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THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 1921.

South American Constitutions

The recent visit of Secretary Bainbridge Colby to Brazil, Uruguay, and Argentina, making for a better understanding among all the republics of the Western Hemisphere, as well as for cordial good will, should make us all realize the necessity of more accurate information regarding our southern sister republics.

Professor H. A. James, writing in the February number of Current History, summarizes some of the governmental changes shown in the written constitutions of Mexico, Uruguay, and Peru, at the same time pointing out that many fundamental changes are not reflected in the written document.

There is a definite recognition in the new constitutions of the fundamental or social democracy in the requirements for compulsory free education, the safeguarding of the rights of labor, the prohibition of monopolies, the nationalization of natural resources and the extension of the right of eminent domain to include the taking over of public utilities and services.

After a week's stay in Mexico City, Mr. McAdoo announces that his visit is for pleasure, not business. Americans have previously found out within a much shorter time that they had no business in Mexico.

A State College experiment shows that egg production can be increased fifty per cent by operating an 120-Watt electric light in the henry from sundown to 9:30 p. m. It remains to be determined how much will have been gained after the meter has been read and the hens paid off at the rate of time and half for overtime.

The Department of Agriculture denies that poison gas will be used to destroy the boll weevil. The value of a bumper cotton crop would be negligible with nobody left to pick it.

Just by way of being optimistic, it should be observed that Mr. Harding must have been cut out for a working man. He is the most ill-fated vacationist we have read about in a long time.

Lloyd George says he wishes someone would tell him that the danger is past. We don't see any reason why the wish should not be granted. A man with L. G.'s heavy responsibilities wouldn't be hurt by a little kidding now and then.

"A Cabinet or a Coterie?"

You will not find backing Democrats half so bothered about Mr. Harding's cabinet as stalwart, dyed-in-the-wool Republicans appear to be. Even so loyal a party organ as the New York Tribune is becoming restive over Mr. Harding's indecision, his rejection of truly big men, his leaning toward small fry. It can not see why the President-elect should pay any attention to politicians "who seek to fill his ear with interesting advice," because the very size of his majority it conceives to be a charter of freedom from petty obligations.

Much to the report and gossip that has come from the neighborhood of the President-elect is disturbing. Few sincere friends of his will say that his cabinet, if the list finally sent the Senate is according to prevailing prognostication, will be satisfying to this country. Too many names of the conspicuously fit are absent for any one to say it is the best available. The guessers mention too many names who will derive luster from cabinet office rather than add lustre to the new Administration.

The country has expected a cabinet of Lincoln size. It will be gravely disappointed if its expectation is not met. The folks do not wish to embarrass Mr. Harding by intruding their counsel, but they have a distinct idea of what they would like.

There was no reason to expect a Lincoln cabinet, because there is no Lincoln to do the choosing. But, if the Tribune nursed any expectation that Mr. Harding would select the "conspicuously fit", it must be suffering a rude disillusionment as the Hayes and the Daughertys begin to loom up as probable cabinet officers.

The New York Evening Post points out, as the worst aspect of the matter, that the cabinet is likely to be made up not merely of mediocrities but of representatives of the Old Guard. This would amount to an instant surrender to the Senate, and the reduction of the President to a position not of co-operation but of subservience.

When the country considers the number and complexity of the problems which await Mr. Harding's solution, it finds small comfort in the prospect of vacillation completely surrounded by standpatters and nonentities.

The Wages of Science

Scientists who add immeasurably to the health and wealth of the world do not always reap a money reward. Now that Mme. Marie Curie, co-discoverer, with her husband, of radium, is to visit this country, the fact is conspicuous. For while Mme. Curie worked with her husband in the discovery and isolation of the precious element, she owns not the smallest atom of radium. Such ownership would make possible experimentation of great value to science, and would make complete the life of Mm. Curie, who said, when asked what she desired above all else in the world, "A gramme of radium all my own."

That she may have her desire, a group of American women are now raising a fund of \$130,000, the market price of a gramme of radium for the purchase of a gramme which will present to her on her arrival. This will more than double the amount of the costly substance now in France, as, though New York state possesses 42 grammes, the land of its discovery has less than one gramme.

