

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, August 29.

The Czar's Agrarian Policy.

The radicals continue to terrorize (p. 487). A bomb thrown or dropped in the country house of Mr. Stolypin, the prime minister (p. 394), on the 25th, killed or fatally wounded 32 persons, and seriously and perhaps fatally injured about 25 more, including two of Mr. Stolypin's children. Mr. Stolypin himself escaped with a few scratches. His death sentence, imposed by revolutionists, was found in the pocket of one of two conspirators killed by the explosion, two others being wounded. On the 26th General Min was shot to death by a young woman in the railway station at Peterhof, and an attempt was made to kill General Kaulbars in Odessa. On the 27th General Liarlarski, acting military Governor General of Warsaw, while driving through the streets of Warsaw, was fatally shot by a young man. Press dispatches also relate that the soldiers of the 11th and 12th Sapper battalions, in summer camp near Odessa, mutinied on the 23d. They assembled in political meeting, sang "The Marseillaise," and passed a resolution not to fire upon the revolutionists if ordered to do so. Officers of the battalions who tried to break up the meeting, were beaten by the soldiers.

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In haste to stem the rising tide of revolution expressed through this terrorism, the Czar's government has begun a system of land distribution (pp. 443, 461), by which it is hoped to win the peasants to the support of the government at the coming elections. According to the dispatches the Czar, by ukase, transferred on the 27th 4,500,000 acres of crown appanage lands to the Peasants' Bank. The Bank is to sell the land to peasants on 33 or 60 years' time. It is announced that 10,000,000 additional acres will further be transferred shortly. The Peasant Bank will issue to the Czar and the grand dukes in return for the land a "nominative scrip," and a dispatch says that in effect the imperial family will thus simply convert their land holdings into 6 per cent. securities, and be relieved of all the expense of management of crown lands and appanages, which absorbs at present a large share of their revenue. In regard to the peasants' side of the transaction it is said that the "period of amortization through installment payments" has not yet been fixed. The majority opinion favors thirty-three years, but smaller payments, covering a period as high as sixty years, also are advocated. Until redeemed the debentures and scrip will constitute a

blanket mortgage. In regard to this step the Chicago Record-Herald says editorially:

It is interesting to point out that, while the government is planning agrarian legislation on its own account, on such questions as popular instruction, personal liberty and civil equality it is merely preparing bills for submission to the Douma. These things can wait, but the peasant's confidence must be won at once, or the elections will go entirely against the government. The peasant wants land, and will send deputies to get it at any cost. Hence the anxiety of the government.

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The Drift Toward Constitutionalism.

Rumors of a crisis in Persia—the Shah's tottering health, an empty treasury, revolts—come in the same dispatches with information of crowding movements on the part of England, Germany and Russia, who are "preparing to protect their interests when a crisis arrives." But in spite of the danger of national dissolution impending, a constitutional government in Persia (p. 491) seems to be an accomplished fact. And it is a new thing in governments—a constitutional government steeped in orientalism. A special dispatch to the Chicago Inter Ocean thus describes it:

By the terms of the new Persian constitution the Koran, the book of Mohammed and scripture of the Islamic faith, is made the supreme law of the land, corresponding to the constitution of the United States. Every law must be shown to be in conformity with the teachings of the Koran or it is ineffective. As the Koran is written in Arabic a commission is to be elected at the first session of the new legislative body, which is to be called the House of Justice, to translate it into Persian. Supplementary and explanatory paragraphs will be worked out, by which the rights of the people will be defined and guaranteed by the law, including the full liberty of speech. The constitution proper consists of ten articles, whereby hereafter the Shah will be a constitutional monarch, and legislative functions will belong to the people, among whom class differences will be abolished.

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Even far-away China has heard the slogan cry of constitutional government. It was reported from Peking under date of the 22d that Chinese commissioners who have recently returned from Europe and the United States have recommended a gradual change to a constitutional government, taking ten or fifteen years for educative preparation for it. Under date of the 27th it was reported that the Dowager Empress had appointed a committee to consider the subject. Discussions at Peking are on the line of organizing an upper house of parliament from among the Chinese officials as the beginning of a parliamentary government, and afterward in some years electing a lower house of parliament.

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Iceland, too, is moving in the current. The large island lying in the north Atlantic just on the edge of the Arctic circle, as the chief of the dependencies of Denmark, already has constitutional government. It has even its own constitution and administration, under a charter which came into force in 1874. Legislative power is vested in the Althing, with 34 members elected by popular suffrage, and six nominated by the King of Denmark. A minister for Iceland, nominated by the King, and residing at the

chief city of Iceland, Reykjavik, is the responsible head of the administration. But now the Icelanders want autonomy. It was reported from Copenhagen under date of the 25th that the plan is for Iceland to recognize the sovereignty of King Frederick and the Danish flag, but the inhabitants insist that the sovereign shall style himself King of Denmark and Iceland, and that the Danish government shall not interfere with the internal affairs of the island. It has also been reported that the Icelanders are planning to open up a direct trade with America.

