

Turkey.

The eleventh country entered the war of nations on the 29th when Turkish war vessels fired on Russian Black Sea ports. Odessa, Novorossyk and Theodosia, in Crimea, were shelled, but without serious damage. The apology tendered by the Turkish Grand Vizier gives color to the claim that the attack was made by the German officers on the Turkish vessels, and without the authority of the Ottoman government. Both the army and navy are officered largely by Germans, and the German cruisers, Breslau and Goeben, that were caught in the Mediterranean at the outbreak of hostilities, took refuge in Turkish waters, and were reported purchased by the Turkish government. The Goeben bombarded Sebastopol, but was reported disabled by the shore batteries. Battles between Russian and Turkish troops are reported in the Turko-Russian border in Asia Minor near Trebizond. The ambassadors of Russia, France and England demanded their passports of the Turkish government; but before they left the city the Turkish Grand Vizier assured the Russian ambassador that the attack on the war vessels was unauthorized by the government. The ambassador replied that his government had ordered him home, but that if Turkey would dismiss all the German officers in her army and navy, he would, when assured they had left the country, return to his post. The Turkish ministry is split on the question of war, the Grand Vizier representing the peace party, and the Minister of War the war party, which makes compliance with Russia's demands doubtful. The Ottoman government has annexed Egypt officially, and the British government has declared martial law in Egypt. Rumors of a Holy War are heard, but the British express little fear of such a result. Bulgaria is reported to be mobilizing her second line of troops since Turkey broke her neutrality; but her answer to Turkey's inquiry as to which side she favors has not been received.

Japan.

No decisive action has occurred in the investment of Kiau-Chau. It is officially reported from London that an Indian contingent has joined the forces of Japanese and English.

South Africa.

The vigorous action of General Botha, who took the field in person, is rapidly restoring order among the disaffected Boers. General Beyers and his band were dispersed by the defense troops under General Botha. At Brandvlei and Understooders 100 Boers surrendered without resistance. Colonel Alberts defeated a band of rebels in the Lichtenburg district in the Transvaal, killing 13, wounding 30 and capturing 240. Colonel Conrad Brins, who had charge of the force sent against Colonel Maritz in Northwest Cape province, reports that the invasion has been broken.

On the Sea.

The German cruiser Emden, flying the Japanese flag, entered the harbor of Penang on the west coast of the Malay Peninsula, and torpedoed a Russian cruiser and a French destroyer. The British cruiser Hermes was sunk in the Straits of Dover by a German submarine. Owing to the laying of mines by the Germans to the north of Ireland, and the increasing difficulty of patrolling the coast waters the British admiralty has closed the North Sea. This includes the mining of the waters at any point, and necessitates the following by neutral shipping of the routes mapped by the admiralty. After November 5th shipping entering the North Sea by other than the routes prescribed will do so at its own peril.

**Italy.**

The Italian cabinet resigned on the 31st. The cabinet was united as to neutrality, but was divided on the question of armament. One faction wished preparations pushed at any cost; the other, while admitting the need of greater preparation, held that such action would imperil neutrality. Decreasing revenues and growing deficit were the immediate cause of the cabinet's fall.

**Belgium.**

The hardships and privations of the Belgians become daily more desperate. It is estimated that 200,000 have gone to England and 800,000 to Holland. The mass of those remaining in Belgium are homeless and destitute. Three million women and children, according to Walter H. Page, ambassador to Great Britain, are actually suffering from hunger. Foodstuffs collected by Americans are being forwarded from the United States and England. The Rockefeller foundation of New York, whose capital is \$100,000,000, has undertaken to relieve distress in Belgium, and in other war afflicted territory that may be found in want. One ship load of food has been shipped from New York. A commission representing the foundation has gone to Europe to investigate conditions.

**Porto Rico's Labor Question.**

A formal reply to the recent demands of the Free Federation of Labor was given in writing on October 10 by Governor Arthur Yager of Porto Rico. The Governor promises to recommend to the legislature that it adopt measures for survey of public lands and for examination into titles of privately owned tracts. These measures are to be preliminary to adoption of means "to encourage and enable the laborers of Porto Rico, through their labor, to acquire the ownership of small parcels of land." As a measure of temporary relief he says the Bureau of Labor has sent letters to landholders "to encourage their laborers who are now living upon their lands to cultivate gardens

and to grant them the use of a small plat of land near their cottages for this purpose." He further says that he favors establishment of a rural credit plan similar to what has been proposed for the United States in the Fletcher bill. In answer to complaints he promises to investigate the action of the insular police during a recent strike. But he adds to this that speakers who have been arrested must necessarily be in jail "for violations of the law of which they were duly convicted by a court of justice." [See current volume, page 1020.]