The market price itself, with Mme. Curie's occupation, explain her lack of it. For four years she spent her time in hospitals along the French front, and then returned to her post as a professor at the Sorbonne. This post is one of the honors which have come to her in lieu of money, for she is the first woman to hold such a place. All precedents were broken in order that Mme. Curie might lecture on radio-activity after Pierre Curie's death, for unfortunately radium did not choose two men for its discoverers. Precedent could not be broken too far, however; in spite of the facts that she alone discovered the element polonium, and that she was twice a recipient of the Nobel Prize, she failed of election in the French Academy by two votes.

This country will confer upon her the Willard Gibbs medal for important scientific work, never before given to a woman, and universities will confer honorary degrees, but it goes without saying that "the greatest woman in the world" will treasure most of all that gramme of the element which has in it such tremendous potentialities for the human race. It is as though one gave to a mother the child she had lost.

A "Buck" Gets Even

Among former members of the army, particularly, there will be a rather keen interest in the Norfolk case growing out of an ex-private's attack upon a former captain, under whom he had served during the war. The retired "buck", having stated upon paying a fine of ten dollars that the privilege of licking his late superior was worth ten thousand dollars, is said to have been taken at his word by the one-time weaver of two bars, and a suit for the latter amount now rests against the "buck" on the civil docket.

We have not read the ex-captain's story. From accounts of the brief bout, in fact, we infer that he is not able to handle his jaws with wanted ease or comfort. Men who spent a few life-times in the army during the years 1917-1919 will be interested in the statement of the former private that he promised himself two years ago at Camp Lee that some day he would get even with his company commander. The captain, he asserts, "picked on" him, gave him most of the company's "dirty work" and laughed at him while he performed it. He has been taking a course in physical training against the day of his opportunity. This day came recently, and the world was given another illustration of the fact that a man can nearly always attain his goal if he heaves to the line and keeps his eye on the indicator.

Former service men will attach special significance to the encounter as bringing to light the only man in about four million who has kept his promise to lick a captain or a lieutenant "some of these days." All of the others seem to have been totally deficient in the qualities which might have enabled them to keep in fighting fever through an extended period of engrossment with other affairs. It is indeed fortunate that only a negligible number of the promised humiliations carried according to schedule and with the originally intended violence; otherwise the after-war casualties would have made the A. E. F.'s little engagement look like a college tug-of-war.

We imagine the former "buck" is somewhat at

a loss now over plans for the future. It may be assumed there is little left for him in the way of an incentive to endeavor. It may be worthwhile to note, however, that his case emphasizes again how things have slumped in recent months. His entertainment two years ago would have cost him twenty years in Fort Leavenworth. He pays only ten dollars now and, at the outside, values it at only ten thousand.

The government's decision to begin making syrup out of sweet potatoes can hardly be due to any belief that the farmers are not raising enough cane.

We are not willing to believe that the two items have any sinister connection, but we've just been reading in the papers that Mrs. Harding is on her way to Florida—and that Mr. Harding says his vacation is over.

Contemporary Views

THE ALLIED DEBTS

Boston Post: While it is denied here that any official proposition for the annulment of the \$10,000,000,000 of allied debts to us was made, it has been known for a long time that very strong "feelings" were put forth; and now the British chancellor has admitted that Washington turned the proposal down.

The plan suggested was that if the United States canceled the \$10,000,000,000 of debt for the allies they would in turn expunge the debit balances standing between themselves. That is, Great Britain would cancel the advances made by her to France, Russia and others of the smaller allies, and they would in turn wipe their slates clean.

If this were done, we should lose \$10,000,000,000, which we are entitled to believe constitutes a legitimate and collectible claim. Great Britain would lose about as much, in that she loaned as much. But there is this essential difference. Her loans were made largely to Russia and others of the smaller nations which apparently cannot or will not pay. The British chancellor has in fact, admitted a year or more ago that there was little chance of collecting more than half of her outstanding loans. Actually, therefore, if the cancellation program were put through we should lose the entire \$10,000,000,000, while Great Britain would only lose that which she has already charged off as uncollectible.

