

**British Politics.**

The finance (or Budget) bill of 1909 (p. 368) passed all the steps up to and including its first reading in the House of Commons on the 20th inst., by ample majorities. Of the situation at this time, T. P. O'Connor, M. P., says in his Chicago Tribune cable letter of the 22d that—

the suspense of the week has ended in the complete identification of the Liberal and Irish parties with the veto campaign and whole hearted support of the Budget. This has naturally produced an aftermath of tranquillity. . . . The Tories, jubilant for weeks in the hope of defeating the Liberals by the Irish vote on the Budget, now are sunk in despair. The Budget is passing through all the stages with perfect tranquillity, even apathy, after many months of fierce denunciation. Every Liberal is looking to the next election and a straight fight over the veto of the Lords with perfect confidence, while the Tories are resigned to despair. The Tory papers already are raising a cry of compromise, but no compromise is possible on the terms which the Liberals, Tories, or Irish could accept. . . . All Ireland stands enthusiastically behind the action of Redmond, with which the Irish in England, who always have favored the Budget, especially the land taxes, are generally sympathetic. The Liberal and Labor parties are inexpressibly relieved at the avoidance of a rupture between the English and Irish democracies. The two democracies, indeed, are more closely knit in this fight than in any previous epoch of the history of the two nations. The Irishmen in England will swell the gigantic popular demonstrations now preparing to demand the abolition of the Lords' veto. All of the British democracy also is immensely grateful to Redmond for that firmness of attitude which induced the Liberal cabinet to finally adopt stern, uncompromising, and prompt action in the campaign against the Lords.

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**The French Elections.**

Early reports of the 25th from the elections in France on the 24th (p. 322), indicated no substantial change in the 597 seats of the Chamber of Deputies, and on the 26th, the distribution of seats, with only nine districts not yet heard from, was as follows:

Republicans .....	57
Radicals and Radical Socialists .....	154
Independent Socialists .....	10
Unified Socialists .....	28
Progressists .....	43
Nationalists .....	12
Conservatives .....	53

Second ballotings will be necessary in 231 districts, no candidate having in those districts received a majority.

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**An Echo of Mr. Roosevelt's Visit in Egypt.**

In a speech to 10,000 Egyptians at Cairo on the 3d, as reported in the correspondence of the New York World and the Chicago Inter Ocean, Ali Bey Fahmy Kamel, vice president of the

Egyptian Nationalists, denounced amid loud cheering Mr. Roosevelt's speech at the Cairo University on March 28 (pp. 297, 313, 319). Kamil Bey said in part:

We are not met to recall the evils of British occupation, but to protest against him who has dared to mock our demand for a constitution; against him who has sought to oppose our aspirations toward independence.

We should have preferred to have welcomed Mr. Roosevelt as a broad-minded citizen of a free country, and as such to wish him godspeed, but he has only sought to appear in Egypt as a true English imperialist, and to make us forget he is one of the foremost citizens of free America.

Mr. Roosevelt, having just stepped upon Egyptian soil, has delivered himself, from Khartoum to Cairo, of repeated praises of Lord Cromer and of the present condition of our country. There, as here, he has been the omniscient orator, knowing everything of Christianity, of Islam, of militarism, of the constitution, forever giving his advice, forever preaching his doctrines. He seems ready to proclaim his anxiety to turn his coat according to the country in which he hunts, and, because in America he chose for his prey the wealthy classes to protect the poor, he comes here to Egypt to hunt down those who desire independence, to defend the British occupation.

Oh, Roosevelt, spare us your oracles! Take just a little time to glance over the history of this country, whose important position in the world you have been able to appreciate. Is it worthy of you, on treading for the first time the soil of Egypt, to use your renown to destroy that hope which is the soul and the life of the oppressed, and without which a people can never attain the heights of their destiny? Where have you read that men live happy beneath a foreign yoke which sheds their blood and wastes their treasure and withholds from their sons the fair remuneration of labor which insures their existence and their independence?

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**The Famine Riots in China.**

The rioting at Changsha, China (p. 370), has spread into disorders at other points in the province of Hunan. News of the 23d from Peking emphasized the famine causes assigned last week (p. 370) for the trouble. The Chicago Record-Herald dispatch asserts that "the rioting is not primarily due to anti-foreign feeling, but was turned against foreigners only upon the discovery that the Governor's efforts to prevent the exportation of rice were balked largely through foreign influence. Thousands are on the verge of starvation, owing to failure of the crops. Several weeks ago the Governor, to prevent high prices, prohibited all exportation of rice. British and Japanese merchants and shippers engaged in the rice trade, protested to their respective legations at Peking in an effort to induce the diplomatic corps as a body to protest. This was frustrated by the refusal of the American and German legations to join. The British and Japanese then protested to the Wai-Wu-Pu, which in view of treaties now

in force was reluctantly compelled to instruct the Governor that he must postpone his inhibition of exports. A jump in the price of the people's food quickly followed the suspension of the inhibition, and drove the poor in desperation to wreck government buildings, and afterward consulates, missions and other foreign buildings."

