

The Railroad Rate Bill.

Whether as a result of the President's message on the Garfield report, or other cause, an agreement was effected on the 8th with reference to the Hepburn railroad rate bill (p. 9) between the Republican advocates of the bill, including President Roosevelt, and its Republican adversaries. The principal contention regarding this bill has been over the question of allowing the Federal courts to review the action of the Interstate Commerce Commission in fixing rates. Review by the courts would be a constitutional right regardless of the rate-fixing law, if the Interstate Commerce Commission were to make the rates confiscatory; but the railroad interests demanded the right to unlimited court review, irrespective of Constitutional rights, and under the protection meanwhile of injunctions; whereas the advocates of the Hepburn bill as it came from the House opposed allowing unlimited review by injunction proceedings, of rates as determined by the Commission. That controversy has now been settled by the acquiescence of the President and his supporters in both houses in an amendment allowing unlimited review and injunction proceedings.

+

As summarized by the Washington dispatches, the compromise amendment, embodying four propositions and known as the Allison amendment, though offered in the Senate by Senator Cullom on the 8th, provide for—

1. Unlimited jurisdiction in the United States Circuit Courts to hear and determine suits against the decisions of the Interstate Commerce Commission.
2. No preliminary injunction or other interlocutory order to be granted in these suits without a hearing after notice.
3. Such hearings to be before three judges.
4. An appeal to be directly from the decision of these judges to the Supreme Court of the United States, the hearing on such appeals to take precedence over all but criminal cases.

Another proposition goes with the compromise amendment. The words "fairly remunerative," now in the Hepburn bill as a limitation upon the rates the Commission may fix, and which were originally inserted by President Roosevelt, are to be struck out, and the words "in its judgment," with reference to the same power of the Commission, are agreed to. President Roosevelt and his friends describe this compromise as a victory for him; the Democratic Senators, and in this view they are joined by Senator La Follette, regard it as a surrender by him.

+ +

Indictments of Railroads and Trusts.

Indictments were presented by the Federal grand jury at New York on the 5th against several business men and corporations for violations and conspiracies to violate the so-called "Elkins anti-trust law." The indicted men are Nathan Guilford (vice president of the N. Y. Central and Hudson River R. R. Co.), E. L. Pomeroy (general traffic manager of the same company), C. Goodlee Edgar, and Edwin Earle; the indicted corporations being as follows:

- The New York Central Railroad Company.
- The American Sugar Refining Company.
- The New York Central & Hudson River Railroad Company.
- The American Sugar Refining Company of New York.

These indictments are based upon proofs obtained by William Randolph Hearst, who in January last furnished Attorney General Moody with documentary evidence that the sugar trust and certain railroad companies were violating the laws. Thereafter he filed formal complaints against these offenders, charging them specifically with their crimes, and the present indictments are a result.

+ +

The Anthracite Coal Strike.

The deadlock between the anthracite miners and the operators (p. 104) was broken on the 5th at a convention of the miners at Scranton. The convention, which had met on the 4th and been addressed by John Mitchell, voted in accordance with his advice to accept the ultimatum of the operators. In offering this advice Mr. Mitchell said:

For several months we have been endeavoring to negotiate a wage scale and adjustment of conditions of employment with the representatives of the anthracite coal-mining companies. During these negotiations we made a number of propositions, each of which materially modified our original demands. We still believe that our first proposition was reasonably fair, notwithstanding the modifications we have since made in the interest of peace. Now we are face to face with the alternative of continuing at work under our former conditions or declaring a strike. In this crisis the committee recommends the following policy: (1) That we agree to work on the basis of the award of the anthracite coal strike commission for such period of time as may be agreed upon mutually between the representatives of the anthracite coal mining companies and our scale committee, provided that all men who suspended work April 1 are reinstated in their former positions and working places. (2) That the scale committee proceed at once to meet the representatives of the coal companies with a view of securing an agreement upon this basis. (3) That the convention remain in session until Tuesday and the scale committee shall report to the convention at that time.

In the course of his speech Mr. Mitchell intimated that the operators were trying to provoke a strike. On this point he said:

I believe the operators in a large measure would welcome a strike, as they have on hand a considerable supply of surplus coal and it would give them the excuse they are seeking to squeeze the consumers with an advance in the prices, and all of the miners know that such action on their part is unwarranted. Are we, then, to give them the excuse they are wishing for? If the operators believe in a strike, and we believe they do, it would be better for us to remain at work and claim what we have than to strike and lose what we have already so dearly fought for.

The settlement was adjusted on the 7th at New York, where the miners' sub-committee signed an agreement with the operators for a continuation of the award of the strike commission for three years. The men will return to work as soon as practicable. All miners who have not committed violence against persons or property will be re-employed, and no one will be discriminated against because of any activity he may have taken in the strike movement. The agreement was subject to the ratification of the convention at Scranton on the 8th, at which time the convention gave the final ratification.

+ +

The Progressive Alliance.

