

supplies, which, under the treaty of Washington of 1871, constitutes a breach of neutrality calling for preventive action by the American government. In support of that contention a brief, approved by prominent Chicago lawyers, was made the basis of a petition to President Roosevelt, which is now being circulated throughout the country for signatures. The petition urges the president—

to at once insist upon a strict enforcement of Article vi of the treaty of May 8, 1871, between the United States and Great Britain, and prohibit the further exportation of horses and mules from the harbors of the United States for use against the Boers of South Africa.

The brief which accompanies the foregoing petition quotes from the treaty of Washington the following clauses:

A neutral government is bound . . . Secondly, not to permit or suffer either belligerent to make use of its ports or waters as the base of naval operations against the other, or for the purpose of the renewal or augmentation of military supplies or arms, or the recruitment of men. Thirdly, to exercise due diligence in its own ports and waters, and as to all persons within its jurisdiction, to prevent any violation of the foregoing obligations and duties.

An explanation, also, is made in the brief, of a legal decision in a federal court which refused last Spring to issue an injunction, at the suit of private parties, against the action of the belligerent British army agents at New Orleans. The decision in that case held nothing further than that the enforcement of the neutrality defined by the treaty of Washington is not a judicial function but is the function of the executive department of the government—in other words, of the president. It is quite in accordance with this decision, therefore, that the petition described above has been prepared and is to be presented to Mr. Roosevelt.

From the seat of the war there is no news of interest or importance except a report of the 13th from Lord Kitchener that Gen. Bruce-Hamilton had almost captured Gen. Botha. Gen. Hamilton heard of a concentration of Boers at Knapdar, but when he arrived at the spot they were already three miles away. He chased them until his horses gave out, capturing 32 and some ammunition; but Gen.

Botha, who led the retreating column, was not among the prisoners. An official report of less moment tells of the surprise of a Boer camp and the capture of 42 prisoners, including Maj. Wolmarans.

British politics, now at an exciting point owing to the reassembling of parliament on the 16th, oscillates about the Boer war issue. The British people supposed the war to have been victoriously ended fifteen months ago, and the awakening has been rude, the more especially as slow enlistments are prophetic of conscription and heavy expenses demand drastic taxation. The Liberal party, therefore, is much more vigorous than at any time since the war began. As noted in these columns at the time (p. 584), Lord Rosebery returned to politics with a speech at Chesterfield on the 16th of December, in which, while advocating the prosecution of the war, he urged recognition of Kruger and consideration of proposals for peace if offered by the Boers. The speech created a widespread impression that Lord Rosebery's policy was self-contradictory and designed to give shape to a new party; and when the London Liberal association met on the 13th of the present month, a letter from Lord Rosebery, regretting his inability to attend but expressing the hope that the meeting would second his own efforts to secure a common sense Liberal policy, was hooted and hissed. But it was also cheered, and Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, the Liberal leader, explained that he regarded the points of difference between himself and Lord Rosebery as immaterial and welcomed Rosebery's cooperation. To the same effect was a speech by James Bryce at Aberdeen on the 9th. There seems, therefore, to be a strong probability of a union of the Liberal factions in parliament upon a demand that proposals of peace from the Boers be considered. As the ministry has refused to consider anything but unconditional surrender, and as there is evidently an increasing opposition among the British people to waging such a war as this, a union of the Liberals upon that one point will not unlikely put the ministry in an embarrassing situation. It may possibly result in an honorable peace.

In American politics the event which has excited most interest, though of little importance in itself, is the withdrawal of Richard Croker

from the leadership of Tammany Hall, the regular Democratic organization of New York city. The place of leadership in that organization is the chairmanship of the finance committee. This place has been held for several years by Mr. Croker, but on the 11th, the chairman of the general committee, ex-Judge George M. Van Hoesen, announced, in making up the different subsidiary committees, that Mr. Croker had declined to serve further as chairman of the finance committee, and that upon Mr. Croker's suggestion he had appointed to that place Mr. Lewis Nixon. Mr. Nixon is an honor graduate of the naval academy, who came into general notice as the designer of the battleships Oregon, Indiana and Massachusetts. He was born in Maryland about 40 years ago and has lived in New York seven years.