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## NEWS NOTES

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—A Women's Model Lodging-House has been established by the Chicago health department at 3040 Calumet ave.

—Bjornstjerne Bjornson, the Norwegian poet, novelist, dramatist, reformer, and advocate of universal peace, died in Paris on the 25th, in his 78th year.

—A single tax association has been formed at San Diego, Cal., for propaganda work. The secretary-treasurer is S. Robt. White, and the chairman is Chas. H. Rodd.

—The traction strike in Philadelphia (p. 322), was called off on the 20th, the leaders of the local carmen's union having received satisfactory assurances from the company.

—Mark Twain, whose name was Samuel Langhorne Clemens, died at his home near Redding, Conn., on the 21st at the age of 75. His body was buried at Elmira on the 24th.

—Lake Charles, La., suffered severely from fire on the afternoon of the 23rd. Several hundred buildings were destroyed, involving a property loss of about \$3,000,000, and leaving 2,000 persons homeless.

—Edward Osgood Brown has been appointed by President Taft as one of the Board of Visitors to the United States Naval Academy for the graduation week of 1910. Judge Brown's son Walter, is to be one of the graduates.

—As a result of an explosion in the coal mines of the Birmingham Coal and Iron Company at Mulga, ten miles from Birmingham, Ala., on the 20th, between 40 and 50 miners were imprisoned 200 feet underground. All of them perished.

—President Taft has appointed Gov. Hughes of New York as an Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States. He sent the appointment to the Senate for confirmation on the 25th, having first obtained Gov. Hughes' consent.

—The "Keep off the grass" signs in thirty New York parks will be replaced, says an Associated Press dispatch, with sign posts reading, "Come on to the grass." This is in accordance with an order issued by Mayor Gaynor's park commissioner.

—William J. Bryan was formally ordained and installed on the 24th as an elder of the Westminster Presbyterian Church near Lincoln. He was also elected a delegate at large to the Presbyterian Council to be held at Edinburgh, Scotland, in June.

—The first election in Tacoma under the commission form of municipal government, Berkeley plan (vol. xii, p. 590), was held on the 5th. A. V. Fawcett had a clear majority for mayor over six other candidates and was declared elected. No candidate for

any of the other offices had a majority, and the second election came off on the 19. The total absence of party bossism is reported as the notable feature of this electoral experiment in the Northwest.

—The resolution providing for the ratification by the legislature of New York of the proposed income tax amendment to the United States Constitution (p. 350), was defeated in the Assembly on the 20th, by 74 to 66. Governor Hughes had opposed the amendment.

—The Transandine railroad, connecting Chile and Peru, and piercing the Andes with a five mile tunnel—the highest railroad tunnel in the world (vol. xii, pp. 782, 1163)—was formally opened on the 5th with the passage of a train bearing Chilean and Argentine commissioners.

—Benjamin D. Magruder, former Justice of the Supreme Court of Illinois, died on the 21st at Chicago at the age of 72. Judge Magruder delivered the Supreme Court decision against the Chicago "anarchists" in 1886. He was distinguished also for his anti-trust decisions.

—Tom L. Johnson's daughter, Elizabeth, is the co-author with her uncle, Adrian Johnson, of "The Game of the Golden Ball," a new novel which is attracting favorable attention. The latest advices from England are to the effect that Mr. Johnson's health improves daily.

—The second annual conference of the National Negro Committee (vol. xii, pp. 540, 559, 563), of the invitation committee of which Mary M. Ovington (Room 422, 500 Fifth Ave, New York) is chairman, will meet at the Charity Organization Society Hall in New York on May 12, 13 and 14.

—By a vote of 111 to 71 on a straight party division the House of Commons of the Dominion of Canada has adopted the bill creating a Canadian navy under Canadian control in time of peace and at the disposal of the King in time of war, by the consent of the King's advisers in Canada and the Canadian Parliament.

—Halley's comet, reported last autumn as having come once again into near proximity to the center of our solar system after having been on its periodic long journey out of sight and ken (vol. xii, pp. 902, 997), has become faintly visible to the naked eye. It was sighted in Chicago in the very early morning on the 20th. It is expected to be most clearly visible from the Earth about the 18th of May.

—Representative Martin of Colorado made on the 20th, a further move against the government sale of friar lands in the Philippines (p. 337), by introducing a resolution providing for a Congressional inquiry into the alleged sale to the "sugar trust" and the "activities of the War Department and the Department of Justice and the Philippine government," the committee to report at the next session of Congress.

—The Illinois Tax Reform League criticize Governor Deneen of Illinois for holding back appointments to the tax commission (p. 350), for eight months after the law required them to be made; and of his appointment of John P. Wilson, the chairman, it says: "He it was who framed the bills unlawfully exempting the great corporations from paying any capital stock tax, a law declared unconstitutional by the Illinois Supreme Court last year in the Consoli-