

tion of separation. There is not and cannot be any question of rivalry or competing for supremacy subject to these conditions. That is the Liberal policy. For reasons which we believe to have been adequate, the present Parliament was disabled in advance from proposing any such solution, but in the new House the Liberal Government at the head of a Liberal majority will be in this matter entirely free.

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On the subject of suffrage, Mr. Asquith said that the law is still incumbered with artificial distinctions and impediments for which there is no justification; and referring specifically to woman suffrage he said that his views [for adult suffrage regardless of sex] were well known, and he had not altered them despite "the suicidal excesses of a small section of the advocates for such a change."

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His speech bore most directly, however, upon the necessity for limiting the power of the House of Lords as the necessary prerequisite to any progressive legislation whatever. On this point the cable reports Mr. Asquith as follows:

"What has been done may be done again. It becomes our first duty to make its recurrence impossible. We shall therefore demand authority from the electorate to translate an ancient unwritten usage into an act of Parliament and to place upon the statute book recognition explicit and complete of the settled doctrine of our Constitution that it is beyond the province of the House of Lords to meddle with any law, to any degree or for any purpose, of national finance." The Premier, continuing, said that neither he nor any other Liberal minister supported by a majority in the House of Commons was going to submit again to the rebuffs and humiliations of the last four years. They would not assume office unless they could secure safeguards which experience showed to be necessary for the legislative unity and honor of their party. The Liberal party, Mr. Asquith declared, was not promoting the abolition of the House of Lords or the setting up of a single chamber, but it asked of the electorate that the House of Lords should be confined to the functions proper to the second chamber and that the absolute veto must go. He, personally, did not underestimate the odds against which he had to contend, but the Government was unanimous in demanding the absolute control of the finances by the House of Commons, the maintenance of free trade, and an effective curtailment or limitation of the power of the House of Lords. Mr. Asquith defended the Budget as necessary to social reform, and in this respect old age pensions were the first step. The Budget, he continued, had been thrown out by the House of Lords after weeks of debate and the Government, as a result, was confronted with three Constitutional innovations: First, the claim of the House of Lords to control in levying taxation; second, the claim of the same House to the right to compel dissolution of the popular chamber, and, third, the assertion of the House of Lords of their

power to make and unmake the executive government of the crown. Mr. Asquith pointed out that just four years ago Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, then Prime Minister, had outlined in Albert Hall the policy of a new Liberal government, which included many reforms. The representatives of the people of the House of Commons had labored faithfully to carry into law the measures promised, but their will had been nullified and, as a fitting climax, the supplies which the House of Commons had voted had been stepped upon by the House of Lords: Therefore the House of Commons was now on the eve of another dissolution and it had fallen to his lot to take up the burden. The last time, he said, the Government had reckoned without its host, but it was not going to make that mistake again. "I tell you in the name and on behalf of the Liberal party," Mr. Asquith proceeded, "we have at this moment laid upon us a single task—a task which dominates and transcends because it embraces and involves every great and beneficent social and political change upon which our hearts are set. That task is to vindicate and establish upon an unshakable foundation the principle of representative government."

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Owing to the announced policy of what Mr. Asquith described as "a small section of the advocates" of woman suffrage who, by their excesses, are increasing the difficulties of its supporters in the Liberal party, it had become necessary to exclude all women from Albert Hall during the Prime Minister's speech. By no possibility could orderly women be distinguished from the disorderly at the entrance doors. As it was, a number of women contemplating disorderly interruptions were found secreted in the hall and excluded before the meeting began. The hall was therefore filled to overflowing exclusively by men. Among these were two men who sought to create disorder by interruptive cries of "votes for women" during the speaking, and they were ejected.

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American Relations With Nicaragua.

