

freeholds could likewise vote if he chose to retain them in his service.

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I wish I had the space to spare and the pen that would do it, for a word picture of politics in Scotland. With the Scot good humor thaws, but only reason satisfies. It is in Scotland that Henry George's work of a quarter of a century ago has sunk deep. In many a family the Bible and "Progress and Poverty" go together; and he who knows the Scotch mind knows what that means. Scotland could not be fooled with protection romances and fallacies. And little do you wonder when you face her political audiences or listen to her political candidates. The land question was the shibboleth there, and the land question won. If all Britain had done as well as Scotland did, the Liberal-Labor majority in this Parliament would have been bigger than in the last one.

When Walter Long, M. P., spoke at Glasgow in opposition to land value taxation he made the tactical blunder of wanting to know if any one could tell him "how to tax land values." Instantly from the body of the audience came the response—"Henry George!" followed by thunderous applause.

The readiness and the wit with which Scottish audiences help the speaker, or mar his best efforts, is illustrated by another Glasgow incident. A Tory candidate, obviously youthful, climaxed with the impudent words of Lord Milner—"Down with the Budget and damn the consequences!" He thought it an effective climax, and so it might have been if a solemn-humored woman in the audience had not instantly asked: "Diz yer mither ken ye've staarted swerin'?"

But political humor of this sort is not confined to Scotland. An argumentative joke of the campaign is credited to another region. A Tory speaker was advocating protection to labor under the specious name of "tariff reform," when a carpenter interrupted, and announcing his trade, wanted to know whether a prohibitory duty would be put upon factory-made window casings in the interest of carpenters. The speaker begged indulgence until he could finish what he was then saying, and after an interval inquired: "Where is the carpenter who wanted us to put a tariff on factory made casings?" "He was thrown out of the meeting by a bricklayer!" some-body answered.

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On the eve of our departure Mr. George and I were tendered a farewell dinner at the Liberal Club in London, by some 25 or 30 representatives of the British movement for the taxation of land values. Among those in attendance were Crompton Llewellyn Davies, who presided, and three members of Parliament. One of the latter was Edward G. Hemmerde, K. C., recorder of Liverpool and president of the English League for the Taxation of Land Values. He was in the last Parliament, and has been re-elected from Wales. Another was Francis Neilson, who goes to the present Parliament for a constituency in Cheshire, as a pronounced advocate of land values taxation, the issue which gave him his election. The same issue elected Henry George Chancellor (not named for the Prophet of San Francisco, by the way, but for two relatives), from a Lon-

don constituency, Mr. Chancellor being the third of the members of Parliament present at our dinner. On this occasion the consensus of opinion was pronounced, and of its soundness I have no doubt, that political issues in Great Britain are now clearly drawn between Protection as a substitute for Free Trade, and Free Trade supplemented with Land Value Taxation.

Wherever there was a fighting chance for a Liberal, the Whig Liberal who merely negated the protection theory was defeated; whereas the "fighting-chance" seats contended by radical Liberals, who argued for carrying free trade on to its ultimate of land value taxation, were elected. This at any rate was the general tendency, and as far as I could ascertain, the actual fact. The Tories were successful, not in the places where voters were free and radical ideas had been boldly championed, but in cathedral towns and agricultural regions; in industrial places the Liberals gained even in comparison with the landslide vote of 1906.

In the House of Commons, as a result of the elections, the Liberals, Irish and Tories, together have a strong majority. Technically, there was not a Liberal victory, for the Liberals are about even with the Tories; but essentially it was a progressive victory, for the Liberals, the Irish, and the Labor party, all bent on progressive legislation now, are in a commanding majority.

L. F. P.

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## NEWS NARRATIVE

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To use the reference figures of this Department for obtaining continuous news narratives:

Observe the reference figures in any article; turn back to the page they indicate and find there the next preceding article, on the same subject; observe the reference figures in that article, and turn back as before; continue until you come to the earliest article on the subject; then retrace your course through the indicated pages, reading each article in chronological order, and you will have a continuous news narrative of the subject from its historical beginnings to date.

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Week ending Tuesday, February 22, 1910.

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### The British Parliament Opens.

The third Parliament of Edward VII's reign assembled on the 15th (p. 154). Members were sworn in, and the House of Commons re-elected the Rt. Hon. James William Lowther as Speaker. Before the state opening, set for the 21st, the Prime Minister, Mr. Asquith, filled vacancies in the ministry.

