

the blackmailing agent, is withheld. United States District Attorney James H. Wilkerson has announced that all charges will be investigated by a special grand jury.



Tax Reform News.

The report was made to the Nebraska Press Association at its meeting at Lincoln on June 24 by the committee appointed at the 1913 meeting to investigate taxation in the state. In reporting, the chairman of the committee, Laurie J. Quimby, of Omaha, declared that a referendum vote had been taken of all citizens in whose hands it was possible to place ballots to ascertain what the general opinion regarding taxation might be. Farmers are found to be quite united in the view that farm implements and products should not be taxed, but were not so sure that manufacturing machinery and merchants' stocks should be also exempted. Nearly everybody voted for income and inheritance taxes, and for taxing franchises at their market value. On the whole the committee found the replies vague when it came to suggesting specific programs of tax reform. The committee proposed: 1. The adoption of the pending amendment increasing the latitude of the legislature in farming tax laws. 2. A state tax commission to appoint a state assessor to have general charge of the subject. 3. Listing of all taxable property for taxation and applying afterward whatever exemptions the law allows. 4. In taxing personal property a distinction should be made between what is held for consumption and what is held for sale at a profit. 5. Annual, instead of quadrennial assessments of lands. 6. Owners should be required to make their own assessment of lands and any citizen or the state should be empowered to buy at the owner's valuation at any time. 7. All property should be assessed at its full value. 8. All personal property taxes should be repealed. 9. All franchises should be assessed for taxation at market value and taxes on improvements eliminated. The committee report was ordered printed and referred to all the editors of the state to the end that it may be discussed by newspaper readers. The recommendation to exempt personal property was referred for action to the legislative committee. [See volume xvi, page 1164.]



The Nova Scotia legislature passed finally on June 5 an act that empowers local assessment bodies to adopt whatever system of taxation for local purposes they may prefer.



Lorimer Bank Scandal.

Investigation of the affairs of the La Salle Street Trust and Savings Bank of Chicago, of

which former Senator Lorimer was president, developed the fact that a loan of \$40,000 had been made on November 1, 1911, to former Senator Paynter of Kentucky. Senator Paynter was a member of the Senate committee that conducted the first investigation of Lorimer's right to his seat, and made a report exonerating him from the charge of bribery. Throughout the whole scandal Paynter championed Lorimer's cause. The indebtedness had been reduced to \$2,600 at the time of the failure. Evidence of loans to local politicians has also been reported discovered and of entries crediting 3½ percent interest on certain city deposits which actually received but 2¼ percent. [See current volume, page 591.]



Destructive Fire in Salem.

A destructive fire which raged in Salem, Mass., on June 25 rendered 18,000 persons homeless, caused the loss of four lives and loss of \$12,000,000 in property. The factory and business districts were swept by the flames. Among the homes destroyed were many built during the colonial period.



English Affairs.

Peace talk continues among the English people and in parliament, while Ulstermen bluster and the Nationalists arm. The amending bill is expected to pass its second reading in the House of Lords on the 30th, after which it will be amended to meet the wishes of Ulster. John Redmond, the leader of the Nationalists, will grant nothing more than the amending bill now includes, that is, the temporary exclusion of Ulster. But those critics who have carefully followed the course of Mr. Asquith have little doubt that when the two irreconcilables meet this great political leader will find a way of harmonizing their differences. [See current volume, page 612.]



Assassin's Blow at Austria.

Archduke Francis Ferdinand, heir to the Austro-Hungarian throne, and his morganatic wife, the Duchess of Hohenberg, were assassinated on the 28th in the streets of Sarajevo, the capital of Bosnia, by a Servian student. The act was committed while the Archduke was making an official visit to the Bosnian capital. The Archduke, who was born December 18, 1863, was a nephew of Emperor Franz Josef, and became heir to the throne on the death of the Emperor's son. Owing to the Archduke's morganatic marriage, his children are out of the line of succession, and the crown will go to the son of his younger brother, Archduke Charles Francis Joseph, who was born August 17, 1887. [See vol. xvi, p. 584.]

This assassination is in keeping both with the ill fortunes of the House of Hapsburg, and the reign of terror in the Balkan Peninsula. Bosnia and Herzegovina were given to Austria by the Berlin treaty of 1878, for administration and military occupation. On October 5, 1908, Austria assumed sovereignty over the two countries. Serbia in particular resented this; and it is thought the present act was due to the bitter feeling of the discontented people toward one of the men instrumental in imposing Austrian sovereignty.

