

became converted into exceptions from land taxes; and that the Government were convinced that the surtax should stand. Owners would have a chance of dodging that by cultivating their lands; but nothing should be enacted that would enable a man to evade his just contribution to the national revenue in proportion to the value of the area he held. Deputy Monte insisted that the surtax was unjust, that it would involve endless litigation. Deputy Gonzalez put forward a number of considerations with the object of showing the wisdom of the Chamber's rejecting the surtax. To these Deputy Gaona replied advocating that the clause be retained as presented. The clause on being put to the vote was approved as follows: "Properties valued at over \$100,000 shall pay a surtax of 5% for the first year, 25% the second year, 35% the third year and 40% the fourth year, should it be proved that 20% of the value of the land has not been invested in development.

Article 5 was approved without discussion. Article 6 was altered to read that the values assigned shall stand for 5 years (five). It was specially approved that in making any valuation, the value of the land only shall be taken into account and that taxes levied on improvements shall be considered illegal.

The discussion of this law by the Congress is the Question of the Moment. Wherever one goes one hears nothing but the Land Tax being discussed, and of course opinions are greatly divided. Argentina is deeply interested in this matter, as many proprietors of land in Paraguay live in Buenos Aires, many being Argentines by birth.

C. N. MACINTOSH.

NEWS NARRATIVE

The figures in brackets at the ends of paragraphs refer to volumes and pages of *The Public* for earlier information on the same subject.

Week ending Tuesday, February 17, 1914.

Mexico and the United States.

President Huerta's offer to pay the expenses of a number of press correspondents who might be sent to Mexico to write uncensored reports of the situation has been accepted by a number of important newspapers in different countries. The President promises free access to all parts of the country, and freedom to write what they wish. [See current volume, page 155.]

It is announced that the government will issue 500,000,000 pesos fiat money in the form of fractional currency. Its circulation is to be made compulsory. It is denied that the government will cease coining half pesos. The tax to be levied on all investments will be one-eighth of one per cent. Charge O'Shaughnessy made a second protest to General Huerta against the severe attacks of the Mexican press on President Wilson. General Huerta promised the offense would not be repeated.

General Villa has found time to talk politics

and to announce some of the things that will be done by the Constitutionals when they come into power. "After the revolution," he says, "this is our pledge to the Mexican people: That every Mexican shall have a piece of land, so that he may live; that all the world shall work; that there shall be a school for every child in the republic. The schools are nearest to my heart." There is to be no standing army, for that makes the opportunity of the dictator—and Mexico wants no more dictators. Schools, factories, and great agricultural enterprises will be established. "We must give the soldiers work," he says. "I do not believe in pensioning them. The mind of the idle soldier runs to war." But after setting forth policies that would enlighten more advanced countries than Mexico, General Villa declares he would not accept the presidency if offered to him, as he is a soldier and not a statesman.

Military operations amounted to little, beyond the investment of Tampico by the Constitutionals. But the Federals are still able to hold the city itself. General Villa announces an early attack on Torreón, which is now completely invested. He expects to capture the place without difficulty and thinks Monterey will offer little resistance.

The Labor War.

Congressional investigation of the Michigan copper mine strike continues. Witnesses for the strikers have told stories of bad treatment. On February 10 Sidney Thomas told how he had once been compelled during the winter to go to work in wet clothes on the surface to cut up timber for use below. On February 11 Daniel Waati said he had worked twenty-six years for the Calumet & Hecla and that working conditions had become worse during the past five years. Another witness said he had made as much in one month as \$100 and as little in another as \$16 for sixteen days' work, but his monthly average for sixteen months was \$45 or \$50. Another witness had made as high as \$160 for one month, and again as low as \$12, and said further that the average was low. On February 12 two witnesses told of having worked for months under the contract system and had been informed at the end of that time that they owed the company money after balancing their account for supplies, benefits, rents and other things. On February 13 Mr. Allan F. Rees, counsel for the mining companies, asked a witness if he was a Socialist. Objection to the question was raised and sustained, although Mr. Rees explained that he wished to show the Western Federation of Miners to be a Socialist organization, and that this had an important bearing on the refusal of the companies to recognize it. Mr. Hilton, attorney for the strikers,

denied Mr. Rees' statements. The question of investigating the cause of the Christmas Eve tragedy caused a deadlock in the investigating committee. Two Democratic members, Taylor and Casey, favor the investigation, and two Republicans, Switzer and Howell, oppose it. A fifth member, Mr. Hamlin of Missouri, a Democrat, is absent in Washington. On February 14 he was urged to attend and break the deadlock. On February 16 the report of Governor Ferris' special investigator, Alfred J. Murphy, made several months ago, was admitted as evidence. [See current volume, page 156.]



