

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 All personal property taxes should be repealed. 9.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.]