In an Associated Press interview of the 10th, President Zelaya of Nicaragua (p. 1186) complains of unfairness on the part of the United States. He says:

I proposed to Secretary of State Knox that he submit the case to the decision of a committee of his own choosing, agreeing to surrender my title to the Presidency if the argument in his letter to Isidor Hezera, former Nicaraguan minister to the United States, were sustained. Secretary Knox has not replied. Defenseless against the hostility of a powerful nation, I must submit, although I have been condemned unheard. The coercion of the United States will not redound to the credit of that nation, whose motives are questioned in all Latin-America. The shooting of Groce and Cannon was a pretext. Both were amenable to the laws of Nicaragua, which distinctly authorizes the shooting of individuals commanding rebels. It is different if a

person is captured during the course of an international war. The attempt of Secretary Knox to establish the inviolability of the persons of Americans participating in foreign revolutions will result in constant revolutions led by immune Americans. The initiative in the shooting of Groce and Cannon was not mine. I simply refused to extend clemency to them after a properly constituted military tribunal had passed upon the case. While I am ready to surrender the Presidency, I cannot do it precipitately, as it will result in uprisings by evil factions, each of which is eager to secure power. I am in negotiations with the revolutionists to secure an indorsement to a successor who will be acceptable to all parties and have submitted the name of Jose Madriz, judge of the Cartiga court. I hope this will obviate the necessity for American intervention which would be intensely distasteful to the whole of Latin-America. I am informed that it is the intention of the United States to prevent my leaving Nicaragua. I don't believe this to be true.

Unnamed officials of the State Department at Washington were reported on the 11th as denying that any such communication as that proposing a committee to pass upon the case had been received.

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President Zelaya's statement of the effect of the policy of the United States upon the public opinion of all Latin-America was given added color by the action of a meeting of citizens of the Central American republics resident in the City of Mexico on the 9th, which in denouncing the action of the United States in a series of resolutions stated that "Secretary Knox violated the first principle of international rights in his note to Chargé Rodriguez," and that "later Mr. Taft in his message to Congress did the same," and, declaring that the government of the United States had taken as a pretext the shooting of two Americans to menace Nicaragua by sending troops to that country, had attacked "not only the country against which they were proceeding, but menaced the whole of America, since by this means a precedent was being established whereby no country on this continent would have the right to punish any North American criminal unless it was prepared to have the United States deal summarily with it on the ground that American interests had been attacked."

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Congressman Sulzer's resolutions in the lower House of Congress (p. 1187) were supplemented in the Senate on the 10th by resolutions proposed by Senator Rayner empowering the President to take all steps necessary for the punishment of President Zelaya as a common criminal, charged with murder of two Americans engaged in revolutionary activity in Nicaragua. Senator Rayner spoke to his resolution on the 13th, denouncing Zelaya as an assassin for his execution of Groce and Cannon, and saying that—

If the country knew what is known in official circles in reference to his general depravity it would regard the Secretary's communication as exceedingly temperate as it shows upon its face the restraint under which he was laboring in dealing with such a character. Such a creature as this deserves the execration of mankind. Now, as the culminating infamy of his administration, trampling upon every instinct of humanity, in violation of universal law, in defiance of those precepts of the international code that have been recognized ever since the night of barbarism receded before the rays of civilization, he has put to torture and then to death two American citizens, who were not guilty of treason, who were not spies, but whom he had captured as prisoners of war in the army of the revolutionists. This act was not only the act of a fiend, but was an insult to the honor of this Republic, and cannot remain unavenged.

A weekly paper of Managua, Nicaragua, dated November 19, and received in New Orleans on the 7th, contained a report of the execution of Cannon and Groce. It asserts that both were caught in the act of trying to blow up the steamer Diamante and had exploded a mine fifteen yards in front of the vessel. It says also that when the men were captured they had in their possession dynamite, fuses and machines for causing the explosion, and that after a trial at Fort El Castillo they confessed to having set the mine, and were shot outside the fort. No authentic disclosure by the American government of any information substantially contrary to this Nicaraguan newspaper statement has yet been made.

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The Railroad Strike.

Dispatches of the 10th from Cincinnati told of a consultation there between Frank Hawley, president of the American Switchmen's Union, and Samuel Gompers, president of the American Federation of Labor, relative to the switchmen's strike in the Northwest (p. 1187), at which Mr. Gompers had come to the conclusion, which he announced, that the Federation should support the striking switchmen to the extent of its ability both morally and financially. Regarding the possibility of a general railroad strike the committee representing the telegraphers of the Big Four system, were reported from Cincinnati on the 10th as announcing that 99 per cent of the telegraph operators of that company who have sent in their ballots have voted in favor of a strike if the demand for higher wages is refused. In Cincinnati, Toledo and Dayton the vote is unanimous.

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Some of these days the West, which feeds the country, and the South, which clothes the country, will combine politically against that small section of the East which exploits the country.—The Commoner.