The trial of three Waddell-Mahon men and of two deputy sheriffs at Houghton, Michigan, for murder of a striker at Seeberville on August 14, came to an end on February 15. The three Waddell-Mahon men and one of the deputies were convicted of manslaughter. The other deputy, Henry James, was acquitted. On February 15 the Waddell-Mahon men were sentenced to serve from seven to fifteen years, and the deputy sheriff to a minimum of twelve years. [See current volume, page 156.]



Investigation of the Colorado situation continues at Denver. John C. Osgood, of the Victor-American Fuel Company, testified on February 12 that the strike was over as far as his company is concerned. He declared himself opposed to an eight-hour day but that his company had done all it could to comply with state laws. He had never allowed false weighing at the mines. He further assumed responsibility for purchase of machine guns and furnishing of arms for use of mine guards. He wanted nothing to do with the United Mine Workers of America. On February 14, James F. Welborn, president of the Colorado Fuel & Iron Company, testified concerning accidents in the mines. According to this testimony seventeen men had been killed last year in the twenty mines operated by his company. He denied that his company was guilty of peonage or of interference with the mails. On February 15 the committee went from Denver to Trinidad to continue investigation there. Attorney E. P. Costigan for the strikers asked that a subpoena be issued for "Mother" Jones. An application for her release on habeas corpus had been already filed on February 13 in the State Supreme Court. [See current volume, page 157.]



An inquiry into the cause of unemployment was announced on February 15 by the United States Industrial Commission, of which Frank P. Walsh is chairman. The investigation will cover the country from Boston to Kansas City.

Railroad Problems.

The Inter-State Commerce Commission on Feb. 16 ordered a further suspension for six months of the proposed five per cent increase in freight rates, pending further investigation of the question. Since the previous suspension was to have terminated on March 12, the present order will terminate on September 12. But this does not debar the Commission from granting the increase before the date fixed or from permanently denying it. [See current volume, page 154.]



Suit, under the Anti-Trust law, was brought at Salt Lake City on Feb. 11 by the United States Government against the Southern Pacific and the Central Pacific railroads. The petition sets forth that in violation of law the Southern Pacific has secured a controlling interest in the stock of the Central Pacific. [See vol. xvi, page 674.]



Chairman E. E. Clark of Inter-State Commerce Commission reported to the Senate on February 12 that the Commission's agents had been ejected from the offices of the Louisville and Nashville railroad at Louisville, where they were endeavoring to examine records of the company relating to issuing of passes and contributions to political campaigns, and to maintenance of political agents. A resolution was introduced by Senator Lea of Tennessee to appoint a special committee of five Senators to co-operate with the Commission. The resolution was referred to the Committee on Accounts and promptly reported out by the chairman, Senator Williams of Mississippi. But owing to the opposition of Senators Brandegee of Connecticut and Works of California action on it was delayed.



Federal Suffrage Amendment.

The Chamberlain joint resolution for a woman suffrage Constitutional Amendment came up unexpectedly in the Senate on January 21. Action was postponed at the request of Senator Ashurst, chairman of the Woman Suffrage Committee, to enable speeches to be made upon it; and it stood first in regular order on the calendar while the agricultural extension bill and other unfinished business were under discussion. On February 10 the resolution again came up and was again postponed at the request of Senators who wished to debate it—retaining its place at the head of the calendar. On the 12th the Senate adjourned in honor of Lincoln; on the 13th the calendar was not reached; on the 14th the Senate adjourned because of Senator Bacon's death and did not reconvene for business until the 18th. [See vol. xvi, p. 585; current volume, page 130.]