

of municipal boards of review to be appointed by the mayors of the respective municipalities; a pure alphabetical Australian ballot bill, and a bill to prevent corrupt practices at elections.

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Mr. Howe is now vice-president of the Municipal Traction Company of Cleveland, the "holding" company by means of which Mayor Johnson is seeking to establish municipal ownership and operation and remove corporation influences from politics. The duties of this position are in line with Mr. Howe's whole career with reference to the question of municipal ownership, for which he has constantly agitated for ten years past and which he has efficiently served in both public and private life.

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Mr. Howe's life is a worthy example of young Americanism. A man of exalted political ideals, he has had the will, the discernment, the ability and the courage to depart from old models and to defy accustomed influences in order to give to his ideals practical form and dynamic force.

NEWS NARRATIVE

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.

Week ending Wednesday, Dec. 12, 1906.

The Congo Free State an International Problem.

For some years Christendom has been shocked by stories of the horrible exploitation of the native inhabitants of the Congo Independent or Free State. This country lies in the heart of equatorial Africa, covering a region of about 900,000 square miles. Through it runs the Congo river, and the State includes a strip of territory reaching out to the coast where the river empties into the South Atlantic. It has a population of about 30,000,000 Negroes of Bantu origin, speaking many dialects. Its great product is rubber, and it has been in respect to the methods by which the natives have been compelled to bring to the white exploiters of the country never-ceasing supplies of crude rubber, that the civilized world has been shocked. Naturally the first stories, mostly from missionaries, were denied. Then came more positive stories, supported by various kinds of proof, including photographs of dismembered bodies and of living mutilated men, women and children, for it seems that

the tribute of rubber has been most commonly enforced by cutting off the hands of those who have failed to make good the quantity required of them—even to the point of cutting off the hands of very little children. The photographs showed this. But the atrocities are still denied by the exploiters of the unhappy country.

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The Congo Free State is under the sovereignty of Leopold II., King of the Belgians (vol. vii, p. 441), who has bequeathed to Belgium all his sovereign rights in the State. King Leopold holds in succession to the Congo International Association, which he himself founded in 1882, and the sovereignty of which received international recognition. At the Berlin conference of 1884 the Congo Independent (or Free) State was established and internationally safeguarded; and further efforts at protecting the State were given shape at an international conference at Brussels in 1889. Nevertheless the situation has become increasingly intolerable.

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English associations for the amelioration of the situation have been in existence for years, and are now becoming insistent. At the present moment the Belgian parliament is considering the conditions under which King Leopold is bequeathing the State to Belgium. The terms apparently impose a minimum of parliamentary control, entirely exclude the crown lands (consisting largely of the great rubber forests) from supervision, and leave the rights of the monopolist companies intact for all time. That Belgium will agree to accept and perpetuate so gigantic a monopolization of a nation and so atrocious an exploitation of a people, seems unlikely, but it is to be noted that the King has known how to surround his iniquitous system with a complicated network of defences. As the London Tribune says, "he has distributed the wealth wrung from the Congo very widely in Belgium, partly by corruption, partly by lavish expenditure, most subtly of all by splitting up into fractions the shares of the companies which thrive on the rubber trade. He has on his side a solid and loyal clerical majority in the Chamber, and behind that a legal system based on the theory that the Congo is his private estate." Moreover, late news in the United States credits him with having succeeded in drawing into his Congo business relationships the Standard Oil connection, which interests will, of course, add to his invulnerability. Most recent news in regard to the situation is that on the 8th Prince Albert of Flanders, King Leopold's nephew and the heir apparent to the Belgian throne, was proclaimed heir apparent to the Congo Free State, so that whether Belgium annexes the State (as she has a right to do under international agreement, paying due regard to Leopold's rights of sovereignty), and whether she receives the sovereignty as a bequest from King Leopold, or not, Prince Albert will in any case be its next ruler. The existence of an expensive lobby maintained at Washington by King Leopold for the prevention of the passage by Congress of resolutions unfavorable to the exploitation of the Congo, was made known with detailed particularity in the American press of the 10th. And on the same day

Senator Lodge offered to the Committee on Foreign Relations the following resolutions:

Whereas, The reports of the inhuman treatment inflicted upon the native inhabitants of the Congo Free State have been of such a nature and so well sustained as to draw the attention of the civilized world and excite both the indignation and the compassion of the people of the United States, therefore be it,

Resolved, That in the opinion of the Senate of the United States the time has come when the affairs of the Congo Free State should be made the subject of international inquiry, and the Senate respectfully advises the President that in any steps he may deem it wise to take in co-operation with or in aid of any of the powers signatory to the treaty of Berlin, which shall seek to ameliorate the conditions of the Congo Free State and redress any evils now existent there, he will receive its cordial support.

