
INCIDENTAL SUGGESTIONS

WASHINGTON TAX REFORM LEAGUE.

Bellingham, Wash.

The Washington Tax Reform League stands for such a change in our system of taxation as will encourage instead of discouraging industry. For example, in British Columbia wild land pays four to ten times as much tax as does similar improved land. This encourages development; creates a demand for labor; makes steady employment at fair wages. It benefits everybody but the speculator. In Nebraska they exempt from taxation for "planting out" trees. In Washington we should exempt from taxation for blowing out stumps.

As a matter of fact we put fines upon people who develop the country. A farmer who goes into the forest and puts \$1,000 of improvements on his own land, usually adds several thousand dollars to the value of adjoining wild land—for he shows what it will produce. Yet we put a fine upon him while we allow the land speculator to pocket unearned thousands. The wageworker is also interested; for, the world over, dear land means low wages, while cheap land means high wages.

As secretary of the Washington Tax Reform league I wish to get the names and addresses of three tax reformers in every Grange, Farmers' Union and Trade Union in the State of Washington. Send me at once your name, post office address and the number of your Grange or Union.

W. H. KAUFMAN.



A CORRECTION.

The increase in the capital stock of the New York Central & Hudson River Railroad Company (11.82 per cent), mentioned in my articles in *The Public* of October 6 and 27, at pages 1018 and 1096, was the increase to 1896, not to 1906, as erroneously stated. The increase from date of incorporation (1869) to June 30th, 1906, was a fraction less than 67 per cent. The error of statement signified nothing substantial; it only gave further emphasis to the substantial fact that the dividends in the lean years ending in 1875 were \$4,871,334.37 more on \$89,428,300 capital than the dividends of the fat years ending in 1906, on \$149,197,800 capital stock.

LEVI STEVENS LEWIS.

NEWS NARRATIVE

The figures in brackets at the ends of paragraphs refer to volumes and pages of *The Public* for earlier information on the same subject.

Week ending Tuesday, November 7, 1911.

The Chinese Revolution.

The native section of the city of Hankow seems to have been retaken from the insurgents by the Imperialists, and has in large part been burned

to the ground. Reports of general massacres of the inhabitants of Hankow by the Imperial troops come by way of Peking. Elsewhere the revolution has proceeded swiftly but almost bloodlessly, one city after another being occupied by the revolutionists, often simply by a change of officials. Shanghai was so occupied on the 3rd. No resistance was offered on the part of the Imperial representatives. After taking over the municipal government the revolutionists informed the foreign consuls that a provisional republican government had been established. [See current volume, page 1120.]



By the 3rd the National Assembly had completed a draft of a proposed constitution, and by Imperial decree this draft was accepted by the Throne on the same day. As summarized in the dispatches the draft contains the following principles:

1. The Emperor shall reign forever.
2. A person of the Ta Ching dynasty (the great pure dynasty, the same being the name adopted by the ruling family) shall be Emperor inviolable.
3. The power of the Emperor shall be limited by the Constitution.
4. The order of succession to the throne shall be prescribed by the Constitution.
5. The Constitution shall be drawn up and adopted by the National Assembly and will be promulgated by the Emperor.
6. The power of amending the Constitution shall belong to Parliament.
7. The members of the upper house shall be elected by the people from among those particularly eligible.
8. The Parliament shall elect and the Emperor shall appoint the Premier, who will recommend the other members of the cabinet, who also shall be appointed by the Emperor. The Imperial princes will be ineligible for the office of premier or members of the cabinet or administrative heads of the provinces.
9. If the premier, when impeached by Parliament, does not dissolve Parliament he must resign. One cabinet shall not be allowed to dissolve Parliament more than once.
10. The Emperor shall assume direct control of the Army and Navy, but when this power is used in connection with internal affairs, the Emperor must observe special conditions to be decided by Parliament.
11. Imperial decrees cannot be issued to replace the law except in the event of urgent necessity; in which case they may be issued in accordance with special conditions.
12. International treaties shall not be concluded without the consent of Parliament, but a treaty for the conclusion of peace or a declaration of war may be made by the Emperor if Parliament is not sitting, the approval of Parliament to be obtained afterwards.
13. Ordinances in connection with the administration shall be settled by acts of Parliament.
14. In case the financial budget fails to receive

the approval of Parliament, the government may not act upon the budget of the previous year nor may items of expenditure not provided for in the budget be appended thereto. The government shall not adopt extraordinary financial measures outside the budget.

