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Survey of the World.

A Tax on Franchises.

The Ford bill, which provides that the tax on real estate shall be applied in the State of New York to the value of municipal franchises, has not yet been signed by Governor Roosevelt, who awaits the action of a special session of the Legislature, called by him on the 17th inst., with respect to certain amendments which he is willing to approve. After the adjournment of the Legislature, arguments against the bill were laid before the Governor by the corporations to be taxed, and it is understood that the leaders of the Republican organization did not regard it with favor. The Governor, however, had exerted his influence to procure the passage of the bill. He approved the purpose of it, but saw that the bill could be improved and was willing to give the Legislature an opportunity to make certain changes. He called the special session, to begin on the evening of the 22d inst., making known his purpose to sign the original bill on the 27th if the Legislature should not have passed the desired amendments by that date. He had refused to recommend or approve the substitution of a tax on gross receipts for the tax on the value of the franchises, and had given notice that he would accept no amendments affecting the main provisions of the bill, except one requiring the valuations to be made and the tax to be collected by the State Board of Tax Commissioners (instead of the local assessors), and another providing that such franchise taxes as are now paid to the local authorities shall be deducted from the new tax. While he desires that these changes shall be made, he will not sacrifice the original bill for lack of them. As

the day for the beginning of the special session approached there was much uncertainty as to the result. It was said that the Democrats would oppose the amendments, because the power to assess and collect would by them be taken from Democratic officers in the cities and given to a Republican State Board, and it was pointed out that if in the Senate two Republicans should join all the Democrats in opposition, the amendments could not be passed.

The Mazet Committee.

Among the witnesses before the Mazet Committee in New York last week were Mayor Van Wyck and the four Police Commissioners, the purpose of Mr. Moss being to show that at the beginning of the Tammany Mayor's term the two Republican Commissioners, Hamilton and Phillips, were removed because they would not vote for the retirement of Chief McCullagh; that the present Republican Commissioners, Hess and Abell, were then appointed because they were willing to obey the Tammany orders; that McCullagh was retired because he refused to punish officers for attempting to enforce the law against poolrooms and gambling houses controlled by Tammany politicians and intimate friends of the Mayor and his associates; and that under Chief Devery up to the present time the poolrooms and gambling houses had carried on their unlawful business without restraint. The testimony tended to confirm this explanation of what had taken place in the Police Department. The Mayor asserted that he removed Hamilton because the latter consulted Senator Platt as to his course in the Board, and then explained that

of informing the brethren to gather in the first General Assembly since the action was taken what I have felt my duty to be in view of the fraternal counsel offered me.

The action of the Assembly as well as the overture from the Presbytery of Pittsburg, upon which that action was based, make it evident that many of my positions, together with the spirit and purpose of my book as a whole, have been seriously misapprehended. Such misapprehension I sincerely regret, and I wish here emphatically to repudiate the false constructions that have been placed upon my book in many quarters. So far as my views are concerned, they have been and remain, as I believe, in accord with the faith of the Presbyterian Church and of evangelical Christendom in all vital and essential matters, and I therefore cannot feel that it is my duty, or even my right, in justice to myself and to my brethren, and to the Church of our Divine Lord and Master, in which I am an office-bearer, to withdraw from the ministry of the Presbyterian Church. In taking this position, to which I am constrained by a profound sense of duty, I desire to say that I recognize gratefully the spirit of Christian kindness which animated those who joined in the action of the last Assembly, and appreciate the devotion to the truth and the concern for the welfare of the Church which prompted their action. I desire to say, also, that I yield to no one in my devotion to the truth and in my concern for the welfare of the Church.

Praying for the blessing of God upon the Church universal, and especially upon that branch of it within which I was born and bred, and whose interests I have most deeply at heart, I am, respectfully and fraternally yours,

A. C. McGIFFERT.

MINNEAPOLIS, MINN.

The Southern Presbyterian Assembly.

By D. C. Rankin, D.D.

IN all the Southern States there is not a city of more historic interest than Richmond, Virginia, where the Southern Presbyterian General Assembly is now in session. In Colonial, Revolutionary and Civil War periods Richmond has been a focal point and consequently is rich in traditions and memories. For the beginnings of her Presbyterian history she points back with pride 150 years to the days of Samuel Davies. The home of this great man was only twelve

miles from the city, and there one of the oldest Presbyterian Churches in Virginia, organized in 1748, and bearing his honored name, still stands as a monument to him. During the closing years of the last century and the opening decade of this, the "Two Parsons" of a well-known book, Mr. Blair of the Presbyterian Church and Mr. Buchanan of the Episcopal Church, preached on alternate Sundays in the same house, which, as Dr. Moses Hoge impressively said, "was a prophecy and a prelude to the harmony which has descended to our own day, a harmony which has always been delightfully characteristic of the relations between the churches of all denominations in this city." This spirit to which Dr. Hoge alluded was beautifully exemplified on the first day of the present Assembly by the exchange of cordial greetings between the Presbyterian Assembly and the Diocesan Convention of the Episcopal Convention of Virginia, now in session in St. Paul's Church of this city; and on the second day by the reception of the large Ministerial Union of Richmond, embracing all evangelical denominations.

