

appeared before the naval committee on December 16. He said that the navy is short of about 30,000 men, that it would take months in case of war to get the reserve vessels in fighting shape and that the United States ranks third among the naval powers of the world.

A vigorous fight by Senator La Follette compelled the Senate on December 16 to adopt an amendment to the treaty for safety at sea before ratification. As adopted by the international convention at London January 2, 1914, the treaty was open to such construction as to nullify the pending seamen's bill and regulations regarding immigrants. Senator La Follette's amendment expressly permits such legislation. Since ratification was necessary by December 31, Senator La Follette was able to force adoption of his amendment and in that form the treaty was finally ratified. [See current volume, page 609.]

Popular Government League Convention.

The Second National Conference on Popular Government will be held in Washington on January 4th and 5th next. Headquarters and conference hall at the Willard Hotel. One of the themes to be considered is: "How can the Progressive Elements of all the Parties Get Together for the Control of Government?" The address of the president, Senator Robert L. Owens, of Oklahoma, will show that reactionaries are conducting a nation-wide campaign against popular government measures. Other subjects will be: First, "What is the Matter with the Direct Primary?" Vicious "jokers" in several primary laws which enabled machine politicians to control nominations in the last election will be discussed by men from these states. The short ballot and the preferential ballot as necessary adjuncts to the direct primary will be urged by experts. Second "The Need for an Effective Federal Corrupt Practices Act." Reports showing corruption, coercion, and an excessive use of money in the last campaign will be made by men who know. Third, "The Problem of Publicity." How to get the truth regarding candidates and measures to the voters for intelligent action. Advocates of popular government throughout the country are urged to send representatives. Judson King is executive secretary of the league with headquarters at 1017 Munsey Bldg., Washington. [See vol. xvi., page 1187.]

Mexico.

Brigadier General Hugh L. Scott, chief of staff of the United States army, arrived in Naco, Arizona, on the 20th to endeavor to restore order. He does not supercede General Bliss, but being personally known to both Governor Maytorena

and General Hill, it is thought he may talk them into reason, and avoid the use of force. General Maytorena has promised to fire no shots toward the United States, but insists upon retaining his position in trenches around the city. General Hill continues to fire upon the besiegers.

Small battles in the vicinity of Tampico are said to favor the Carranza troops. The Villa general in charge of San Luis Potosi is reported to have gone over to the Carranza forces and surrendered the city. General Zapata occupies the city of Puebla, the principal place between Mexico City and Vera Cruz, and is pressing on toward Carranza's coast capital. The new government under Provisional President Gutierrez appears to be growing in strength.

The European War.

Reports from the campaign in Poland, while confused and contradictory, appear to favor the Germans, who have advanced their center to within a few miles of Warsaw. The Russian advance on Mlawa is reported checked, and reverses in Galicia are claimed. Serbia, on the other hand, is reported to be free of Austrian troops. In the West the Allies advance at a snail's pace in Belgium and northern France. Three German cruisers crossed the North Sea and shelled three English coast cities, two of which were unfortified. England has proclaimed a British protectorate over Egypt, with Prince Hussein Kemal as Sultan. No decisive action has occurred at any point. [See current volume, page 1212.]

The Campaign in the East.

Confusion, contradiction and uncertainty mark the reports from the Polish campaign. What was announced by the German press as the greatest battle of the war, and the most brilliant victory was reported from Poland on the 17th. Berlin was decorated and the school children given a holiday. Later accounts are less definite in their claims, and agree that a great battle is now in progress thirty miles from Warsaw on the Vistula and the Bzura Rivers. The Russians continue to press their campaign in East Prussia, where they have made slight gains, and in the neighborhood of Cracow. This is taken to indicate that they are not afraid of losing the campaign before Warsaw. The Austrians are reported to have withdrawn all troops from Serbia, but to have made advances in Galicia. Real facts regarding the Eastern campaign are very meager. Nothing at all definite is reported of the Turkish-Russian operations, which are looked upon as of minor importance.

The Campaign in the West.

No great action has been reported, but there has been a vigorous pounding by the Allies all along the line, resulting in small gains at various points, particularly in Belgium, where the German lines have been forced back. The operations near the coast have been assisted by the fleet, which was able to shell the Germans for some distance inland. These operations are said to have cost the Allies heavy losses, as progress is made only by taking fortified positions.