The chancellor says: "We made the proposal because we believed it would be in the interest of good relations among the peoples, the rehabilitation of international credit and the restoration of international trade." But this hardly fits in with the fact that the allies, at the time that they ask to cancel their debts to us, are insisting that Germany pay five times that amount to themselves. If Germany alone can pay this indemnity, surely the allies can pay the comparatively small debt to us.

A FLABBY ARGUMENT

Ashville Citizen: Some members of the General Assembly have been very much disturbed by the fact that in a recent loan, evidenced by one-year coupons notes the State of North Carolina was forced to pay six and a quarter per cent interest. They recall those not distant halcyon days when the State could borrow all the money needed for its purposes on a four per cent interest basis without the necessity of huckstering its securities in the eastern financial markets.

There is nothing unusually alarming in this situation. Any person who has recently had occasion to test the temper of the credit market knows that money is earning a larger return than it did a few years ago. The days of four per cent interest have passed. Whether they will ever return the shrewd financiers do not know. When the State of North Carolina found itself in the position where it was forced to dispose of \$4,500,000 worth of short term notes in order to refund a maturing bond issue, it had to meet the rates prevailing in the market for government securities exempt from all Federal income taxes. These developments should not be permitted to swerve North Carolina from its settled purpose of voting adequate appropriations for the State institutions and for good roads. The cleverest financiers can offer no rational hope that the rates of interest will stabilize much below the present levels in the next few years. It is an illusory promise which admonishes us that if we will only postpone our plans we can anticipate with confidence the return of the day when the State can borrow money at four per cent. Our needs are so pressing that we should not allow ourselves to be shunted from the path of progress which we have determined to travel these next few years.

TO PROTECT THE COUNTRY SIDE

Charlotte News: The plan of some of those who have been largely instrumental in framing the present State highway bill—the measure which is likely to be passed without material changes,—is to have the superintendents of the maintenance forces serve as rural constabulary. The measure provides for the upkeep of the roads by a state, the mileage being divided into sectors to which a superintendent and a force of workers will be assigned for constant work.

It looks as if this would be a very practical proposition. By clothing these road supervisors with power to arrest wrong-doers along the public highways, much of the current lawlessness could be broken up in the rural sections.

It seems that some sort of a constabulary is greatly needed in the countryside from the amount of disorder that prevails and it would also appear that the law has been made abundantly clear-cut and specific to interfere very materially with the continued practices of this sort if there were somebody to apprehend the guilty parties.

Just the other day, to illustrate the potency of the law relating to immorality on the highways, a rather prominent man of a little village near Charlotte, was a defendant in Mecklenburg courts on the charge of violating this law. He was found guilty and the presiding judge had to be earnestly implored before he agreed to let the defendant off with a fine and then he plastered a fine of \$250 and the costs on him.

Such an instance goes to show that the law is leaving all its force to be made stronger, and perhaps, ought to be made a little more comprehensive as well as specific, but if no change were to be made at all in the statute, great numbers of people can be punished under it if a system was devised by which they might be arrested.

DOUGHTON MAKES SOME GRAMMAR

The Raleigh Times: While we have known for some time that Doughton of Alleghany had quite definite views on gender and sex as applied to politics and the holding of public office, we had not suspected that he would attempt to make over either. Indeed, he has been pretty generally for leaving all such things as they are. And here he comes securing the passage of a bill through the House to make some of our very best political nouns now masculine in gender.

Hereafter when North Carolina elects a woman Governor she'll not be a Governess, and the old executrix and administratrix may be abandoned for a full share of executor, etc. Rather considerate of Mr. Doughton, eh?

We always have said the North Carolina Legislature would in time get around to the business of making its own grammar.

Daily Editorial Digest

The Labor Board's New Problem

With the railroad executives' demands for release from their wage agreements and the Union heads' assurance that they will fight any attempt to cut down pay, the Labor Board has a problem before it which the press of the country seems to think may produce another crisis. While a number of writers apparently believe that the drop in the cost of living has been sufficient to justify reduced wages for the railroad men, many think that trouble lies not in too high wages but in the fact as stated by the Railway Age that the railroads "are being compelled to pay employees in the shops many millions of dollars annually for work which is not done." That, whatever be the trouble with transportation, the employees must not be allowed to suffer, is an opinion voiced by at least a few newspapers.

