

The only wise course is to challenge this threat of "endless litigation" now, and have done with it. That is also the only honest course. We of this generation in Chicago have no right to hand down the traction monopoly burden to our successors as our predecessors have handed it down to us.

It is a burden that ought never to have been taken up. Having been taken up it ought to have been thrown off 20 years ago. Having been strapped on tighter than ever then, it ought to be thrown off now.

That this can be done we have shown already. That the inconvenience of bad service or no service during the litigation is not to be dreaded can easily be shown.

Pursuant to the policy of immediate ownership and operation, no new franchises would be granted as old ones expired. But this would cause no deterioration of traction service. If the city were not yet ready or able to take over, whether for legal or financial reasons, the city council could grant revocable or short-term licenses to the existing companies. Should they refuse to operate under such licenses, the question as to them would be out of the way. But they would not refuse. The time has not yet come when a traction company will refuse to operate its existing plant for 5 cents a fare for a 2-cent ride even under a revocable license.

But is it asked what kind of service they would give? They couldn't give worse than they have given for years and are giving now; and if the city council chose, it could compel them to give better service.

The advantages of "endless litigation" are not all on the side of the stock-jobbers. The city is now in better condition to ameliorate the hardships of "endless litigation" than the companies are. They would suffer as much or worse than the people would, and in a more sensitive place—the pocket nerve. The city may never again be in a better position to fight for its rights. Besides the advantages indicated above, it has others which the companies fear and which would doubtless be decisive if availed of.

Let the people of Chicago vote

emphatically at the April election for the policy of immediate municipal ownership and operation, and the prophecy is a fair one that the people will have good traction service under municipal ownership and operation sooner than there is any reasonable probability of getting it through compromises with the traction stock-jobbers.

EDITORIAL CORRESPONDENCE.

WASHINGTON.

Washington, D. C., March 14.—The throttling power of party organization has seldom been more conclusively shown than in the action last week of the Republican members in the matter of investigating the post office department. For days, member after member had risen on the Republican side and delivered bitter speeches denouncing that department for including their names in a report to the committee on post offices and post roads, this report having made specific mention of 151 Congressmen who had recommended increased post office allowances, either for rent, for clerk hire, or for "separating." As the report was headed with "Charges Against Congressmen," they were justified in assuming that their constituents would be prejudiced against them, no matter what the particular circumstances of their recommendations might be, and that the fact that whoever drew up this "unfathered" report had added a paragraph near the end to the effect that "where the increased allowance had not been discontinued or reduced it was according to law," would not relieve them of the cloud of suspicion which must necessarily rest upon every man whose name was mentioned therein Grosvenor even denounced it as being "conceived in sin and born in iniquity."

Not alone Democrats, but Republicans, were furious. They charged that the purpose of the wholesale inclusion of the names of Congressmen was an intimation to Congress that it had better go slow in ordering an investigation of the post office department, as that department held over their heads matters which, if disclosed, would "queer" them with their constituents.

When the size and temper of the storm became apparent to the Republican leaders, attempts were made by Mr. Overstreet, the chairman of the committee on post offices and post roads, to postpone the debate until this week; but having failed in that on the 9th, he attempted on the 10th to get the vote upon the resolution postponed until the 12th, his object obviously being to secure all the time possible to whip the Republican recalcitrants into line; and this, notwithstanding that he had originally refused to consent to set apart the amount of time which the Democrats insisted was necessary for a proper discussion of the re-

port. In fact, having failed to postpone the debate until this week, he announced to the House on the 9th, at the end of the one hour which he had secured in order to discuss his motion, that he had achieved the "real" purpose he had in mind, viz., the securing of an extra hour for debate. It is claimed, and I think with good warrant, that the death of a South Carolina member early on the 10th, and the consequent adjournment of the House immediately after the reading of the journal of that day, was the only thing that saved the Republican leaders from being swamped by insurgent Republicans. They thus had a whole day to "put on the screws" and bring pressure upon the insurgents, who confined themselves to speeches of protest against the report, so as to set themselves right with their constituents, but abstained from carrying that protest to the point of voting down the substitute for the "Hay" resolution which the Republicans had drawn and entrusted to McCall, of Massachusetts.

How general and bitter was the feeling, not only at the post office department, but even at the White House, was shown in the remarkable demonstration on the 11th, when William Alden Smith, of Michigan, having cited the cases of Blaine and Garfield as men who had been taken from the House membership to become the party nominee, said that he hoped the time was near at hand when the 30 years of service of Speaker Cannon would be crowned with the Republican Presidential nomination. The instantaneous and ostentatious endorsement of this proposition embraced practically the entire membership of the House, saving only a few Republican leaders like Payne, Dalzell, Hepburn and Overstreet. Had the Speaker followed the suggestion made shortly after by Congressman De Armond, and permitted the point of order raised against the Democratic substitute motion to be decided by the House itself, I think there can be no doubt that it would have been declared in order and adopted, and the effect would not unlikely have been to have drawn the line sharply and distinctly between the House and the President. This would have made Speaker Cannon the central figure of the antipathy of the Republican members to the President, so that the refrain would probably have at once been taken up, "Cannon, Cannon, four long years of Cannon," thus creating a popular idol around which the opposition to Roosevelt could gather, and which might possibly have defeated him for the nomination. The Speaker was thus shown to be either a poor politician, in depriving his friends of the opportunity of making him a popular idol, or else so intense a partisan that he would not permit even the bait of a possible Presidential nomination to interfere with his use of the great power of his position to prevent a thorough investigation of the postal department.

