

the State, they resolved to use it as an asset. For Brennan, Guffey, Donnelly, Ryan and Dewalt to be for Wilson is, of course, a political joke. But the reorganizers were not to be scared by any such move on the part of the regulars. While the Wilson resolution was being read in the rump meeting, the reorganizers were endorsing Wilson for President in the warmest terms. To be sure that there should be no "deal" later, a resolution was unanimously adopted that each Democrat express on his ballot at the primary election his choice for President. Any violation of such instructions by a national delegate, the resolution continued, should be regarded as an act of "perfidy and dishonor."

BERNARD B. MCGINNIS.

INCIDENTAL SUGGESTIONS

ECONOMIC PROBLEMS IN SPAIN.

Chicago, July 15.

Mr. Antonio Albendin has an article in the Madrid Herald of June 17 on the present state of affairs in his country, commenting upon the attitude of the press and reformers toward the ever-prevailing poverty of the masses. For a brief time during the winter season the papers make much ado over the suffering of the poor, with sensational announcements of people dying in the streets of starvation, and strongly urge that charitable associations make strenuous efforts to relieve the distress. Then they subside and for the balance of the year avoid the subject as if all were going well in the world. Little or no attention is given serious matters by the numerous organizations that expend much energy on matters of minor importance, such as the Association for the Care and Preservation of Trees; the Association for the Improvement of the Condition of Tenants, which ignores thousands of people who are without a roof to cover their heads; the League to Combat Tuberculosis, which entirely overlooks poverty as the primary cause of the disease; and efforts on the part of legislators to assist the poor by proposed "Internal Colonization," on lines of "small holdings."

All of these endeavors are regarded by Mr. Albendin as merely treating effects and ignoring basic causes, and he does not believe that good results can be obtained as it is unintelligent action.

That there may be a better comprehension of the true cause of their economic ills, and that they may know that there is a cure, he recommends that they read "Progress and Poverty," and in verification of the correctness of the theories therein expounded he points to the improvement already manifest in such countries as Denmark, England, Germany, Australia and Canada where the land value tax has been, at least in some degree, applied.

C. L. LOGAN.

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The public life of Charles the First
Was absolutely shameless.
At home the matter was reversed;
His private life was blameless.

—Chicago Tribune.

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, July 25, 1911.

The Lords' Veto.

At last the great struggle of the Liberal-Irish-Labor coalition in Great Britain to hold in check the absolute veto powers of an hereditary legislative chamber upon progressive legislation by the popular chamber, approaches a successful close. [See current volume, page 681]

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The climax came on the 21st. At its session of the 20th the House of Lords had passed the House bill, as amended out of shape by the Lords, without division and after only three hours' debate. Thereupon, on the following day, the Prime Minister, Mr. Asquith, communicated informally to the Tory leader, Mr. Balfour, the substance of an announcement he intended to make in the Commons on the 24th. Following is Mr. Asquith's communication:

Dear Mr. Balfour: I think it is courteous and right, before any public decisions are announced, to let you know how we regard the present situation. When the Parliament Bill, in the form which it has now assumed, returns to the House of Commons we shall be compelled to ask that House to disagree with the Lords' amendments. In the circumstances, should the necessity arise, the Government will advise the King to exercise his prerogative to secure the passing into law of the Bill in substantially the same form in which it left the House of Commons, and his Majesty has been pleased to signify that he will consider it his duty to accept and act on that advice.

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When Mr. Asquith arose in the Commons on the 24th to make his announcement, the opposition, led in this by Lord Hugh Cecil, created and maintained such a disturbance that he could not proceed. "During three-quarters of an hour," the dispatches read, "Mr. Asquith rose at short intervals and read a sentence or two from a manuscript, only to be overwhelmed by jeers, hootings and cries, among which 'Traitor' was the most frequent, but with 'Redmond,' 'Patrick Ford,' and 'American dollar' often distinguishable." Finally, closing his manuscript, he said: "I am not going to degrade myself. I shall simply state the conclusion at which the government has arrived." He then announced the conclusion briefly, but it was not heard above the din of the Tory outcries. Even "the Speaker's pleadings to 'observe the de-

encies of debate' was drowned in the tumult." When A. J. Balfour, leader of the Opposition, replied to the speech the Premier was unable to make, he received a quiet hearing. Mr. Asquith issued to the newspapers a summary of his speech, the conclusion of which was in line with his letter to Mr. Balfour quoted above.