Among these is the Cleveland Plain Dealer (Ind. Dem.) which considers it "doubtful if anything like a general and arbitrary wage reduction would be justified at the present time. The railroad men were among the last to receive the wage advances to compensate for the great increase in living costs." The St. Louis Star (Ind.) points out:

"A downward revision cannot safely mean the beating down of wages beyond the level of a good livelihood, but should be a readjustment to meet the plainly recognizable change in living costs. Some relief could be afforded the public in the high rates for freight and passenger traffic, the Memphis News Scimitar (Ind.) believes, "without cutting a reduction in wages" and the New York Globe (Ind.) writes: "It admits that the theory is 'in a sense revolutionary,' yet 'one of the revolutionary measures which prevents revolution' declares:

"To reduce this wage rate while prices are still high above the pre-war level will work as serious a hardship on multitudes of employees as high freight rates and passenger tariffs do on shippers and passengers. Solvent for workmen is just as desirable as solvent for railroads or private business."

The San Francisco Chronicle (Ind.) "hopes" that "wage reduction may be necessary for the present, but if the roads have not the business they must reduce their forces." The Fargo Courier News (Non. Part. League), however, asserts that no "immediate wage cut" is justified. "The roads are simply trying to do away with the Esch-Cummins Labor Board" as a preliminary to a general open shop fight on all railroad labor. While the New York Post (Ind.) makes no such accusations it does go so far as to say that "it is an open question whether conditions are so desperate as to justify the abandonment of the method of inquiry and negotiation for a modicum of conflict."

There is a general call for "a show-down" from supporters of both sides of the controversy. Labor, official organ of the Plumb Plan League, declares that "the people are entitled to know all the facts" which the Interstate Commerce Commission can easily obtain for them. If this is done, the Chicago Tribune (Ind. Rep.) believes

"the air will quickly clear and wrongs will be righted." The Milwaukee Journal (Ind.) thinks the railroad heads could give the public some information if they would: "The honest belief of the railroad executives that the public will not understand their business. But since the executives can't run the business it is time the public began to learn. And the best trick the managers could take today would be to turn all the cards face up."

Some writers feel that the agreements which the railroads have asked to have cancelled have outgrown their practicality. It is not simply a question of wages, the New York Times (Ind. Dem.) explains, but whether "the wage fund is being administered as economically as the rate fund under private management with public fixing of rates." The Boston Herald (Ind. Rep.) remarks that "it is not strange that the railroads wish to be released from the 'national agreements' which under changed conditions and conditions of control would handicap the roads. The Grand Rapids Press (Ind.) considers it "inevitable that the railroads should demand release from these temporary agreements" and the Oklahoma City Oklahoman (Dem.) thinks that:

"If the railroads can convince the Railroad Labor Board that a change in working rules and conditions can save millions of dollars a year and that the service to the public will not deteriorate as a result, there is reason to believe that their request will be granted. On the other hand the New York World (Dem.) thinks the demand for annulment of the agreements is most "extraordinary" and the reasons for the action equally "extraordinary" quite justifying "the labor organizations' affected in making a protest."

As to the concrete question of wage-reduction a number of newspapers reflect the opinion of the Columbia State (Dem.) that since other costs have dropped wages must drop too. The St. Louis Post-Dispatch (Ind.) says: "When rail employees were demanding increases in wages they based their plea on the rising cost of living; railroad executives, in asking permission of the labor board to reduce wages, are reversing the argument. And the Philadelphia Record (Ind. Dem.) believes the latter's reasoning "has undoubtedly merit." Eventually the employees "must reconcile themselves to less pay." The Richmond Times Dispatch (Dem.) declares and the Brooklyn Eagle (Ind.) sees no reason why this particular group should demand that the government should keep it from "participating in the sacrifice that must be general if stabilization of values is ever to come as the herald of business prosperity." Says the New York Herald (Ind.):

"The railroads are prepared for action looking to traffic rate reductions. Are the railroad workers ready to lead their jobs as traffic dies, ready to

partments in 1913. Moreover, the change in the situation is less due to an increase in the number of deaths (which were 520,653 in 1919 as against 587,445 in 1913) than to a decrease of 587,445 in 1913, which fell from 608,990 in 1913 to 403,502 in 1919. This is obviously a most disturbing symptom.

