

chief House of Commons whip of each party. The last of these the rank and file of the party know little about; for there are no conventions or public meetings in connection with the headquarters organizations. The chief whip is supreme; he handles large sums of money; but, with the exception of the leaders, no one knows how this money is raised, and no public statement is issued accounting for its expenditure. The expenditure of money in the constituencies themselves, however, is very definitely fixed by law, and severe penalties are imposed for the illegal use of money. Parliament has not only limited the objects for which money may be spent, but has also set a maximum limit to the amount that may be spent—a limit varying in accordance with the number of names on the electoral roll. The penalties for corrupt practices are severe. If it is found that any corrupt practice has been committed by a candidate, or with his knowledge and consent, his election is void and he is forever incapable of being elected to Parliament by that constituency. If, however, the corrupt practice is committed by his agents, the election is void and the candidate is incapable of being chosen by that constituency for seven years. The restrictions upon the use of money are so strict and the statutes dealing with corrupt practices are so severe that British elections are, as a rule, remarkably pure.

THE SHORT SESSION OF CONGRESS

The final session of the Sixty-first Congress, according to general prediction and general precedent, will be not only short, but uneventful as regards new legislation. It is impossible to get much positive action from a Congress which is merely filling a gap under the antiquated system of allowing a year to elapse before a new Congress meets—a system which few defend but no party energetically proposes to overthrow. Especially is this true when, as now, the party in power has been defeated in the Congressional elections. Moreover, the President's Message, summarized and characterized last week in *The Outlook*, made no insistent call for immediate action, whether on the tariff or in other directions. Before Mr. Cannon on Tuesday of last week

called the House of Representatives to order he received many congratulations on being, as one of the cartoonists called him, "the last survivor of the wreck." His expected successor, Mr. Champ Clark, was received with vociferous acclamation by the Democratic side of the House. The allusions to the "Can't Come Back Club" and "Lame Duck Alley" were many, and altogether the new situation was treated in a good-humored rather than a despondent fashion, although in the lower house a Republican majority of about forty-five is to give way next session to a Democratic majority of about sixty. In the Senate an adjournment was taken in respect for the announced death of four Senators between the sessions—an event, Senator Bacon pointed out, which had no precedent in the history of Congress. All four—Dolliver, of Iowa; McEnery, of Louisiana; Daniel, of Virginia, and Clay, of Georgia—had been long in the Senate, Mr. Daniel twenty-three years, Senators Clay and McEnery thirteen years, Senator Dolliver ten years. They will be succeeded by ex-Governor Claude Swanson, of Virginia; Joseph W. Tirrell, of Georgia; Lafe Young, of Iowa, and J. R. Thornton, of Louisiana. The reception of the Message and of departmental reports chiefly occupied the week's record of Congress. It is noted that, while economy is promised as the order of the day, Secretary MacVeagh's total estimate of appropriations for all branches of the Federal Government (\$748,414,861) is over three millions in excess of the last estimate, although the latter included ten millions for the Census. The amount asked for Panama fortifications is nineteen and a half millions; about one hundred and twenty-eight millions are asked for naval expenditure.

THE BALLINGER REPORT

The majority of the Ballinger-Pinchot Investigating Committee have made their report. A summary of their conclusions has been published. As every one who has followed the case has almost from the first expected, the result of the investigation is a personal vindication of Mr. Ballinger. The report declares that in regard to the coal claims in Alaska his

conduct is not justly censurable; that he was justified in revoking the Indian co-operative agreement; that his action regarding water power sites was taken in good faith; that he cannot be justly criticised for his administration of the Reclamation Service; that he is not an enemy to a reasonable and judicious policy of Conservation; and that there is nothing to justify the opinion that he is not a faithful and efficient public officer. As *The Outlook* has reported, with these conclusions a minority of the Committee consisting of all the Democratic members and one Republican are not in agreement. It should be remembered, however, that no charges of corruption have been brought against the Secretary. The real cause of the controversy which led to the investigation was the belief that Mr. Ballinger was not, as head of the Department of the Interior, efficiently guarding the public interest, and that he was so far out of sympathy with the Conservation policies in which the American people believed and to which the Republican party had committed itself as to be unfitted to carry those policies into execution. On this point *The Outlook* reached its conclusion and stated it last June. We see no reason for changing the opinion then expressed. Now, after investigation, the majority of the Committee, at the same time that they announce their opinion that Mr. Ballinger should be relieved of any stigma, reach a conclusion that, of itself, justifies the belief regarding Mr. Ballinger's unfitness for the great office he occupies. This conclusion is in direct issue with Mr. Ballinger on one of the fundamental questions of Conservation. While the Secretary in his recent report argues against the leasing of coal lands, the majority of the Committee state the following conclusion:

Your Committee believes that it would be the height of unwisdom to permit the great coal-fields to be monopolized or gathered into the private ownership of a few for speculative purposes. As they increase in value the income should inure to the benefit of all the people. To bring about this result and at the same time put an end to the unreasonable condition now existing, your Committee recommends that the Government refuse to sell these lands, but that, retaining their ownership, it shall grant leases at fair royalties for periods limited but long enough,

and covering areas large enough, to justify the necessary investments upon sound business principles, and thus secure the opening and operation of sufficient mines to meet the necessities of Alaskan consumption, afford relief from the present outrageous prices paid by consumers, and at the same time afford some revenue to the Government. We recommend legislation to that end, and that, pending such legislation, the existing withdrawal from entry of the Alaska coal lands be continued.

This is an emphatic statement, in outline, of the very policies concerning the preservation of the public domain which Mr. Ballinger's administration has imperiled. *The New York "Journal of Commerce"* is not chargeable with leanings toward impractical idealism or with sympathy for doctrinaires. That our readers may see how impressive this aspect of the majority report is, we quote from its columns. After contrasting with the Secretary's plan the recommendation of the Committee, the "*Journal of Commerce*" continues:

This is substantially in accord with the Roosevelt-Pinchot policy, and not at all with that of Ballinger. With which President Taft is personally in sympathy appears in his brief reference to the matter in his Message. He refers to the Secretary's objections to the leasing plan and approves of his stating them at length, but says, "After a full consideration I favor a leasing system and recommend it." He had, in fact, committed himself to it without reserve in his speech at the St. Paul Conservation Congress.

In this difference of policy the "*Journal of Commerce*" sees "an illustration of the cause of the whole trouble in which Ballinger and the Administration have been involved over the Conservation policy inherited from the Roosevelt-Garfield régime regarding public lands." And it concludes that, whatever the evidence regarding Mr. Ballinger's honor and faithfulness, there was during the controversy "plenty of evidence brought out to show that if the Conservation policy established by the previous Administration was to be adhered to and consistently carried out, the wrong man had been appointed to the head of the department under which this was to be done." Whether this report will lead Mr. Ballinger to believe that it would be best to resign his office we do not know; but at least it gives assurance that the great wealth in the public lands