NEWS NOTES

—At the ter-centenary of the foundation of Groningen University, Amsterdam, Holland, on the 20th, Andrew Carnegie was among those who received honorary degrees.

—Announcement was made on June 27 of a gift from John D. Rockefeller to the Rockefeller Institute of Medical Research of \$2,550,000, making the total contributed by him to that institution \$12,550,000.

—Senator A. J. Gronna of North Dakota and Governor Hanna were renominated on the Republican ticket at the State-wide primary on June 24. W. E. Purcell received the Democratic nomination for Senator and F. O. Hellstrom was named for Governor.

—An economic Study Club has been organized in San Antonio, Texas. Mr. E. G. LeSturgeon is President and G. E. Meliff, Secretary. The object of the organization is "the study and discussion of economic, social and political questions of local, State and national importance."

The proposal of two-cent postage between France and the United States is receiving the attention of the French Parliament. This rate now prevails between America and England, and America and Germany, and the five-cent rate to France is considered a handicap to French trade.

—A severe earthquake occurred in southern Sumatra on the 26th, causing much damage to property and a considerable loss of life. Sumatra is the second largest island in the Malay archipelago, being about the size of Spain, and having a population of 3,500,000, of whom 5,000 are whites.

Conservative Republicans of Wisconsin held a State convention on June 23 at Madison and nominated a State ticket headed by Levi H. Bancroft for Senator and Emanuel L. Philipp for Governor. Petitions will be circulated to put this ticket on the primary ballot in opposition to Senator La Follette's following.

—A press dispatch from Athens on June 27 states that United States Minister to Greece, George Fred Williams, has sent his resignation to the State Department at Washington. The reason is assigned that Mr. Williams took this course to relieve the Department of any embarrassment that might result from failure to approve views he has publicly expressed concerning the Albanian situation.

—The old wholesale dry goods concern, the H. B. Claffin Company of New York, failed on June 25.

Assets are reported to be \$34,000,000; liabilities, \$44,000,000. The creditors are mainly banks. The concern has financed many retail dry goods establishments and department stores throughout the country. From 3,000 to 5,000 banks in all parts of the United States are said to be holders of its paper.

—The Associated Advertising Clubs of the World, in session at Toronto, Ontario, June 22-25, took a pronounced stand for higher ethics in advertising. By a unanimous vote the conference adopted a set of resolutions declaring it the duty of newspapers to protect the reader and the honest advertiser as far as possible from deceptive advertisements, and to accept no advertising that is antagonistic to the public welfare.

—F. J. Dixon accompanies the announcement of his candidacy for the Manitoba legislature, from Winnipeg Center, by a declaration of principles that marks the forward state of public opinion in that country. Among the principles for which he stands as an Independent Progressive candidate are direct legislation, home rule, woman suffrage, public ownership of franchise monopolies, and Single Tax. Nor is the Singletax plank hidden away; it stands forth in all the boldness of truth.

—King Peter I of Serbia is announced as having abdicated the throne on the 24th in favor of his second son, Prince Alexander. The king, who is 70 years old and in poor health, is taking the baths at Vrnja in southern Serbia. He ascended the throne on June 15, 1903, after the murder of King Alexander and Queen Draga by forty Servian army officers. The new king was born December 4, 1888, and is said to be very popular. His elder brother George, was compelled to surrender his right to the succession on account of wild escapades.

—The National Chamber of Commerce on June 23 denounced the proposed exemption in the Clayton bill of labor and farm organizations from anti-trust prosecution. It declares that if such exemptions are to be made they should include "any organizations, orders or associations instituted for the purpose of mutual help and not merely fraternal, labor, consumers, agricultural and horticultural associations." It points out that there are associations for mutual help of bankers, lawyers, manufacturers and others, which are unjustly omitted from the exceptions. [See current volume page 560.]

PRESS OPINIONS

Is "American Freedom" a Myth?

Emporia (Kansas) Gazette, June 18.—The dispatches tell of a young Italian who came to America and killed himself when he found that it was not what he was told it was. The young man had a delusion that this was a land of free speech, and free thought. As a matter of fact there is no such thing as free speech, and the only way to enjoy free thought is to say nothing about it. Free speech means that freedom in speech upon certain subjects is granted. In America we have more subjects about which men may think and talk than in any other country in the world; but we have not free speech by any means. Let a Catholic go into