A municipal movement called The Progressive Alliance has been organized in Detroit, with Frederick T. Ingram as president. The organization aims to concentrate the influence of those who believe the

people should have the greater influence in shaping public policy and controlling public officials which they formerly enjoyed. It will work to secure majority rule and to stop corporate and corrupt rule. Its immediate effort will be devoted to bringing about direct responsibility of elected officials to their constituents, and to free public officials from all dependence upon corporate and financial influences, by the adoption of the principles of direct legislation, home rule, efficient non-partisan civil service and public ownership of public utilities. The executive committee of the Alliance is composed of John Naylor, Wilber Brotherton, David Inglis, John Ballantyne, Geo. H. Sherman, Francis Fildew, Henry A. Voelkner, Geo. F. Fuerth and G. W. Weikert. John B. Howarth is the treasurer and Isaac N. Payne the secretary. An important office, that of statistician, is filled by Judson Grenell.

* * *

Re-election of Mayor Rose.

At the special election in Kansas City, Kansas, on the 8th, ex-Mayor Rose, who recently resigned for the purpose of "going to the people" (pp. 34, 52) was re-elected. Mayor Rose was first elected in April, 1905 (vol. viii, p. 9), in opposition to corporation interests and influences, by a plurality of 1,000. He found it an established policy of unquestioned standing for 25 years, in this as in other river cities of Kansas, to ignore the prohibition law of the State, except by police fines in the nature of an extra-legal license whereby the revenues of the city were augmented (vol. viii, p. 419). With this custom Mayor Rose did not interfere. But no more attention was paid to this technical neglect on his part than had been paid to the like neglect of his predecessors and of the contemporary mayors of other river cities, until October last, when he was in the heat of a contest with one of the public utility corporations. Then, however, proceedings to oust him for his refusal to interfere with the established custom as to prohibition in his city, were begun in the Supreme Court of the State (vol. viii, p. 425), nominally by prohibitionists. Finding his administration with reference to public utilities hopelessly obstructed by these proceedings, Mayor Rose and his chief of police, Vernon J. Rose, resigned early in April of this year. After his resignation, which was for the purpose of becoming a candidate to fill his own vacancy, Mayor Rose was ousted from the office by the Supreme Court, and the election authorities refused to place his name upon the official ballot, the Supreme Court having assumed to make him ineligible until the expiration of the regular term. But at the election, which occurred on the 8th, he received a plurality of 1,600 over his Republican and Socialist adversaries—an increase of 600 over his original plurality. His Republican adversary for the mayoralty, E. E. Venard, had been his leading antagonist in the city council, and as president of the council had become acting mayor upon Mayor Rose's resignation. According to the Associated Press dispatches—

the question of Rose's right to hold the office of mayor will now be tested. The Supreme Court held that its action in ousting Rose rendered him ineligible to be a candidate for office again at this time. Rose contends that as he had resigned before the Supreme Court

acted in his case the ouster proceedings against him were ineffective.

* * *

The French Elections.

Parliamentary elections in France took place on the 6th, the number of seats in the Chamber of Deputies to be filled being 591. The various factions of French politics were arrayed in two great parties, the supporters of the ministry on one hand and its opponents on the other. The former, composed of radical republicans, socialists and radical socialists, were known as "the bloc," and the latter, composed of nationalists, clericals, royalists, Bonapartists, anti-semites, etc., as "the anti-bloc." A heavy vote was reported from all parts of France, and 262 ministerial members were elected against 169 of the opposition. The results in a few districts are not yet reported, but in 155 there will be reballotings in consequence of the failure of any candidate to poll a majority.

* * *

Russian Politics.

Preliminary to the assembling of the first Russian parliament, which is set for the 10th (p. 30), the Constitutional Democrats met in convention on the 4th at St. Petersburg to discuss the policy and programme of their party in the parliament. Prince Paul Dolgoroukoff was chosen president of the convention. The convention has been attended by 200 delegates to the parliament and a large body of peasants. The latter are insistent upon the adoption by the party of a land-nationalization policy, but the leaders of the party incline to peasant proprietary.

* * *

The general political situation in Russia on the eve of the opening of the parliament is forbidding. The Czar is accused of disloyalty to his pledges of political rights, there is a new ministry whose purposes are uncertain, and popular resentment at official treachery and oppression is again expressing itself by means of assassination.

NEWS NOTES

—The excitement in Paris over anticipated uprisings of workingmen (p. 103) has subsided.

—The international postal convention is in session at Rome. N. M. Brooks and Edward Rosewater represent the United States.

—Ex-Congressman Robert Baker of New York spoke on municipal ownership on the 4th at a joint meeting of the Multonomah and the Young Men's Democratic Clubs of Portland, Oregon.

—On the 4th the electoral vote for President of Cuba (vol. viii., p. 579) was announced by the Cuban Congress in joint extraordinary session. All the votes had been cast for the re-election of President Palma.

—Postmaster General Cortelyou recommended to Congress on the 6th the appointment of a commission to inquire into the subject of second-class mail matter, with a view to ascertaining what modifica-