

NEWS

The full text of the American treaty with Denmark for the purchase of the Danish West Indies, the terms of which had not been officially disclosed at the time of our last report (p. 681), was made public by the Senate on the 6th after receiving a favorable report from the Senate committee. In conveying sovereignty over the islands the treaty includes—

the absolute fee and ownership of all public, government or crown lands, public buildings, ports, harbors, fortifications, barracks and all other public property of every kind and description belonging to the government of Denmark, together with every right and appurtenance thereunto appertaining.

From this conveyance are excepted the arms and military stores of Denmark, which are to be removed unless purchased by the United States; also individual debts owing to Denmark, which are reserved to the crown; also property of the state church, which is to go to the congregations. As to the status of the inhabitants of the islands, the treaty provisions are as follows:

Danish subjects residing in said islands may remain therein or remove therefrom at will, retaining in either event all their rights of property, including the right to sell or dispose of such property or its proceeds, and in case they remain in the islands they shall continue, until otherwise provided, to enjoy all the private, municipal rights and liberties secured to them by the laws now in force. If the present laws are altered, the said inhabitants shall not thereby be placed in a less favorable position in respect to the above-mentioned rights and liberties than they now enjoy. Those who remain in the islands may reserve their allegiance to the crown of Denmark by making, before a court of record, within two years from the date of the exchange of ratifications of this convention, a declaration of their decision to preserve such allegiance, in default of which declaration they shall be held to have renounced it and to have accepted allegiance to the United States; but such election of Danish allegiance shall not, after the lapse of said term of two years, be a bar to their renunciation of their preserved Danish allegiance and their election of allegiance to the United States and admission to the nationality thereof on the same terms as may be provided according to the laws of the United States for other inhabitants of the islands. The civil rights and the political status of the inhabitants of the islands shall be determined by the

congress, subject to the stipulations contained in the present convention.

In respect of the political status of these people, therefore, the treaty follows that with Spain, in its cession of Porto Rico and the Philippines, which leaves the question of citizenship to Congress. It departs in this respect from all our previous treaties of cession. For these treaties not only transferred the allegiance of the inhabitants to the United States; they also required the United States to invest the inhabitants with the reciprocal right of American citizenship. The amount agreed upon in this treaty as purchase price is \$5,000,000, and the transaction is to be completed at Washington within six months after ratification. The treaty bears date at Washington the 24th day of January, 1902, and is signed by John Hay for the United States and C. Brun for Denmark.

Another treaty, recently made but just disclosed, is of extraordinary importance in world politics. It is nothing less than a treaty of alliance between Great Britain and Japan with reference to the far eastern question or "open door" in China. While its terms are friendly to all nations, this treaty is manifestly intended to check Russia. The circumstances out of which it has evolved date back to the war between Japan and China in 1894 and 1895.

At the close of that war, Japan, seeking to acquire as one of the results of her victory, a foothold on the mainland of Asia, insisted upon retaining possession of the Korean peninsula, over which China had until then exercised dominion as suzerain. To prevent this, Russia interfered, and in 1896 the Japanese withdrew. By agreement between Russia and Japan, Korea was acknowledged by both countries in 1898 as an independent power; but Japan has never abandoned her ambition to expand to the mainland, nor has Russia receded from her policy of exclusive control in northern China.

Pursuant to the Russian policy a Russian fleet occupied Port Arthur, at the southern extremity of Manchuria and commanding the entrance to the gulfs of Laiotung and Pechili from the north; and, in accordance with concessions secured from the Chinese government, a Russian military force took formal possession (vol. i, No. 1, p. 10) on the 28th of

March, 1898. As an offset to this move the British, fearing that Russia contemplated securing a monopoly of Chinese exploitation, secured the concession, July 1, 1898, of Wei-Hai-Wei, which also commands, but from the south, the entrance to the gulfs of Laiotung and Pechili. Disturbing incidents in Russo-British relations followed (see vol. i, No. 19, p. 10; No. 20, p. 9; No. 25, p. 9; No. 50, p. 10; vol. ii, No. 57, p. 10; No. 59, p. 10); until the Boxer troubles in China united all the powers in efforts to restore order. While these activities were in progress in the region of Peking, Russia, participating there with the rest, carried on in addition a little order-restoring war of her own in the province of Manchuria. This was upon pretense of protecting her southern frontiers, upon which Manchuria borders. At the close of the Boxer troubles, and while settlement negotiations with the Chinese government were proceeding, Russia assumed a protectorate over Manchuria (vol. iii, p. 617), which she has never since renounced. Objections made by Great Britain, the United States and Japan, evoked from Russia about a year ago a diplomatic note (vol. iii, pp. 769, 775) containing the following assurance:

As soon as lasting order shall have been established in Manchuria and indispensable measures taken for the protection of railway construction, which, according to formal agreement, China assured, Russia will not fail to recall her troops from these territories of the neighbor empire, provided the action of other powers does not place any obstacle in the way of such a measure.

Notwithstanding this assurance, Russia appears to have been trying even then to force from China a treaty making concessions, for China appealed to the powers (vol. iii, p. 823) to support her in refusing to sign some treaty which Russia demanded. Later an explanation was given out by Russia (vol. iv, p. 9), in which she asserted that her intention to restore Manchuria to China could manifestly—

only be carried out when the normal situation is completely restored to the empire, and the central government established at the capital independent and strong enough to guarantee Russia against a recurrence of the events of last year.

