

of a brilliant Boer victory (vol. iii., p. 583), which suddenly revived general interest in the subject. And now, another year having elapsed, during which the South African war news had again dropped to a minor place, the holiday season has again restored it and made the South African war the news topic of principal interest.

Though some indications of revived energy among the Boers was given last week, in that report the British appeared to have offset their losses somewhat by an important capture on the 24th. But later advices show that on the same day on which this capture was made in the Pietersburg district, the Boers were making a capture of much greater importance and winning one of the most encouraging successes of the year. This was at Zeefontein, in the Orange Free State, northwest of Bloemfontein and between Bethlehem and Lindley. Under DeWet they attacked four companies of British yeomanry, commanded by Col. Firman. Firman was absent at the time, and during the battle Maj. Williams was in command. The British lost 56 in killed, including Maj. Williams, and 250 in wounded and prisoners. The two guns in possession of the British at this point were captured by the Boers. After the battle the Boers were pursued by reinforcements of British horse, but unsuccessfully. Subsequently they released their prisoners.

The British casualties at Begin-deryn, reported last week (p. 602) prove to have been 10 killed and 15 wounded.

Boer leaders at Amsterdam are said to have decided to send C. M. Wessels to the United States, accredited by President Kruger to President Roosevelt, with a view to making peace overtures. American sentiment being regarded as friendly. This impression derives further support from the fact that pro-Boer meetings are becoming markedly successful. A large one was held in Topeka, Kan., on the 29th, and was addressed by prominent leaders of both political parties. The resolutions urged an offer by President Roosevelt of his friendly offices as an arbitrator. Other meetings of similar character are being arranged for, following the example (p. 568) of the great meeting last month at the Auditorium, in Chicago, which was pre-

sided over by Judge Tuley and addressed by Burke Cockran.

Curiously enough there comes a holiday message from the Philippines (the last previous reports from which were summarized at page 568), which resembles that from South Africa, though in minor degree. On the very day of the British disaster in the Boer war, Christmas eve, the Americans in the Philippines suffered seriously in an engagement in the island of Samar. An American detachment of 18 men, while scouting near Dapado, was attacked by Filipinos, and a hand-to-hand fight resulted. The American loss was seven killed and six wounded.

Other Philippine news is not so disheartening to the Americans. In an engagement in Batangas province, Luzon, only one American was badly wounded, while several Filipinos were killed. In Laguna province, Luzon, the Americans have made what the dispatches describe as a "clean sweep." They have burned not only all the Filipino barracks they could find, but also several little villages or hamlets. Still another item of Philippine news is the sentence to hanging of several Filipinos, by American courts-martial, upon allegations of murder, one of the accused being a commander of Filipino forces charged with aiding the assassination of prisoners.

The birthday of Jose Rizal, Filipino poet and patriot, who was executed by the Spanish before the occupation of the Philippines by the Americans, was celebrated at Manila on the 30th, by his countrymen. They decorated the spot upon which he died, and held a mass meeting on the site where a monument to his memory is to be erected.

The American civil governor, Taft, sailed from Manila for home on the 24th, on the United States army transport Grant, leaving Vice Gov. Wright at the head of the American civil government in the archipelago.

Warfare is not altogether the order of our time, but wars and rumors of war are the prominent facts which meet the eye in whatever direction it turns. South America, already furnishing news from two wars, is looked to now for news of a third. Chili and Argentina are the countries involved. We have already noted the possibility of this war (pp. 584, 602); supposing,

however, that it had been averted by the signing, reported last week, of a protocol between the quarreling countries. But news of the current week is to the effect that the government of Argentina has rejected this settlement.

The dispute between Chili and Argentina is over a boundary line. By treaty in 1881, the boundary line between the two countries southward to the fifty-second parallel of south latitude, was laid along the highest summits of the Andes mountains, between the watersheds on each side; and it was agreed that disputes as to its course should be decided amicably by experts chosen by the two governments. Disputes did arise, and in 1892 an attempt was made to fix the line in accordance with the treaty; but the experts could not agree, the Argentine government declaring that the line proposed by Chili fell far within Argentine territory. Disputes continuing, a new treaty on the subject was entered into in 1898, under which the definition of that portion of the boundary which is south of latitude 26 degrees, 52 minutes and 45 seconds, was left to the decision of the British government. In 1899 the British government accordingly appointed as arbitrators Baron Edward McNaghten, Gen. Sir Charles Ordagh and Col. Sir Thomas H. Holdich. Although the arbitration proceedings are still pending, Chili has opened roads in the disputed territory. She is also—and this is the immediate cause of the present friction—fortifying disputed territory in the region of the Straits of Magellan, south of the fifty-second parallel, territory which she claims to be outside the territory involved in the pending arbitration proceedings; and as a countermove Argentina has sent troops into the same territory, and is making active preparations for war.

The good offices of the United States were offered to Chili and Argentina early in December of this year, but they have not been accepted. Great Britain and Brazil made a like offer at about the same time, which as yet is also unaccepted. On the 13th Chili forwarded diplomatic proposals to Argentina, to which the latter replied on the 16th. On the 21st Argentina ordered her minister to Chili to withdraw if the terms of her reply were not complied with. An arrangement was made, however, on the 25th, whereby both governments agreed to

include the present dispute in the arbitration treaty of 1898, and to refrain from acts of dominion in the debatable territory pending the award of the British arbitrators. This arrangement was the protocol we mentioned last week. Accordingly, the Argentine minister to Great Britain was notified by his government on the 26th, so said the London dispatches, that—

the pending incidents have been settled direct with Chili in satisfactory form. Chili has given explanations concerning the roads. The police of both countries have been withdrawn from the disputed territory.

