

found supporting a proposition for the limitation of armaments. Mr. Edmund Robertson, the financial secretary to the admiralty, presented the government's scheme for reduction and made a favorable impression upon the House of Commons.

The minister of education, Mr. Birrell, has been the busiest of the ministers so far. He has had charge of the educational bill which has been under discussion for several months and which after being perfected in the committee of the whole has been passed to a third reading by a majority of a hundred and ninety-two. As the bill deals with religion as well as education and concerns the children of the country it arouses deep interest. In England the public school system has grown up as an addition to the church schools, or rather the public schools have supplemented the work formerly done by the private schools. As these schools increased in numbers and importance the church schools began to ask for a division of the school funds and this, as it usually does, brought into politics the question of religious instruction in the schools. As long as the private schools were supported by private contribution or endowment their religious instruction was entirely in their own hands, but when these schools began to draw their support from the public treasury the taxpayers objected to paying for instruction in the creed of any other church than their own. Four years ago the Conservatives enacted a law which gave to the established church of England considerable advantage over the non-conformist churches in the management of the public schools and this led to a campaign against the law by the non-conformists. Their opposition to the conservative government contributed not a little to the liberal victory and the bill now under consideration in parliament puts them upon an equal footing with the members of the established church in respect to schools and removes the tests which formerly operated against non-conformist teachers.

Mr. John Morley, the secretary for India, is too well known in America to require an introduction. He stands in the front rank of English men of letters and his appointment has given new hope to the people of India. In presenting the Indian budget a few days ago he promised a reduction of taxation—especially the detestable salt tax, and said that a commission was enquiring how far the doctrine of self government could be applied to the people of India. The fact, however, that but a few hours were devoted to Indian affairs while days and weeks are given to home problems shows how far the interests of citizens are placed above the rights of remote subjects.

Mr. James Bryce, the secretary for Ireland, is also well known in the United States, his American Commonwealth being a standard work among us. He brings to his duties wide experience and a splendid mind and, what is more important, an excellent heart. His sympathies are broad and he has enough Irish blood in his veins to insure an equitable view of Irish problems. The prime minister made an excellent selection when he named Mr. John Burns as president of the local government board. In this position Mr. Burns has to deal with the subjects to the study of which he has devoted his life, namely, labor and municipal affairs. Having worked his way up from the ranks he is able to give invaluable assistance in all matters pertaining to wage-earners, factory inspection and municipalization. He is a tower of strength to the Liberal ministry.

Mr. Winston Churchill, son of the late Lord Randolph Churchill, as the representative of the colonial department in the House of Commons, has to deal with the Chinese question in South Africa, one of the leading questions of the recent campaign. The new government has undertaken to abolish a system of contract labor which has been described as little short of slavery. The mine owners insist that Chinese labor is necessary for the successful working of the mines and that the conditions imposed upon the Chinese are not severe, but the laboring men of Great Britain are quite unanimous in their condemnation of the system and the liberal government is supporting their views. Mr. Churchill is a brilliant young man and has, as his friends believe, a bright future. The fact that his mother is of American birth gives him a more than usual interest in our country and makes us watch his career with a friendly eye. His connection with the important work of framing a constitution for the Transvaal is likely to largely increase his political prominence.

I have left for the last the chancellor of the

exchequer, although in order of importance his office stands near the head of the ministry. Mr. Henry Asquith, the present occupant of this position, is one of the strongest members of the Liberal party and probably its foremost debater. He was put forward to reply to Mr. Chamberlain in the tariff controversy and acquitted himself well. He is opposed to the protective tariff whether levied for the aid of particular industries or as a part of the scheme of retaliation and his ideas are, for the present at least, in the ascendancy. If the Right Honorable Joseph Chamberlain, with the prestige given him by the Boer war and with his extraordinary ability as a public speaker, can not overthrow England's free trade policy there is little chance that any other English statesman will be able to attack it successively in the near future.

Mr. Asquith's department has the administration of the income tax and the inheritance tax. The latter has yielded more within the last year than ever before, three large estates having turned into the treasury (or will do so) some twenty millions of dollars. The income tax is not only a permanent part of the fiscal system, but a commission is considering whether a graduated income tax should not be substituted for the present uniform one. The tax is now uniform except that small incomes are exempt.

Besides the measures above referred to the new government is building homes for tenant laborers in Ireland and proposes to so change the election laws as to reduce the land holders to one vote each—at present each land holder can vote in every district in which he has land. The government is also supporting a measure which protects the English tenant farmers in their improvements and in their right to vote according to their own views irrespective of the wishes of the landlord. The liberal victory was a victory for progressive, democratic ideas and the new government is earnestly at work putting these ideas into the form of law.

Copyright.