Improvement Since 1914 "So much for the pessimists. Let us now look more closely at the facts and see whether things are exactly as bad as they look, and also whether there is no hope that this national disease may be cured. "Going back to 1919, one notices in the first place that, though the situation is by no means satisfactory, it is nevertheless steadily improving. The increase in the number of births at the end of 1919 can be explained by the fact that a good many men were demobilized by the end of 1918. It took, however, several months to complete the demobilization and to give to most people the time to go back to normal conditions of life. Hence the sudden enormous increase or wedding number of the year. The improvement will certainly be much more marked for 1920.

New Proposals "It remains nevertheless, true that the situation will be critical as long as no end will have been put to the depopulation. No doubt there is a bright side to an otherwise dark state of things. The losses incurred during the war have been partly compensated by the return to France of two provinces where the birthrate is, and always has been, particularly high. But unless vigorous measures are taken to encourage the development of large families, there is much to be feared that such a compensation will not do. "Fortunately there are many proofs that the nation is at last awakening

to the necessity of doing something. Much has happened with the war in America. At the end of the war, it was which is to educate public opinion, enforce the desirable legislation, societies as the Alliance National, stillion, are doing an excellent work in this respect. Under the leadership of such a propaganda, the President-elect has for the first time passed a number of the first steps toward drastic law was passed on the 22nd of June in order to suppress the manufacture and sale of opium. The government has also taken steps toward the amendment of the old age pension law presented to the chamber of deputies by the government, which would be the subject of increasing the number of voters. Another device worth mentioning is the so-called surruralism, which is a new initiative. A bill has been introduced recently created by a group of young players. By the end of August, there were in France 30,000 families of Surruralism. The government has also initiated. A bill has been introduced in order to make the institutions general and compulsory. The government is being done. However, concerning these devices may be they do not seem to be the root of the problem that has been attacked. To the opposite, there are three great measures which have been applied. One consists in the construction of hospitals, in which a department of children are still allowed to be the second step of an economic measure for the only reason which is the average French peasant is not doing more children is his natural money difficulties. The third measure less congenial to an old country, France may be less able to be made available, is a scientific regulation of immigration in France. One acquainted with the economic problems, as well as with the financial situation of the French people, will see that a little more of such a policy will be of great help and will be published before long."

BARGAINS IN BACTERIA There is a microbe factory at heart of London, and some interesting facts concerning it are given in a report just issued by the medical research council relative to their work for last year. Since January, 1920, writes a London Chronicle representative over the cultures of microbes have been sent to bacteriologists at home and abroad in response to requests, and assistance has been rendered in identification of microbes sent for examination. The history of this national laboratory is interesting. In 1908, a few years the Lister Institute in this country assisted scientific workers in bacteriology used to borrow specimens from one another—perhaps changing a measles microbe for a bag of butter.

M. Binot at the Pasteur Institute, Paris was very kind to British workers and microbes could also be bought from Prague and the Institute of Bacteriology in America has a natural history in New York has a managerial eight year old, while the English collection contains over 100 different cultures. International microscope examinations have been arranged. Most of the strains are of medical and veterinary importance, although beginning has been made with a collection of strains having an economic industrial interest.

European News and Views

England Surrenders the Trident

"Britannia Rules the Waves" will have to be discarded as an English national song if the statement of Lord Bessiere in the London Pictorial is correct. Commenting upon his doctrine that "it is no longer possible for any nation to possess the command of the sea."

The formula rests upon the argument that the battleship has been ousted by the submarine, and the gun has been knocked out by the torpedo. Moreover, surface ships have been robbed of their enormous power by small submerged vessels.

"For a hundred years no one has ventured to dispute the theory that the nation which can build and maintain the largest number of big ships, and whose seamen know how to use them effectively, is supreme at sea. But that fundamental theory is now questioned, for a few submarines can command the world to turn tail, and any little nation can build submarines."

"Out of the mists of the North sea, out of the masses of technical records which are accumulating, the clear and the fact emerges that both the British and the German battle fleets were dominated by the fear of submarines and repeatedly turned away to evade them."