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Following Mr. Redmond's announcement that the Irish Nationalists insisted that the restriction of the Lords' veto should take precedence of the Budget in the Government's program (p. 154), according to dispatches of the 17th, Mr. George Barnes, the new chairman of the Labor party in Parliament, sent a manifesto to Premier Asquith, protesting against the Budget question preceding the veto question in the House, and declaring that

in the event of this protest being disregarded the Laborites would vote against the Government.

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Parliament was formally opened on the 21st by the King in person. The speech from the throne occupied only four minutes in reading. Of the financial estimates for the coming year the King said: "These have been framed with the utmost desire for economy, but the requirements for the naval defense of the empire made it necessary to propose a substantial increase in the cost of my navy." Recording the fact that the expenditures authorized by the last Parliament were being incurred, and met by a recourse to temporary borrowing, the speech declared: "Arrangements must be made at the earliest possible moment to deal with the financial situation thus created." This was taken as confirmation of Premier Asquith's avowed determination to regularize the present conduct of financial affairs before attacking the House of Lords. The speech closed with the following statement of the relations between the two Houses:

Recent experience has disclosed serious difficulties due to recurring differences of strong opinion between the two branches of the legislature. Proposals will be laid before you with all convenient speed to define the relations between the Houses of Parliament so as to secure the undivided authority of the House of Commons over finance and its predominance in legislation. These measures, in the opinion of my advisers, should provide that this House should be so constituted and empowered as to exercise impartially in regard to proposed legislation the functions of initiation, revision, and, subject to proper safeguards, of delay.

The King's use of the words, "in the opinion of my advisers," is taken to mean that he is not willing to identify himself with his ministers upon this question. After listening to the speech the two Houses separated and reassembled in their respective chambers.

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In the House of Lords Lord Lansdowne, leader of the Opposition in that House, said that if the new House of Commons adopted the Budget, the Lords would support it, though their opinion in regard to it was unchanged. He protested at the Government's program for the House of Lords, which he declared to be a plan "for pulling the constitution of this country to pieces, for breaking up the union and setting up a single chamber of government. I use the last expression advisedly, because if the words of his Majesty's speech have any meaning at all, that is what they mean." Lord Roseberry appealed to the Lords to reform themselves without delay, as the opportunity might never be given to them again. The hereditary feature was the thing the country would not tolerate.

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In the House of Commons, Arthur J. Balfour, leader of the Opposition, criticized the King's speech for inadequacy on the subject of naval defense, and questioned the strength of the support given by the country to the Budget, as indicated by the elections. Mr. Asquith in replying made the following statement as to the "guarantees" from the King for the "swamping" of the House of Lords should it become necessary, his possession of which has been both assumed and questioned:

I have said that we must have legislative safeguards, but some of my friends say that I talked about guarantees of the exercise of the royal prerogatives. If I had said such a thing I would not now be standing at this box. I received no such guarantees; I asked for no such guarantees. It is the duty of a responsible minister, so far as possible, to keep the name of the sovereign and the prerogative of the crown outside the domain of party politics.

The Government's program, as summarized by the dispatches from Mr. Asquith's speech is to the effect that the House will proceed on the question of the Lords by resolutions which will be laid on the table soon, discussed before the Easter recess and passed at this session. The Government has only two objects in view: To pass the Budget and to put an end at the earliest moment by the wisest and most adequate method, to the constitutional condition giving to nonrepresentative and irresponsible authority the power to thwart the purposes and mutilate the handiwork of the chosen exponents of the people's will. Mr. Asquith also reiterated his assertion that the removal of the Lords' right of veto was a necessary preliminary to the discussion of home rule for Ireland. Mr. Redmond announced, as the dispatches summarize, that the Nationalists had supported the Government at the election because the Prime Minister's pledge on home rule was supplemented by one still more important to Ireland, the abolition of the veto of the House of Lords, which was tantamount to the adoption of home rule. He thought, and the country thought, that Premier Asquith had promised to ask for guarantees of the exercise of the royal prerogative, and that if he did not get them he would decline to hold office. But it appeared that the Nationalists were mistaken. The Government's policy was to pass the Budget before any assurance was given that the veto bill would pass. It was a disastrous policy, and meant the throwing away of the mandate they had received from the country. They would be enabling the Lords on the veto bill to force a second election in a year, and the Government would be beaten by the weary electorate. "If the Prime Minister gives us reasonable assurance that he will be able to carry the veto bill into law this year," said Mr. Redmond, "we will vote for the