#### SAME OLD YARN

The St. Louis Globe-Democrat says: "The entire country paid the penalty of the blunder of 1892, by which a democratic president and a democratic congress were placed in power. The penalty began to be exacted even before the democrats passed their tariff bill. Everybody knew that the democrats would, as soon as they entered office, make an assault on the protective system. Capital got frightened just as soon as the returns came in on election night in 1892 that the democrats had won. Mills began to close before Cleveland called his democratic congress in extra session in the summer of 1893, 'runs' were made on the banks, and the entire industrial machinery of the country was jarred. The people were forced to consume less bread and meat as well as other things, farm products went down, and the corn, wheat, cattle and fruit raisers suffered with the rest of the community."

It is strange that republican editors and republican speakers having concern for their reputation, reiterate the false statement that the so-called "panic of 1893" was due, either to democratic tariff legislation or to the fear of it.

As The Commoner has repeatedly shown the so-called panic of 1893 began long prior to the election day of 1892. The Homestead strike, in which many lives were lost, occurred in July, 1892, and failures and commercial disasters, multiplied, beginning as early as November 11, 1890—thirty days after the McKinley tariff bill became a law. All the things described by the Globe-Democrat began under the Harrison administration and continued with the republican tariff law upon the statute books.

#### "A PEOPLE'S LOBBY"

Some one proposes the creation of "a people's lobby" the same to be maintained at the state capitals and at the national capital, for the purpose of advancing public interests.

The real "people's lobby" should assemble at the ballot box and see to it that those who may be depended upon to act in accordance with the public welfare, are elected to office. But the people are often deceived, you say? Quite true, but under the present plan they have an opportunity of correcting their mistakes at subsequent elections, and they will have additional power whenever they make up their minds to adopt the initiative and referendum—a reform that is growing in favor.

Dr. Garvin, former governor of Rhode Island,

wrote for the Independent, of New York, an interesting article entitled "The Statesman's Job." In that article Dr. Garvin said: "It is highly desirable that the fundamental reform, which is to open the way for all other reforms, should be in full accord with the principles of government established by the founders of our states and nation. As a part, and an essential part, of our republican form of government, we find the written constitution. Concerning that portion of our scheme of government George Washington wrote: 'The basis of our political systems is the right of the people to make and alter their constitutions of government.' If that basis had not been departed from the dangers and abuses which threaten the stability of our institutions would never have arisen. The statesman's work, therefore, is to apply that dictum of the Father of his Country. This has been done in a somewhat imperfect and complex way in the state of Oregon. It is now possible there for eight per cent of the voters to propose an amendment to the constitution of the state and have it submitted to the qualified electors for acceptance or rejection by majority vote. Not only is it possible, but the thing is actually in process of being done. At the state election on June 3, 1906, the electorate voted to amend, or refuse to amend, the state constitution upon a matter proposed for their action by more than 7,000 of the legal voters. The people of Oregon have found the key. They have unlocked the closed door which confined them and confines us all. Henceforth her people are free to effect any reform which the majority desires. Discontent, so far as state matters are concerned, will soon be a thing of the past. A careful progress will mark her future. Some statesman has arisen there in the coming center of the world. To other states I would say. Go thou and do likewise."

#### CHARLES DUNCAN M'IVER

On another page will be found a well deserved tribute to the late Charles Duncan McIver from the pen of Dr. Albert Shaw, the editor of the Review of Reviews. Dr. McIver died suddenly on the special train which carried Mr. Bryan through North Carolina a few days ago. The latter's first visit to North Carolina was made twelve years ago at Dr. McIver's invitation and from that day they were close personal as well as political, friends. Dr. McIver was a rare man. Having worked his way up from a humble station he first showed what an ambitious young man could do for himself, and then he dedicated himself to the task of showing what a noble and unselfish man could do for his fellows. He received flattering offers to go into other occupations, but he regarded his occupation, that of teaching, as a calling to him and resisted the temptation. He did not leave much money, but he left what money can not buy—a good name which, as the wise man says, is rather to be chosen than great riches, and loving favor, which is to be preferred to silver and gold. The fortune which he left can not be computed in dollars, and is a legacy to the entire land. So great was the sorrow caused by his death that the political meeting which was arranged for his city that evening was converted into a memorial meeting. How this old world would be transformed if all of its people cherished the ideal which Dr. McIver followed along an ever brightening way.

#### UNDIGNIFIED

"Uncle Joe" Cannon says that a man suggested to him that the tariff on steel should be cut down as one of the first legislative acts, but that he had replied: "My friend, I think the schedule is too high, myself, but do you suppose that we can turn a double somersault and cut it down?"

Perhaps there are some who indulge in the violent supposition that the tariff on steel, or other special favor enjoyed by liberal contributors to the republican campaign fund, will be "cut down" by the republican party, but they are the victims of misplaced confidence.

Steel rails selling for \$28 in America were selling abroad for about \$20, but in spite of this hold-up, the republican party is powerless to act!

There are no "double somersaults" to be turned by republican leaders so far as the tariff question is concerned. That would be highly undignified in a "standpatter."