

then disreputable Third Ward, and neither he nor his friends ever dared to deny that votes were there bought and sold like merchandise, and as low as a dollar per vote. From a ward boss he grew to be a controller of city and county politics, and about 1870 he entered the New York Assembly. There he voted for the bills put forward by the Tweed Ring and defended the corrupt judges Barnard and Cardozo; but when the Tweed Ring was exposed, Mr. Hill joined forces with Samuel J. Tilden and turned all his great abilities to the successful prosecution and impeachment of Tweed and the corrupt judges. As an efficient aid to Mr. Tilden in the latter's campaign for the Governorship and later for the Presidency, Mr. Hill rapidly gained prominence and influence; and when the wave of Democratic success came which made Cleveland Governor, Mr. Hill became Lieutenant-Governor of New York, and was recognized as the party leader in legislative matters—a quite unheard-of thing for a Lieutenant-Governor. His skill and shrewdness in managing his own party and outwitting the Republicans were extraordinary. He benefited again by the prestige of an abler and better man when Mr. Cleveland resigned the office of Governor to become President. As Governor of New York Mr. Hill fought against a Republican majority with a long series of vetoes, and a famous deadlock ensued. It was when he was a candidate for election as Governor (he served three years to fill out Cleveland's unexpired term) that Mr. Hill began a speech with the words "I am a Democrat"—words which became a battle-cry for his followers, and which he himself parodied at a later date, in one of the Bryan campaigns we believe, by saying in private talk, "I am a Democrat still—*very* still." Mr. Hill served as United States Senator from New York for the six years beginning in 1891, and was more than once in opposition to President Cleveland's measures. As a lawyer he stood high in his profession, and was unquestionably a close reasoner and an able pleader. As a politician he was a striking illustration of the type of party workers who like the game for its own sake, who love trickery and dodging, and who put personal ambition far above any desire to serve the people.

THE END OF THE FRENCH STRIKE

Last week, to the relief of all friends of law and order, the danger threatening the French Republic passed over, and the threatened universal strike disappeared. This outcome is due primarily to the courage of one man, Aristide Briand, the Prime Minister. To the railway strikers who had tied up the transportation facilities of the whole country, and provoked many sympathetic strikes, he announced himself their friend and asked them to confide their case to him, encouraging them to believe that he would practically win their cause with their employers. But—and this is a big "but"—he informed those employees that they could not obtain his good offices by a strike, and that they must return to work. To insure this he called them out for military duty as State employees, and then informed them that their military duty was to return to their places. At first the men hesitated, but later the vast majority capitulated. They were sensible enough to see that their ultimate good lay in obedience to law. The peculiar relation existing between the State and the railways in France gives to the Prime Minister ample authority in the matter. Though there are two kinds of railways in that country, those managed by private companies with the State's participation, and those under the State's absolute control, in all railways the State has the right to interfere for better service and for better treatment of employees. But the railways themselves are not oblivious to the needs of their employees, as is seen in the system of old age pensions instituted by the companies. As to wages, only the subordinates in small stations receive as low a wage as three francs (sixty cents) a day. The strikers demand a minimum wage of a dollar a day. They improved their position last week in two directions: First, in the assurance of Government aid in the attempt to obtain the higher wage; and, second, in the Cabinet's definite promise that a bill to be called the *Statut des Fonctionnaires* would be introduced in Parliament, redefining the relations of railway employees to the State. The Premier is well advised in introducing such a bill. He doubtless remembers that in the early 90's, the Casimir Périer Ministry fell on this very

issue. But if the relief to the employees is great, the relief to the upholders of law and to the Government must be greater. Though the Government's victory was due chiefly to the Prime Minister's immediate summoning of the striking employees to military service, it was also due to his arrest and imprisonment of the strike leaders, whom he regarded in a totally different light from their followers, and finally to the fact that the army contains a large number of competent locomotive engineers and firemen, most of them being in the Corps of Engineers; these would be used in case of need. The spectacle of the stern suppression of a strike by a Prime Minister who had been actively associated with the Socialists until his entry upon office, the spectacle of another crushing defeat of the machinations of its foes by a Republic only a generation old—these are events the influence of which should be a lasting good.

CONCERNING WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION

The question has been raised whether the Legislature had the Constitutional right to enact the law in relation to workmen's compensation in certain dangerous employments which practically makes the employer an insurer of the workmen against accidents not caused by their own positive negligence. This law, recently enacted in New York State, is based on the Workmen's Compensation Act of England, and its enactment was due to the fact that the common law affords no available remedy for injuries occasioned by industrial accidents not attributable to the negligence of the employer. In a suit brought by an employee against the South Buffalo Railway Company to recover damages the corporation answers that the Act is unconstitutional because it deprives the corporation of property without due process of law, because it denies the right of trial by jury, and because it limits the amount recoverable in actions brought to recover damages for injuries causing death. This contention has been overruled at a Special Term, and Judge Cuthbert W. Pound has written an opinion maintaining the constitutionality of the Act. The Legislature may alter or repeal the common law; may create

new offenses, enlarge the scope of civil remedies, and fasten responsibility for injuries upon persons against whom the common law gives no remedy. Judge Pound holds, therefore, that the Legislature may make those who employ workmen in dangerous callings insurers, to some extent, of the safety of such workmen. "The common law imposed upon the employee entire responsibility for injuries arising out of the necessary risks or dangers of the employment. The new statute merely shifts such liability in part upon the employer." No doubt this case will be carried to the Court of Appeals, and perhaps to the Supreme Court of the United States. We shall not assume to anticipate the decision of the higher tribunal, but we think most laymen will agree that Judge Pound's opinion is in accordance with the principles of practical common sense.

EXTRAORDINARY SESSION OF THE FINNISH DIET

In obedience to a summons from the Czar, the Finnish Diet met in extraordinary session on September 14, to elect four representatives to the lower house and two to the upper house of the Imperial Parliament, and to express its opinion with regard to two bills which have recently been drafted by the Council of Ministers and which are to be submitted to the Duma when it reassembles in November. This session of the Diet was one of great historical importance, partly because it was the first meeting of the representatives of Finland since the enactment of the so-called "Imperial Legislation Law" of June 30, 1910, and partly because it determined the attitude of the Finnish people not only toward that law but toward the whole Russifying policy of Premier Stolypin and the Czar. The Imperial Legislation Law, it will be remembered, violated the Constitution of Finland by depriving the Diet of its right to pass upon Finnish questions that involved Imperial interests, and by including among such questions the imposition of taxes, the direction of the police, the management of schools, the authorization of public meetings, and the control of the periodical press. The Diet had to decide whether it would sub-