In this case, as in that of the Cuban reciprocity bill, the Republican insurgents deliberately voted for the motion to prevent their doing the very thing which they insisted they wished to do. Such is the stifling power of a party organization under the rigid rules of the House when the party whip is cracked.

ROBERT BAKER.

CLEVELAND.

Cleveland, March 16, 1904.—After the tremendous pluralities the Republicans secured in this State and city last Fall, it was generally supposed that Tom L. Johnson had been eliminated from practical politics, being so completely discredited at home that thenceforth he could be ignored by the Republicans as a "has been," and allowed to serve the remainder of his term in peace, then to follow the example of defeated politicians generally by passing into retirement. But the Republican leaders are evidently fearful that Johnson is not destined to follow the example of discredited politicians. For four successive elections he has defeated them here, and notwithstanding their great victory over him last Fall they have already given evidence that they are afraid to meet him in the political arena this spring. They know at what cost they won their victory over him in this county last Fall, and they do not care to have a repetition of that experience, when in all probability they would have the cost and lose, too. In order to avoid a contest with him they have passed what is known as the Chapman bill, a bill to abolish Spring elections.

"Golden Rule" Jones of Toledo is also a factor in this legislation. He has been quite troublesome to the machine in his city and it is intended to retire him as well as Johnson.

An effect of the Chapman bill in Cleveland is to continue in office for eight months, the Mayor, City Solicitor, City Treasurer and City Auditor. They will go out of office January 1, 1906, instead of May 1, 1905.

It likewise continues in office one-half of the members of council, the school director and one-half of the members of the school council; two justices of the peace, and a police judge for a similar period.

This new law makes all municipal, county, State and national elections occur at the same time. The next ballot here will have nearly four hundred names upon it, as there will be about seventy people to be elected and five or six tickets on the ballot.

The so-called "Rickets law," passed at the same time, will submit to the voters of the State a constitutional amendment whereby all municipal elections will occur in the Fall of odd years and all State elections in the Fall of even years. Under the Longworth law adopted two years ago this constitutional amendment can be placed in the party column if endorsed by the State political conventions, thus

getting the benefit of the straight party vote either for or against it, as the State convention decides. Without the party vote of the Republican party the amendment cannot carry; so the separation of State from municipal elections is still left in the hands of the Republican State convention.

The citizens of Cleveland are very much excited over prospective school legislation. Two plans are before the legislature for a reorganization of the schools of the State, made necessary by a recent decision of the Supreme Court of the State making all the school laws pertaining to municipalities invalid. These plans are known as the Cincinnati and Cleveland plans.

The former requires a large school council, the members being elected by wards and the council having entire charge of the executive and legislative branches, as well as of the department of instruction.

The latter requires a small board elected at large with legislative duties only. The executive is elected independently. The department of instruction is under a superintendent, responsible only to the executive head and not responsible to any body for the appointment of teachers.

The difference between the systems is, in substance, that the tenure of teachers in Cincinnati is determined by politics, while in Cleveland it depends on efficiency and good behavior. The Cincinnati plan is championed by Geo. B. Cox, of that city, sometimes called "Boss" Cox. The Cleveland plan is unanimously favored by the people of Cleveland regardless of political affiliations, excepting the Republican machine, now known as the "Herrick-Dick-Cox Combination," which has taken up the mantle of the late Senator Hanna. The prominent educators of the State favor the Cleveland plan, and President Elliot, of Harvard College endorses it heartily.

The friends of Mayor Johnson are very jubilant over the situation, as they believe that the independent voters of this city will never be cajoled again into voting a party ticket for the sake of harmony.

D. S. LUTHER.

is as yet no conclusive news regarding the matter, but the probabilities are that there has been no evacuation.

Naval skirmishes in the region of Port Arthur have continued, the most important of the war having occurred on the 10th. Reports of this fight are conflicting. They depend upon their origin—whether Russian or Japanese. Taking them all together they indicate that both sides suffered considerable loss in men and ships, but that no decisive or immediate advantage was secured by either.

The strict neutrality of China during this war between foreign Powers on her own territory is demanded by Russia, to the extent even of holding her troops to the south of the great wall. Notice to this effect was reported from St. Petersburg and Peking on the 10th to have been given to China. In obedience to that notice the Chinese government must not send troops beyond the great wall, and must exercise its influence to restrain Chinamen to the north of the wall from interfering with railway and telegraph lines. Failure on the part of China to heed this warning is to be considered by Russia as a breach of neutrality.

Peremptory action to guarantee neutrality on the part of the United States was taken on the 10th by President Roosevelt. He issued a proclamation supplementary to his original proclamation of neutrality, directing "all officials of the government, civil, military and naval," not only to observe the formal neutrality proclamation, "but also to abstain from either action or speech which can legitimately cause irritation to either of the combatants."

The most notable event of the week in the United States is the decision in the so-called "railroad merger" case (p. 41), rendered by the Federal Supreme Court on the 14th. This case grew out of an attempt made about two years and a half ago (vol iv., p. 505), to centralize railway control west of the Mississippi. A "holding" corporation had been organized under the laws of New Jersey, called the Northern Securities company. Its capital was \$400,000,000, and its

NEWS

Week ending Thursday, March 17.

Persistent rumors in connection with the Russo-Japanese war (p. 775), rumors emanating, however, from Japanese sources, have for several days encouraged a belief that Port Arthur has been evacuated by the Russians. These rumors have been as persistently denied from Russian sources. There