But since that notification Argentina is reported to have overruled her diplomatic representatives who assented to the protocol of the 25th, dispatches of the 28th from Washington being to the effect that the Argentina government has rejected so much of the protocol as requires her to withdraw her police from the territory of Ultima Esperanza, the territory in immediate dispute, and to include the present difficulty in the arbitration by Great Britain.

From Colombia, one of the two South American countries referred to above as being involved in war, there is news of an important battle. Our last previous reference to this war was at page 554, when Colon was re-surrendered to the government troops. News of the battle now referred to was not received until the 28th, though it was fought on the 9th. The insurgents, 1,200 strong, attacked a garrison of 430 men, beginning the fight at Honda, on the Magdalena river about 60 miles northwest of Bogota, the capital of Colombia. It lasted from six in the morning until 11:30 at night, ending at Caracol, nine miles away. The loss of life is reported as 400.

From Venezuela no important news has transpired since our report of last week (p. 601), except that Germany has postponed her contemplated naval demonstration for the collection of debts due German subjects. In this connection it is reported from Washington that the German ambassador to the United States has assured President Roosevelt that in the proposed German movement in Venezuelan waters there will be no violation of the Monroe doctrine; but that nothing more will be done than to hold and administer Venezuelan custom

houses until the amount of the indebtedness shall have been collected.

The first of the Cuban elections arranged by the permanent Cuban committee in cooperation with Gov. Gen. Wood, (p. 411) came off on the 31st. T. Estrada Palma was elected president of the Republic and Louis Estevez vice president. The president-elect lives in exile at Central Valley, a village near Goshen, N. Y. He intends to return to Cuba in the spring.

Practical steps to head off the railroad trust, known as the Northern Securities company of New Jersey (pp. 505, 534), have been taken by the states affected. Gov. Van Sant, of Minnesota, proposed a conference of these states on the subject as soon as the trust was formed (p. 534), but it was not until late in December that the conference got together. It met at Helena, Mont., on the 30th. The attendants were Gov. Van Sant and Attorney General Douglas, of Minnesota; Gov. Toole and Attorney General Donovan, of Montana; Gov. Herroid and Attorney General Pyle, of South Dakota; Gov. Hunt and Attorney General Martin, of Idaho; and Attorney General Stratton, of Washington. The recent death of Gov. Rogers, of Washington, prevented a gubernatorial representation from that state. Gov. Van Sant was elected chairman of the conference, and Attorney General Martin secretary. No definite business was transacted on the 30th; but on the 31st the conference laid out a plan of campaign. The whole plan has not been divulged; but it is understood that the first step is to be a law suit against the trust brought by the state of Minnesota, and morally supported by the other states. Congress was petitioned, also, in the matter.

Another check upon the Northern Securities company scheme for railroad consolidation came in the form of an injunction, probably instigated by some of the parties to the deal, for purposes of their own. One Peter Power, a stockholder of the Northern Pacific railway, owning 100 shares, obtained this injunction from the federal district judge at Minneapolis. It restrained the officers of the Northern Pacific from retiring preferred stock or doing any other act tending to transfer the management of the road to the Northern Securities company. The reasons for the injunction were that the officers of the Northern Pa-

cific the Great Northern, and the Burlington roads had made an agreement to stifle competition by consolidating them; and inasmuch as direct consolidation is unlawful under the statutes of several states through which the roads pass, they had organized the Northern Securities company for the purpose of acquiring ownership of the competing roads and thereby evading these statutes. But the injunction was quickly dissolved. The federal circuit judge dissolved it on the 31st, holding that there was nothing in the case to show an intention to consolidate either directly or indirectly. In consequence of this favorable decision the Northern Pacific retired all its preferred stock at midnight on the 1st.

#### NEWS NOTES.

—United States Senator William J. Sewell, of New Jersey, died at Camden on the 27th, after a prolonged illness.

—The American Historical society and the American Economic society met in joint session at Washington on the 27th.

—Three Finland newspapers have been suppressed and seven suspended by the Russian government for criticisms of Russian subjugation of Finland.

—At the New Year reception at the White House, from 11:05 a. m. to 2:35 p. m., President Roosevelt received 8,351 callers—3,000 more than were received last year.

—John R. Rogers, governor of Washington, died on the 26th, aged 63 years. He was a Populist. The lieutenant governor, who succeeds him, is a Republican.

—The American navy department is reported to have abandoned the use of carrier pigeons, intending to develop instead for naval purposes the Marconi system of wireless telegraphy.

—The Zionist congress met at Basle on the 26th, with 1,000 delegates in attendance. It has resolved to establish a fund of \$1,000,000, to be made up of collections from all quarters of the world for the purchase of land in Palestine for Jewish occupation.

—According to mail advices from Japan a German named Theyerson has attempted to kill the emperor of Japan. The Japanese government had seized a copper mine in which the German was interested, a fact which is reported as the motive for the crime.

—An agreement for a prize fight between James J. Jeffries and Thomas Sharkey was made on the 30th, the fight to take place between March