

mark has replied in the affirmative. The United States proclaimed neutrality on the 11th.

The subject of chief interest to the United States, however, with reference to the war, is Secretary Hay's diplomatic note (p. 713) regarding a proposed delimitation of the fighting territory. As unofficially (but probably correctly) reported on the 13th, Mr. Hay's note instructed the American representatives to Russia and Japan as follows:

You will express to the minister of foreign affairs the earnest desire of the government of the United States that, in the course of the military operations which have begun between Russia and Japan, the neutrality of China, and in all practical ways her administrative entity, shall be respected by both parties, and that the area of hostilities shall be localized and limited as much as possible, so that undue excitement and disturbance of the Chinese people may be prevented and the least possible loss to the commerce and intercourse of the world will be occasioned.

At the same time, Mr. Hay notified of this action all the Powers that participated in the Chinese adjustment at the close of the "Boxer" trouble, and requested similar action on their part. Great Britain, France, Germany and Austria-Hungary are reported to have fallen in with the suggestion. Japan has notified the United States of her assent; but Russia has not yet replied.

A significant dispatch comes through the Reuter agency from Moscow, Russia, under date of February 15th. It speaks of the degeneration of patriotic demonstrations at St. Petersburg into riotous scenes in which "seditious proclamations" play a conspicuous part. The police are reported to be making domiciliary visits and arresting many persons. As Russia is believed to have been on the verge of revolution at the outbreak of the war, the reported circumstances may have peculiar importance.

In British politics the most important event of the week was the defeat on the 15th of John Morley's amendment (p. 696) to the address of the Commons in reply to the King's speech. This amend-

ment, intended to raise the issue of free trade or protection directly, was as follows:

It is our duty to present to your majesty that our effective deliberation on financial services is impaired by conflicting declarations from your majesty's ministers. We respectfully submit the judgment of this House that the removal of protective duties has for more than half a century actively conduced to the vast extension of the trade and commerce of the realm and the welfare of the population, and this House believes that, while the needs for social improvement are still manifold and urgent, any return to protective duties, and more particularly when imposed upon the food of the people, would be deeply injurious to the national strength, contentment and well being.

The defeat of the proposed amendment was by a vote of 327 to 276. The Irish vote was cast solidly against the ministry, for the reason, as Mr. Redmond, the Irish leader explained, that—

Ireland has suffered in the past equally from the protectionist as from the free trade policy of England. We are determined to use the complications which have arisen in the English parties solely for the purpose of forwarding the cause of home rule. We voted against the government to-night not on the merits of Mr. Morley's amendment, but because we regarded it a vote of want of confidence in the ministry. We shall strike in the same way against every ministry so long as home rule is refused.

For the same reason, namely, that a vote for the amendment was regarded as a vote of want of confidence in the ministry, many ministerialists who oppose protection, voted against the amendment. The debate disclosed a hopeless division of opinion in the ministry itself.

Attention has again been drawn to the principle of home rule in American municipalities, by an apparent rivalry of both parties in the New York legislature to promote home rule legislation. The Republicans, under the lead of Gov. Odell, are reported to be contemplating laws which would delegate to municipal control not only the Sunday question, but most other subjects of local concern, such as the regulation of local finances, the granting of local franchises, etc.

In the same general direction, though more advanced, was the action of the League of Michigan Municipalities at its meeting at Ann Arbor on the 13th. The following report by the committee on resolutions, of which Frederick F. Ingram, of Detroit, was chairman, were adopted by the League unanimously:

Whereas, It is the purpose and object of this League to further efficiency and progress in municipal government, and believing that such ends will be promoted by creating interest in the vital municipal problems of the day; therefore be it resolved, that this League take official action favoring and encouraging the adoption of the following:

First. A complete and efficient direct nomination law, whereby all nominations throughout the State shall be made by single blanket ballot.

Second. That the principle of municipal ownership of public utilities be fostered and encouraged.

Third. That public rights should be zealously guarded; therefore, ordinances alienating any public rights or granting so-called franchises should be given the strictest scrutiny and opportunity for discussion, in which the public should be invited to participate. Therefore, with that end in view, no ordinance granting such rights should be put to final passage until due notice of at least 30 days shall have been given to the public, and not then, if in the meanwhile a petition containing a fair percentage of the qualified voters shall have been received by the common council asking for its reference to a popular vote.

A programme for securing immediate municipal ownership and operation of the Chicago street car systems (p. 705), was adopted on the 14th at a special delegate meeting held under the auspices of the Chicago Federation of Labor. The plan proposes—(1) That the Mueller law be adopted at the April election. (2) That the city acquire "as much of the tangible property, unexpired franchises and ninety-nine year act rights as may be a necessary part of an ideal system" by purchase or condemnation. (3) That the city council then submit to a vote of the people the question of issuing certificates to pay for the system and the question of municipal operation. (4) That in the meantime the council permit cars to be run only by revocable licenses.