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Canadian Reciprocity.

In the Senate of the United States on the 22nd, the reciprocity agreement with Canada was adopted. [See current volume, page 677.]

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Senator McCumber of North Dakota offered a free list amendment, which was voted down, 64 to 16; Senator Cummins of Iowa offered an amendment on iron and steel, and one on oilcloth and linoleum, both of which were voted down 64 to 17; Senator La Follette's wool schedule amendments were voted down 64 to 15, and his cotton schedule amendments 63 to 15. Then Mr. La Follette offered an amendment making wood pulp and print paper free of duty for all the world, but it got only 11 votes. Senator Bailey of Texas moved to put cotton bagging and cotton ties upon the free list, but lost it by 61 to 17. Other proposed amendments were defeated by about the same division.

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It was evident that no amendment was disposed of upon its own merits, the controlling issue being simply for or against putting obstructions in the way of the reciprocity agreement. All the Democrats present, except Bailey (Texas), Clarke (Ark.) and Simmons (N. C.), voted for the agreement, including Gore, Owen, Hitchcock, Kern, Shively, Martine, O'Gorman, and Pomerene. Among the progressive Republicans who voted against it were Bourne, Bristow, Clapp, Nelson, Cummins and La Follette. Lorimer of Illinois also voted against the agreement; but Guggenheim, Penrose, Root and Stephenson voted for it. Republicans voting for it numbered in all 21, while those voting against it were 24; Democrats voting for it were 32 and those against it 3.

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This agreement, which now awaits the President's signature and Canada's acceptance, came out of a conference with Canada under the Payne-Aldrich bill, upon an invitation of President Taft extended to Canada March 30, 1910. The Canadian representatives arrived at Washington January 7, 1911, and reciprocity negotiations formally began January 8th. They were concluded January 21st. President Taft sent the agreement to the Senate January 26th, and January 28th McCall (Republican) introduced a reciprocity bill in the

House. It passed the House, 221 to 93. February 14th, with 78 Republicans and 143 Democrats for it and 87 Republicans and 6 Democrats against it. March 4th the Senate adjourned without action. April 4th, Congress convened in extra session and April 12th the Democratic leader, Underwood, introduced the bill which passed the House April 21st by 267 to 89—64 Republicans and 203 Democrats for, and 78 Republicans and 11 Democrats against. April 24th the Senate finance committee received the House bill, and June 13th reported it without recommendation. June 14th the Senate debate began, and July 22nd the Senate passed the bill by 53 to 27.

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The Singletax in Missouri.

According to an editorial in the Chicago Tribune of the 22nd—

if the Initiative and Referendum League and the Single Tax League of Missouri succeed in their present intentions the voters of that State will have an opportunity at the next election to adopt or reject Henry George's theory as a basis of taxation. The amendment has been drawn up and this fall petitions will be circulated in every Congressional district for signatures asking that the matter be put upon the ballot. The Leagues have organized in several of the large cities and many of the smaller towns. The amendment proposes to put property into four classes. The first includes every kind of personal property which does not belong to public service corporations. No property of this class will be subject to taxation after 1913. All improvements on real estate are included in the second class. After 1913 all owners will be entitled to an exemption of \$3,000 on the value of their improvements, and by 1922 a sliding scale will cut off taxes on all improvements. All lands except those now exempt from taxation or the rights of way of public service corporations go into class three. No property in this class shall ever go untaxed. The property of public service corporations comprises class four. This property, real and personal, is to be assessed at its true value and the price it would bring at a voluntary sale, and a levy on one-half that value is to be made. But whenever these corporations accept regulation of their charges, and the values of the franchises be so reduced that the companies shall make only a reasonable return on the actual value of their physical holdings, further exemptions may be made. It will be seen that the amendment contains some variations on the George theory, variations made necessary by modern conditions of business and the relation of corporations to the State. The poll tax is abolished and no license is to be collected from any business not requiring police regulation. The State Board of Equalization is to give way to a State Tax Commission. The Georgeites are said to have done a great deal of missionary work in Missouri in the last year, and there is little doubt that they can get the amendment on the ballot; but a measure embodying such radical changes in taxation methods will not be hastily adopted by any community.