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Valparaiso Recovering.

In spite of the continuance of occasional earthquake shocks the citizens of Chile are bringing order out of the dreadful chaos produced by the earthquake of the 16th (p. 486). Railway and telegraph lines between Valparaiso and Santiago have been restored. Electric lights are reappearing in the streets of Valparaiso, and electric cars are beginning to run. The government has drawn up plans for the reconstruction of the city, which contemplate a uniform level for the streets, and a minimum street width, not counting sidewalks, of fifty feet. The government will pay cash for lands expropriated for this purpose and will facilitate loans to owners of lands thus taken. Customs duties will be suspended for eighteen months on construction material. The town of Quillota, 30 miles from Valparaiso, like a number of other towns, was badly damaged by the earthquake, but was not engulfed, as at first reported.

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The Cuban Insurrection.

Little battles, and the capture and subsequent abandonment of little towns by the insurrectionists, are the visible signs of the revolt in Cuba (p. 487). These signs are most manifest in the most western province, Pinar del Rio, where San Luis, a city of 5,000 inhabitants, was taken by the insurgents on the 22d, and San Juan de Martinez on the 23d. The insurgent leader in Pinar del Rio is Colonel Faustino Guerra, known as "Pino" Guerra. On the 23d "rural guards," in a hand to hand struggle, killed General Quintin Bandera, the famous Negro insurgent leader in Havana province, and several of his followers. A hard fought little battle occurred on the 25th near Santa Rosa, when the insurgents were routed. And they sustained another defeat on the 27th, when Colonel Valle, with a force of rural guards overcame General Guzman with a force of insurgents, near Cienfuegos in Santa Clara province. Even while this battle was in progress President Palma was issuing a proclamation of amnesty, and it is asserted that nearly all the insurgent leaders of consequence, except Colonel Guerra, are willing to take advantage of it.

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Nevertheless it must not be concluded that the trouble is over. Statements of grievances have now come to hand. Colonel Ernesto Asbert, commanding a body of insurgents in Havana province, defines his position in a signed statement from which the following is taken:

We who have taken up arms against the government of

Tomas Estrada Palma, have done so because we have arrived at the conclusion that law and justice are not to be established in this country by the will of the government, because the administration daily commits outrages upon the constitution and despoils our people of their legal rights. It is our sole desire to establish the supreme rule of the law, to restore affairs where they were before the last elections. We want new elections called in order that the people exercising with the fullest freedom the right of suffrage, may elect the men who ought to occupy the posts of president and vice-president, as well as governors, senators, representative and provincial councilmen of the republic.

The Chicago Tribune publishes in its cable dispatches this summary of the causes of the revolt:

The present revolution is a popular protest against the dictatorial methods of President Palma and his advisers. In 1902, when Palma was elected, he had no opposition. He was the candidate of both political parties. For a time the people of Cuba were satisfied with his administration. But there was a clog in the wheel of the new Republic. The island has lived under a constitution since 1902; but its laws are the laws left on the books by Spain. Congress has now passed laws to conform to the constitution. The result has been to concentrate tremendous power in the hands of President Palma. After the first three or four years of the Republic's existence the Cubans divided into two parties, Liberals and Moderates. The government was filled with Liberal office holders. The veterans of the war naturally held positions of honor and trust. President Palma placed himself at the head of the Moderate party. Under the old Spanish laws he had almost unlimited powers. He removed all government officers who were Liberals and filled their places with Moderates. Thus Palma first sowed the seeds of discontent from which the present revolution grew. Then came the Presidential election in 1905. There seems to be no room for doubt that the Liberals were heavily in the majority in a fair and honestly conducted election. Yet Palma and his friends of the Moderate party controlled the election machinery and the police force, and Gomez, the Liberal candidate, was hopelessly defeated.

From that moment a revolution was certain. The Liberals comprise the men who fought ten years with Spain to secure their independence. They claim they wrested the island from Spain, with the help of the United States, only to see it placed under the rule of an oligarchy with Estrada Palma at its head.

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Information that tends to show that other causes may have operated to produce insurrection, comes all the way from Hawaii. The Honolulu Advertiser of Aug. 28 says that "a leading member of the Hawaiian Sugar Planters' Association asserts that he was told within a year by a sugar magnate, who was a fellow passenger with him between Honolulu and San Francisco, that the sugar men of Cuba wanted the island annexed to the United States and were raising a fund of \$5,000,000 to use in creating a disturbance which would compel the United States to interfere and take control of the government. The Hawaiian planter says he believes that the present revolution has been promoted and is being financed by planters with the object of securing annexation."

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Commenting on the relations of the United States to the situation in Cuba, the *Diario de la Marina*, the