This note concluded with the intimation that—

while the Russian government maintains its present organization in Manchuria, to preserve order in the vicinity of the broad frontiers of Russia,

and remains faithful to its original and oft-repeated political programme, it will quietly await the further course of events.

It was understood, consequently, that Russia was pledged to withdraw from Manchuria when the Chinese government had been restored to power and become capable of maintaining order there. But Japan was not satisfied. At any rate it was reported last April (vol. iv, p. 25) that she had demanded of China either that Russia be ejected from Manchuria or that the temporary occupation of that province be made international. And as matter of fact, Russia has remained in Manchuria notwithstanding the reestablishment of the central Chinese government. After last spring the subject attracted no public attention until the 7th of the present month, when it was reported from Washington that protests had been made to China by Great Britain, the United States and Japan, against signing a treaty then understood to be in process of negotiation with Russia. That report was followed on the 12th by a dispatch from London reciting the terms of the treaty of alliance between Great Britain and Japan.

This treaty had been concluded in January last between Lord Lansdowne for Great Britain and Baron Hayashi for Japan, and forwarded January 30 to the British minister in Japan. It provides that the contracting powers—
acted solely by a desire to maintain the status quo and general policy in the extreme East, and being moreover especially interested in maintaining the independence and territorial integrity of China and Korea, and in securing equal opportunities in those countries for the commerce and industry of all nations—

agree in Article I. to recognize the independence of China and Korea, but, with reference to their especial interests in both countries, to—

recognize that it will be admissible for either of them to take such measures as may be indispensable in order to safeguard those interests if those be threatened either by the aggressive action of any other power, or by disturbances arising in China or Korea, necessitating the intervention of either of the contracting parties for the protection of the lives and property of its subjects.

The treaty then proceeds to define the agreement for that purpose:

Art. II. If either Great Britain or Japan, in defense of their respective

interests, as above described, should become involved in a war with another power, the other contracting party will maintain strict neutrality and use its efforts to prevent other powers from joining in the hostilities against its ally.

Art. III. If, in the above event, any other power or powers should join in hostilities against the ally, the other contracting party will come to its assistance and will conduct war in common and make peace in mutual agreement with it.

Art. IV. The contracting parties agree that neither of them will, without consulting the other, enter into separate arrangements with another power to the prejudice of the interests above described.

Art. V. Whenever in the opinion of either Great Britain or Japan the above mentioned interests are jeopardized the two governments will communicate with one another fully and frankly.

This treaty goes into effect immediately, remains in force five years, is binding for one year after either party renounces it, and if it expires during war shall nevertheless be regarded as binding until peace is concluded.

The publication of this treaty with Japan comes upon the heels of an official admission in the British parliament that Great Britain had decided to cease fortifying Wei-Hai-Wei and to evacuate the place. Rumors of this intention had been published on the 6th, but the official admission was not made until the 10th, the day but one before the publication of the treaty with Japan. The secretary for war, Mr. Broderick, then stated that the evacuation had been decided upon. But in the house of lords, a little later, Lord Onslow, under secretary for the colonial office, explained that the place would still be held as a colony. It now appears that the administration of Wei-Hai-Wei was transferred on January 1, from the war office to the colonial office. Much popular indignation upon the disclosure of this action was reported from London, and there is a suspicion that it was to allay that feeling that the treaty with Japan was hurriedly given out.

Parliament has suppressed the scandals in connection with the purchase of military supplies for use in South Africa (p. 695), a feeling having prevailed that this subject must be subordinated to the supreme purpose of completely conquering the

Boers. At the same time the ministry has decided to facilitate negotiations for peace along the lines of Lord Lansdowne's suggestion (p. 695) in his letter to the Dutch government. Accordingly, Mr. Balfour announced in the Commons on the 6th that copies of the correspondence with the Dutch government had been mailed to Lord Milner, governor of the "Transvaal" and "Orange River" colonies, and high commissioner of South Africa, with instructions to cause Lord Kitchener to communicate the contents to the Boer leaders in the field. Mr. Balfour's statement was supplemented by Mr. Chamberlain with the information that if the Boer leaders propose negotiations for peace to Lord Kitchener, the proposals will be forwarded to London for the consideration of the ministry.

In the field the British have suffered another keen disappointment. Lord Kitchener made elaborate plans to capture DeWet by surrounding his force, estimated at 2,000 men, and closing him in. The advance began on the 4th, participated in by all the British troops in the northeastern part of the Orange Free State, and superintended by Lord Kitchener in person; but on the 7th the great closing-in movement came to nothing, so far as the main object was concerned. Realizing that he had been enclosed, DeWet ordered his men to disperse, to meet again at a rendezvous outside the British lines; and at 1 o'clock in the morning of the 7th, under cover of the darkness, he broke through and escaped toward the south. Three of his immediate party are reported to have been killed. Lord Kitchener reports DeWet's total loss in killed, wounded and prisoners in this movement at 283 and his own at 10. In an engagement near Beaufort West, in Cape Colony, the Boers were victorious. They captured 60 donkey wagons, transporting provisions under a convoy of 160 British troops. The loss, according to British reports, was 13 killed and 48 wounded among the British, and 24 killed and 47 wounded among the Boers. In another engagement, February 3, the British lost 10 killed and 17 wounded; while in still another, February 7, the Boers lost 3 killed and 36 wounded. These incomplete reports of casualties are supplemented by Lord Kitchener's usual weekly reports of Boer losses—69 killed, 17 wounded, 57 surrendered and 574 taken prisoners—but with no statement of British losses for the same period.