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Famine in Russia.

The political struggle in Russia would seem to have diverted attention from the continuing famine conditions prevailing in large areas of the empire (p. 488). A dispatch from St. Petersburg dated the 8th tells of dreadful suffering. In ten provinces in central and southeastern Russia there have now been three bad harvests in succession. There are villages of 3,000 and 4,000 inhabitants where there is literally no rye or wheat to be had at any price, and the villagers, famished and broken-hearted, await death from hunger, or from the typhus and scorbutic diseases which are rife among them. Refuse of all sorts, chaff and dirty straw have been eaten. The dispatch reports a government inspector as describing districts which he had traveled through where the people were mere skeletons moving about, hollow-eyed and fever-stricken, with rage burning in their hearts against a government which failed to succor them.

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The Fate of the English Education Bill.

The House of Lords passed the education bill (p. 850) to its third reading on the 6th. On the 10th the Government unexpectedly announced its decision to reject the Lords' amendments entire, and allow the bill to be dropped. A new bill will be introduced at the next session. This decision places the responsibility of killing the bill on the House of Lords.

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On the 10th the Lords rejected the plural voting bill which was passed by the House of Commons at the instance of the Government. The principle of the bill was "one man, one vote."

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The Church and State Crisis in France.

The "separation law," divorcing France from official connection with all religious sects (p. 801), went into full operation on the 12th. The law was passed by the Chamber of Deputies, July 3, 1905 (vol. viii, p. 218), and by the Senate, Dec. 6, 1905 (vol. viii, p. 581), and was ratified as a law Dec. 11, 1905, to be put in force a year from that date. This act of disestablishment provided that within a year from the passage of the act the churches might be turned over to "public worship associations," and it was hoped and believed that the Catholics would institute

such associations. This, however, they have been forbidden by the Pope to do (p. 463).

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On the 11th the papal Nuncio, Mgr. Montagnini, was expelled from France, and escorted to the Italian frontier by a commissary of police. The Premier, Mr. Clemenceau, stated to the Chamber of Deputies on the same day that this action was taken because of the Nuncio's complicity with prominent clergymen of Paris against whom proceedings were pending, and also because he had incited churchgoers to rebellion. The Premier asserted that interference by foreigners under orders from Rome in the politics of France, was not permissible. Cardinal Richard, Archbishop of Paris, and the bishops and parish priests of the department, were ordered by the Government on the 11th to vacate their residences on the 12th. In other departments the clergy were notified to leave their residences on the 13th or 14th. The law contemplates life pensions to the older clergy, and pensions for from four to eight years for the others. An effort is being made by several deputies through the mayors of communes to induce two Catholic laymen in each parish to make the declarations which would ensure the conservation of the church property of that parish for Catholic worship—the declarations which the Pope has forbidden the priests to make. There is still another year, namely, until Dec. 11, 1907, within which the state may, if it deems it wise, transfer the religious property to public worship associations; but in the meantime the title to the property has been lost to the Catholic church, and the State has the right to seize, sell or destroy all of the church's property, or otherwise put it in liquidation. If the State takes over the religious property, the churches may be used free, but the act says the State must dispose of all the property within five years—that is to say, by Dec. 11, 1910.

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In the early morning of the 12th the Government issued a grant of 24 hours of grace. After that date the Roman Catholic church, as such, is outlawed in France. The situation has aroused the intensest feeling, but it is not believed that serious outbreaks will occur.

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French Nationalization of Railroads.

A proposal that the Government purchase for the nation the Western railroad passed the Chamber of Deputies on the 7th, by 364 votes to 187.

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The Bellamy Storer Incident.

Mr. Bellamy Storer, late United States ambassador to Austria, whose peremptory recall by the President was understood to have been caused by Mrs. Storer's excess of zeal in urging upon the Vatican the appointment of Archbishop Ireland to a cardinalate (vol. viii, p. 849), caused to be placed in the hands of the President and the cabinet, on November 20, a pamphlet disclosing correspondence with President Roosevelt both before and after his becoming President, relative to the issue between them. This pamphlet, which reached the public press of the 8th by channels unauthorized by Mr. Storer, he avers, was an effort on the part of Mr.