"We are about to be asked to build, out of our impoverished resources, a new fleet of giant battleships, because the United States and Japan are building such ships. If Lord Bessiere's doctrine is correct it does not matter to us what these great nations do, for battleships no longer give command or furnish the standard of power."

"There is no one to be feared, and power left. The talk of first, second, and third naval powers has no meaning when expressed in terms of obsolete instruments of warfare. The contest in heavy naval armaments is over, though people do not yet realize it."

"But the revolution wrought in sea fighting does not essentially weaken Great Britain. Henceforth we can defend our shores with greater ease, and there is no reason at all why we should not be able to protect our interests on the high seas, as in the past. "We must build no more big battleships. Not only are they as archaic as the population's armour, but for us bankruptcy lies that way."

POPULATION PROBLEM

The French public was recently startled by the announcement made by M. Louis Mourier, the new director of the Assistance Publique (Poor Law) that the population of France had lost during the war as many as four million. The loss was estimated by the London Observer. In what way M. Mourier had been reaching such an amazing total is not quite clear. One thing, however, is certain, and that is that the population problem is still very alarming, though it is, of course, by no means desperate.

The figures show that, in those seventy-seven departments which were not invaded, the number of deaths in 1919 was 217,181 in excess over the number of births. In other words, besides her war losses, France has lost in 1919 a large part of the part of the country considered another two hundred thousand people.

"Compared with the last year before the great war, that is with 1918, it appears that the situation is much worse than it was for the same de-

to the necessity of doing something. Much has happened with the war in America. At the end of the war, it was which is to educate public opinion, enforce the desirable legislation, societies as the Alliance National, stillion, are doing an excellent work in this respect. Under the leadership of such a propaganda, the President-elect has for the first time passed a number of the first steps toward drastic law was passed on the 22nd of June in order to suppress the manufacture and sale of opium. The government has also taken steps toward the amendment of the old age pension law presented to the chamber of deputies by the government, which would be the subject of increasing the number of voters. Another device worth mentioning is the so-called surruralism, which is a new initiative. A bill has been introduced recently created by a group of young players. By the end of August, there were in France 30,000 families of Surruralism. The government has also initiated. A bill has been introduced in order to make the institutions general and compulsory. The government is being done. However, concerning these devices may be they do not seem to be the root of the problem that has been attacked. To the opposite, there are three great measures which have been applied. One consists in the construction of hospitals, in which a department of children are still allowed to be the second step of an economic measure for the only reason which is the average French peasant is not doing more children is his natural money difficulties. The third measure less congenial to an old country, France may be less able to be made available, is a scientific regulation of immigration in France. One acquainted with the economic problems, as well as with the financial situation of the French people, will see that a little more of such a policy will be of great help and will be published before long."

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SAYS AMERICA WANTS KAMCHATKA AS BASE Lenine Tells of Millionaire Pipe Dream

LONDON, Feb. 9.—The Russian authorities were told by an American multi-millionaire that the United States wanted Kamchatka as an American base in case of war between the United States and Japan, according to a speech by Nikolai Lenine, the bolshevik premier.

Asserting that the proposed treaty conceding Kamchatka is part of a scheme to utilize the bourgeoisie capital to accelerate the country's industrial development, Lenine is quoted as having said:

"An American multi-millionaire has been here spoke very frankly about the motives of the treaty, namely, that America has desires to have a base in Asia in case of war with Japan. This American multi-millionaire wanted Kamchatka to the United States. He would promise such enthusiasm to the part of the people of the United States that the American government would immediately recognize Russia."

RACING SEASON ENDS NEW ORLEANS, Feb. 9.—The racing season at the fair ground track came to an end today with an eight race program. The Mardi Gras handicap at six furlongs was won by Mythology, Jack Thurbur, against which ten to one odds were offered. The carnival handicap feature of the day, at 1 1/4 miles, went to Tommy, also ridden by Jack Thurbur, and paid 20 to 1.

While many of the horsemen will keep their horses in training, the balance of the winter will be taken to Kentucky and Maryland tracks in good shape. A few have announced their intention to ship to Havana or Orti Juan for the remainder of the season.

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