The Assembly holds its sessions in the First Church, of which Dr. Robert P. Kerr is now the beloved pastor. This fine old church has enjoyed the ministry of many eminent men, such as Dr. John Holt Rice, founder of Union Theological Seminary (75 years ago), Dr. Wm. J. Armstrong, afterward a Secretary of the A. B. C. F. M., Dr. Wm. S. Plumer, and Dr. T. Verner Moore. During Dr. Plumer's pastorate two notable events occurred,—the founding by him of the *Central Presbyterian* (then, in the heat of the New School controversy of 1837, called *The Watchman of the South*), and the sending forth, as a colony, of the Second Presbyterian Church in 1845, with Moses D. Hoge (who was just out of the Seminary), as its pastor,—a pastorate destined to close only with the great preacher's life, 54 years afterward.

The present Assembly was opened in this historic church on the 18th inst. by a sermon from the retiring Moderator, the Rev. Dr. E. M. Green, of Danville, Ky. The Rev. J. F. Cannon, D.D., of Grand Avenue Church, St. Louis, was chosen as his successor. One hundred and eighty-six commissioners were present at the opening session. Older mem-

bers miss the familiar form and genial face of Dr. Joseph R. Wilson, who for thirty-seven years was the stated clerk, and who is now spending the evening of his days with his son, Prof. Woodrow Wilson, of Princeton University. But Dr. Alexander, of the S. W. P. University, admirably fills his place. The old leaders are missed. Only Dr. Woodrow, of the prominent men of a generation ago, is present. But it is a fine body of men, earnest and thoughtful. A shadow is cast over this meeting by the recent deaths of Drs. Armstrong, of Norfolk, and Murkland, of Baltimore. Dr. Murkland, who was elected a commissioner to this Assembly, and who had been prominently spoken of for Moderator, was, next to Drs. Hoge, Girardeau and Palmer, the most eloquent preacher in the Southern Presbyterian Church.

The annual reports of the various Executive Committees were read Friday morning. They present an encouraging picture of Church work. All these committees closed the year free from debt. The Committee of Foreign Missions conducts work in Africa, Brazil, China, Japan, Korea and Mexico, and has recently reopened its work in Cuba, which was closed during the war. It reported receipts for the past year of \$145,000, and has on its roll 155 foreign missionaries. Overtures are before the Assembly, asking that a forward movement be inaugurated for the twentieth century by raising a fund of \$200,000 for foreign missions. Some eight or ten missionaries, now on furlough in this country, are present from various fields. For the more successful prosecution of the committee's work in the Congo Free State, a boat is now being built in England. The funds for this purpose, \$10,000, were contributed by the children some years ago, on the death of the founder and pioneer of this mission, Rev. Samuel Lapsley. The Committees of Home Missions, Education and Publication reported a year of successful work, with receipts, respectively, of \$64,000, \$17,000 and \$12,000. The Publication Committee, however, received \$30,000 from other sources. Two hundred and fifteen candidates for the ministry were aided by the Education Committee. The report of the Committee on Colored Evangelization was one of interest. While the receipts had only been \$7,000, and

the work prosecuted necessarily limited, the report was a vigorous and encouraging one, and indicated much zeal and faithfulness on the part of those in charge of the work. There were only twelve students in the Stillman Theological Seminary at Tuscaloosa, Ala. The reports of the white theological seminaries showed no advance in the number of students in Louisville and Columbia, but a large increase in Richmond. This increase is, perhaps, attributable to the removal last fall of Union Seminary, now 75 years old, from Hampden Sidney to its new and splendid grounds and buildings in a beautiful suburb of Richmond. Louisville Seminary was bereaved last fall in the death of one of its ablest and most scholarly professors, Dr. Dwight Witherspoon.

Just as the Assembly was adjourning Saturday afternoon the telegraphic greetings of the Northern Presbyterian Assembly at Minneapolis were received.

RICHMOND, VA.

Southern Baptist Convention.

By R. H. Pitt, D.D.

As a sequel to their acceptance of Dr. Whitsitt's resignation, the Board of Trustees of the Louisville Seminary elected Dr. John P. Greene, President of William Jewell College, Missouri, to succeed Dr. Whitsitt as President of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary and Professor of Church History. His election was hearty and unanimous. Dr. Greene was a member of the Board of Trustees and acted with the majority in their deliverances at Wilmington and Norfolk. He is, moreover, a warm personal friend of Dr. Whitsitt, to whom his election is very agreeable. The Board also adopted the following paper:

"Your committee appointed to report on the sentiment of the Board, in view of the retirement of Dr. W. H. Whitsitt from the Seminary, would respectfully offer the following:

"First. In accepting the resignation of our honored brother, this Board takes occasion to say that, whatever differences may exist among us as to other matters, we are one in our recognition of the exalted Christian character, rare ability, and scholarly attainments of Dr. Whitsitt, and in our appreciation of the extended and multiform services he has rendered our de-