**Other Countries.**

Great Britain has formally announced a protectorate over Egypt, and the assumption of all responsibility for its defence. Prince Hussein Kemal, uncle of the deposed Khedive, will be the nominal head of the state with the title of Sultan. Foreign affairs will be conducted under a British resident agent. France accepts this condition. Various restrictions of Turkey's suzerainty will be removed, and the religion of the inhabitants will be respected. Thus Egypt, which came under British influence in 1882 at the time of Arabi's Rebellion, has become a part of the British Empire. The kings of Sweden, Norway and Denmark, together with their ministers, met in conference at Malmo, Sweden, on the 18th, 19th and 20th to determine a course of action by their countries during the war. There was a strong sentiment for neutrality. Belgium is taking steps to pay the German war indemnity. In response to the demands of the German governor delegates from nine provinces met in Brussels, and agreed to meet the German demand that the \$96,000,000 indemnity be paid in twelve monthly installments by issuing treasury bonds guaranteed by the nine provinces and a group of bankers headed by the Societe Generale. The Belgian relief commission, at a meeting in London, announces that they have food enough in sight to feed the people in Belgium until the first part of February, which will aid the Belgians in meeting the war indemnity. Japan's budget for 1915, which shows an estimated expenditure of \$278,000,000 and a decrease of \$40,500,000, in revenue, is before the House of Representatives. Opposition to the budget is so strong that there is fear that the Emperor will dissolve the House. The Italian Chamber of Deputies has given the cabinet a vote of confidence for its continued neutrality policy. The French minister of finance, in presenting the 1915 budget, announced that there were ample funds to bear the war strain even though it be long drawn out. He announced that France had advanced \$50,000,000 to Belgium, \$18,000,000 to Servia, \$5,000,000 to Greece, and \$100,000 to Montenegro.

On the Sea.

The most dramatic event of the week was the shelling of three cities on the English coast by three German cruisers. At daylight on the morning of the 16th three swift cruisers emerged from the fog and began a vigorous bombardment of Hartlepool, Whitby and Scarborough. Hartlepool is a partially fortified city of 100,000, 215 miles from London. Whitby is a fishing town of 12,000, 27 miles to the southward, and Scarborough is a summer resort of 40,000, 42 miles south of Hartlepool. Both Whitby and Scarborough are unfortified towns. No warning was given before the bombardment was begun. About 150 were killed, mostly women and children, and nearly 300 wounded. The cruisers made their escape after sowing mines, and returned in safety to their own waters. The chief effect of the raid was to stimulate the enlistment of English recruits. The German cruiser, Frederick Karl, is reported sunk in the Baltic, with a loss of 400 men. The allied fleet shelled the inner forts of the Dardanelles on the 19th, but the result is not stated.

NEWS NOTES

—A reception to Mrs. Mary Fels, widow of Joseph Fels, is announced by Chicago Singletaxers to be held at the City Club on the evening of December 23.

—The Christmas Ship, U. S. S. Jason, with gifts for Servian children, arrived at Salonika on the 20th, from which point the goods will be shipped by rail to Nish, the temporary capital [See current volume, page 1191.]

—Secretary of Commerce Redfield reported on December 19 that in the year ending June 30, 1914, the United States exported cartridges valued at \$938,489 to the countries now at war. To other countries the reports were \$2,538,044. During October of this year there was exported to France and the United Kingdom cartridges valued at \$1,104,744 and firearms valued at \$539,360. [See current volume, page 1212.]

—Use of vacant lots for Singletax propaganda is a method followed by George L. Rusby of Nutley, New Jersey. For the past twelve years he has maintained a signboard on a vacant lot owned by him near the center of the town on which is the following:

NEIGHBORS ARE PAYING INCREASED TAXES FOR THE PRIVILEGE OF BUILDING HOUSES AND RAISING THE VALUE OF THIS VACANT LOT. WHY NOT TAX EQUALLY ALL LOTS ON THIS BLOCK, WHETHER VACANT OR BUILT UPON, AS WE NOW TAX FOR SEWERS AND FLAG SIDEWALKS? WHY FINE PEOPLE FOR MAKING IMPROVEMENTS?

FOR INFORMATION REGARDING CORRECT TAXATION METHODS, APPLY TO

THE NUTLEY SINGLE TAX CLUB.

[See current volume, page 1144.]

—John D. Rockefeller filed a petition in the United States District Court at Cleveland on De-