15. Parliament shall fix the expenses of the Imperial household and any increase or decrease therein.

16. Regulations in connection with the Imperial family must not conflict with the Constitution.

17. The two houses shall establish the machinery for the administration of the court.

18. The Emperor shall promulgate the decisions of Parliament.

19. The National Assembly shall act upon articles 8, 9, 10, 12, 13, 14, 15 and 18 until the opening of Parliament.

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It seems probable from dispatches received in Peking that the revolutionists of mid and south China will not be satisfied with anything less than the complete expulsion of the Manchus, a step which the proposed Constitution does not contemplate. The Moderates of the north are or assume to be more indifferent on the Manchu question, but to be strenuous for the establishment of full constitutional government. It was reported on the 4th that many of the Provincial Assemblies have objected to a provisional body's assuming the authority to draft a Constitution, which should be the work of a duly elected parliament. Upon receiving these protests by telegram the National Assembly considered the propriety of resigning in a body, but finally concluded not to do so. Yuan Shi Kai, who is claimed by various groups, holds off from undertaking the position of Premier while the situation remains so violently unsettled. A dispatch to the Chicago Inter Ocean includes the following analysis of the situation: "It is now evident that all elements—the Throne, Yuan Shi Kai's party, the National Assembly, the Provincial Assemblies, the southern rebels and the northern army—have, up to the present, no connection whatever. The whole movement is a spontaneous uprising against old and corrupt methods, and the fact that foreigners have not been attacked indicates that the desire for genuine reform is sincere."

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Italian Reverses in Tripoli.

Under new and more efficient leadership the Turkish troops in Tripoli are driving the Italians back. The city of Tripoli, the especially glorious first prize of the Italian raid, is closely hemmed in by the Turks. One of the English correspondents has thus described the present situation at the city of Tripoli: "Now, 35,000 soldiers find themselves with their backs to the sea, cramped and confined, with an active enemy within a few yards of them and with cholera raging among them, for despite

official efforts to conceal the truth there have been many cases among the troops and the civil population is suffering so much that whole streets in Tripoli have been closed by armed sentries. The Turks and Arabs hold the oasis [where the massacres of the Arabs mostly occurred, just before the Italians had to retreat within the inner defenses], which is fifteen miles long and from two to five miles deep, where they can subsist on dates and olives until April 1, meantime harassing the Italians by nightly raids. Every yard of the oasis forms a natural defense, which must be fought for." [See current volume, page 1121.]

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The correspondents who were at the seat of war seem united on the subject of the massacring of non-combatant Arabs by the Italian soldiers, briefly reported last week. In order to furnish uncensored news reports of what they describe as atrocious violation of the rules of civilized warfare, several English correspondents and one German (Gottberg of the Berlin Lokal Anzeiger) surrendered their passports and went to Malta, from whence they sent on detailed accounts, with photographs, of the massacres of the Arabs. Francis McCullagh of the London Chronicle, in a vivid and circumstantial account of the atrocities, asserts that about 4,000 men and about 400 women and children had been shot down or otherwise murdered, without any pretence of justice. He regarded the cruelty of the Italian soldiers as being the result of a paralysis of fear. The Premier of Italy, Mr. Giolitti, on the 1st denied all the reports of cruelty on the part of the Italian troops in Tripoli. Mr. McCullagh's dispatch, confirmed by other correspondents, created a great sensation in England, and on the 6th furnished matter for an interrogation in the House of Commons, of the Government, by a Liberal member, MacCallum Scott. The foreign secretary, Sir Edward Grey, stayed away, and Mr. Scott was forced to ask his questions of the under secretary, Mr. Acland, who disclaimed for the Government any direct knowledge of the reported atrocities. Then Mr. Scott asked the Prime Minister if, in view of the fact that the Italians are conducting the war in Tripoli by barbarous methods, it was not contrary to the principle of law of all nations, but the Speaker, interrupting, said: "I do not think a question of that sort ought to be put in reference to a country with which we are friendly." On the 5th the Turkish Government, through its ambassador at Washington, formally requested the United States to intervene in Tripoli. The ambassador's note asserts as to principle and fact:

The right of all able bodied citizens to fight for the supreme defense of their invaded home is undeniable. It confers on the said citizens the character of belligerents and obliges the enemy to re-