Alberta Penalizes Land Speculation.

The Alberta legislature on October 17 passed a bill to place a special tax on wild lands held for speculation. Commenting on this new law C. W. Cross, Attorney General of the Province, was quoted in the Toronto Globe of October 24 as follows:

I regard the passing of the bill providing for a tax upon wild lands as the principal piece of legislation arising out of the recent session of the Alberta Parliament. There are thousands of acres of land in our Province, as in all the other western Provinces, which have been held for years, in many cases, by speculators and investors, and have not been improved in the least. We say now to these absentee landlords, "You must use this waste territory in some way or pay a tax on it equal to \$10 per quarter-section, or about 6¼ cents per acre." By legislating against absentee landlordism in the rural districts of Alberta to this extent, the annual revenue of the Province will either be increased by nearly \$1,500,000, or the agricultural area under cultivation will be extended with great rapidity. The idea is to encourage a movement of people to the fertile lands of Alberta. And they are going out to the farms from such cities as Edmonton in large numbers already.



Eleventh Hour Plutocratic Appeal.

Two days before election a card was sent to every voter in Nebraska urging defeat of the pending taxation amendment widening the power of the legislature in dealing with the subject. The cards were signed "The League of Taxpayers," an organization of public service corporations. Among arguments used were the following: "It will cost the taxpayers of the state millions of dollars"; "Let well enough alone"; "It will re-open the old controversy over exemptions of church property." "Laurie J. Quimby, chairman of the Nebraska Press Association's Committee and a well known singletaxer, in his report says: 'All personal property taxes should be repealed, and only land should pay taxes.' This means Socialism. Why should the owners of land pay all taxes." "Amendment No. 1 was proposed by singletax advocates." [See current volume, pages 880, 974.]

Walker's Progressive Stand on Taxation.

In his speech at Malden, Massachusetts, on October 28, Joseph Walker, Progressive party gubernatorial candidate, who was the regular Republican candidate in 1912, made the following statement:

In a former speech I have called attention to the fact that for ten years our state expenditure has increased at the rate of \$1,000,000 per year, and that for twenty years our net state debt has increased at the rate of \$1,000,000 per year. I have pointed out the various ways in which the state could economize. I have shown that added revenue is imperative and that this can be obtained from those who now dodge their taxes, thus imposing the burden of taxation upon those who are least able to bear it.

I now wish to suggest a great tax reform which goes to the root of the whole taxation problem, and which would solve the question of revenue without imposing one additional cent upon either the consumer or producer. I refer to a tax on the unearned increment of land. Germany and other European countries have already tapped this great source of revenue. It is time that Massachusetts laid this soundest and least burdensome of all taxes.

Such a tax would lift the burden of taxation from the consumer, would free the producer, would remove the tax incubus from commerce and industry, would yield an enormous revenue without injustice to any man; would lessen the cost and stimulate the use of land, and would tend to reduce the cost of living. I stand for granting the right to our cities and towns to tax land at a higher rate than the improvements on land.

[See vol. xvi, pages 963, 988, 1037, 1082.]



New Haven Directors Indicted.

Indictments for violation of the anti-trust law were handed down by the Federal grand jury in New York on November 2 against directors or former directors of the New York, New Haven and Hartford Railroad Company. Those indicted are William Rockefeller, George M. Miller, Charles F. Brooker, William Skinner, D. W. Barney, Robert W. Taft, James S. Elton, James S. Hemingway, Lewis Cass Ledyard, Charles M. Pratt, A. Heaton Robertson, Frederick F. Brewster, Henry K. McHarg, Edward D. Robbins, Alexander Cochrane, John L. Billard, T. DeWitt Cuyler, Theodore N. Vail, Edward Milligan, Francis T. Maxwell. The allegations on which the indictments are based are as follows:

- 1—To secure by purchase all of the capital stock of other carriers or to secure control of the same.
- 2—To secure other properties by leases.
- 3—To compel said carriers to make combinations and enter into arrangements to carry out "the designs of said conspirators."
- 4—To prevent all competition.
- 5—To exercise secret control of the Joy line and the United States Transportation Company, so that all independent steamship companies had to quit or sell out to them.