

contend with a fully equipped military force. He and other leaders of his party were waited upon on the 19th by the leaders of the Liberal party, who urged an abandonment of the general labor strike which had been called in furtherance of the suffrage movement. The suggestion was favorably received, and on the 20th the general council of labor issued a manifesto to the workmen, advising that the strike be abandoned. Accordingly work was generally resumed on the 22d. At this time some 300,000 men had struck work. The spirit of the movement and the significance of the termination of the strike are best indicated by this quotation from a newspaper interview on the 18th with M. Vandervelde:

The defeat in the chamber is a triumph for the country. What the government has arbitrarily refused today will be realized by the Belgian people to-morrow. The Catholic party ignores the popular will, and if the King be wise he will show that he is King of the Belgian people. The days for street barricades are over. We rely on moral force, and therein lies our strength.

Across the channel, and still the wearisome story of arbitrary government goes on. The English ministry have revived the old-time drastic British policy of governing Ireland. A disturbed condition in Ireland was indicated a month ago (vol. iv., p. 809), in connection with a debate in parliament on Irish landlordism. At that time, although the ministry were evidently disposed to put down the United Irish league, the opinion prevailed that coercion should be avoided until it could be seen whether the new land purchase bill which they were then putting through parliament would have a conciliatory effect. They seem now to have changed their policy. The chief secretary for Ireland, Mr. Wyndham, admits that there is comparative absence in Ireland of crimes against the person; but he asserts that intimidation and boycotting are intolerable. For that reason, the British government caused the lord lieutenant of Ireland to "proclaim" nine Irish counties and the cities of Cork and Waterford as under the coercion act. This he did on the 16th. It means that in these places public meetings are forbidden and trial by jury is suspended. Autocratic domination takes the place of constitutional government.

John Redmond, the Irish leader,

speaking in the commons on the 17th, denounced this action as a step in an infamous conspiracy in England to foment crime in Ireland where none now exists. He entreated the ministry to recede from their arbitrary policy, but warned them that if they continued it they would be met face to face and with blow for blow. A call for sympathy and support from the Irish in America has been made by Redmond and Dillon.

Even at home the British ministry threatens unjust exactions and is arousing in consequence a widespread bitterness of public sentiment. For one thing the education bill now before parliament would compel non-conformists to pay direct taxes for the support of denominational schools. To protest against this measure an enormous mass meeting was held at St. James's Hall on the 14th, at which prominent men, including clergymen and members of parliament, declared their determination to resist if the measure passes.

But the tariff tax on breadstuffs, proposed by the ministry, as reported last week, is creating most excitement throughout the country. On the "budget," which included this measure, the ministry applied the closure in the Commons on the 23d, and the bill was thereupon passed by a vote of 283 to 197. In the course of the debate the chancellor of the exchequer predicted that the advance in the price of bread, which had been from one cent to two cents a loaf higher since the budget announcement, would decline as soon as trade had adjusted itself to the new conditions.

Peace negotiations in the South African war, for the prosecution of which these food taxes in Great Britain are imposed, have come to no conclusion beyond a decision of the Boer leaders to submit terms of peace to their followers in the field. Press dispatches—which, however, cannot be relied upon, owing to the British censorship—told on the 17th of a hitch in the negotiations at Pretoria. The same untrustworthy source of information gave out on the 18th that Great Britain had refused on the 16th to modify its offered terms, and that on the 17th a basis of peace was agreed upon. It then came out authoritatively on the 18th, through Mr. Balfour on the floor of the Commons, that arrange-

ments for a Boer referendum had been made. Mr. Balfour said:

In conformity with the pledge I gave to the House a day or two ago, it will be proper for me to say that Lord Milner and Lord Kitchener, while refusing an armistice on military grounds, have agreed to give facilities for the election and meeting of representatives of the various commandos to consider the position. The Boer leaders have left Pretoria to carry out this plan. It is not expected that communication will be resumed in less than three weeks.

The Boer leaders left Pretoria at nine o'clock at night on the 18th. Their departure is regarded in Boer circles in Amsterdam as evidence not of a coming settlement through the referendum, but of a collapse of the peace negotiations.

Meanwhile military operations are not stayed, except that the British say they are obligated not to attack the Boers on the days set apart for the referendum. A fight is reported on the 11th in which the British lost 1 killed and 4 dangerously wounded. In two others, on the 20th, their loss was 6 killed and 17 wounded. A large inclosing movement by Gen. Hamilton was reported on the 22d as having been concluded, but results were not given.

The investigation into the facts regarding the British army supply post at Port Chalmette, near New Orleans (p. 9), which Col. Crowder of the U. S. army began about two weeks ago, under orders from President Roosevelt, was concluded on the 19th; and on the 21st Col. Crowder made an informal report to the President. He is understood to be preparing his official report. The nature of his findings has not been disclosed. It has been variously reported, in some papers as in favor of the British and in others as against them.

Another gigantic trust, in process of formation for more than a year (vol. iv., pp. 56, 73, 697), is authoritatively announced as completed. It is a combination of six of the leading trans-Atlantic steamer lines—the White Star, with world wide connections; the Dominion, to Liverpool London and the Mediterranean; the Leyland, to Liverpool; the Atlantic Transport, to London; the American, to Southampton; and the Red Star, to Antwerp. The organizer, of course is Mr. Morgan. The merger was predicted