Three states have elected United States senators. For Maryland, Arthur Pue Gorman, Democrat, was elected on the 15th in joint session of the legislature by the vote of 68 to 52 for William H. Jackson, Republican. Senator Gorman's nomination had been made (p. 634) in the Democratic caucus of the legislature on the 8th. Also on the 15th James B. McCreary, Democrat, was elected for Kentucky by the vote, in joint session, of 97 to 35 for Senator De Boe, Republican. On the same day the legislature of Ohio, in joint session, elected Joseph B. Foraker, Republican, by 87 to 53 for Charles W. Baker, Democrat. Republican nominations for the long and the short term senatorships for Iowa, equivalent to election, were made in caucus on the 14th, William B. Allison being nominated for the long term and Jonathan P. Dolliver for the short one.

The debate over the Isthmian canal bill. Nicaraguan route, in progress in the lower house of congress as our last week's issue went to press, was concluded on the 9th, when the bill was passed by the vote of 309 to 2. On a test vote upon an amendment it appeared that the Panama route had large support, and the overwhelming vote noted above was secured with the understanding that if the Senate decides in favor of Panama the Nicaraguan majority in the House will acquiesce. As it passed the House, this bill authorizes the president to secure from the states of Costa Rica and Nicaragua, in behalf of the United States, control of such portion of the territory of those states as may be

necessary for the construction of a canal suitable to the wants of modern navigation and commerce, and appropriates such sums as may be necessary to secure the control of the territory. It further authorizes the president, after securing control of the needed territory, to direct the secretary of war to construct the canal from the Caribbean sea, at a point near Greytown, in Nicaragua, by way of Lake Nicaragua, to a point on the Pacific ocean near Brito, and also to construct proper harbors at the termini of the canal, and to make necessary provisions for the defense of the canal and harbors. Authority is also given the president to make such surveys as may be necessary and to employ such persons in constructing the canal as may seem wise to him, and directs that in the construction of the canal the river San Juan and lake Nicaragua shall be used as far as they are available. The president is to guarantee to the states of Costa Rica and Nicaragua the use of the canal and harbors, upon terms to be agreed upon, for all vessels owned by those states or their citizens. Finally, an immediate appropriation of \$10,000,000 is made to carry on the work, and the secretary of war is authorized to enter into contracts for material and work, such work and material to be paid for as appropriations may be made from time to time, the aggregate cost being fixed at \$180,000,000. The bill went up to the Senate on the 13th, and was immediately referred to the Senate committee on interoceanic canals.

Representative Cooper's bill for permanent civil government in the Philippines (p. 632) came before the House committee on insular affairs on the 9th, and was referred by that committee to a sub-committee composed of Representatives Cooper, Moody, Crumpacker and Hamilton (Republicans), and Jones and Henry (Democrats).

From the Philippine islands it is reported that two of Gen. Malvar's principal supporters in Batangas province, Luzon, have surrendered to Gen. Bell, of the American army, and that they have been granted an armistice of five days for the purpose of enabling them to concentrate and surrender 160 Filipino troops with their arms. American successes of another kind are reported from the same province, Cols. Wint and Wells having "destroyed a large number of

barracks and hamlets and enough rations to keep 20,000 Filipinos for six months," without a single American casualty during the entire expedition. The Filipinos are described as fleeing before the Americans, while "many of them were killed and several surrendered."

A petition regarding Filipino leaders has been forwarded from Boston to congress, by the Anti-Imperialist league. It asks that a hearing be given by that body to Mabini and Aguinaldo. In the same general spirit Senator Hoar introduced a resolution in the Senate on the 13th, providing for the appointment of a committee of seven senators to examine into the conduct of the war in the Philippines, the administration of the government there and the condition and character of the inhabitants of the archipelago, the committee to have power to send for papers and persons, to administer oaths and to sit during the sessions of the senate. On the 14th Mr. Hoar spoke at length upon his resolution. Senator Lodge opposed it, urging that the matter be referred to the Philippines committee. No disposition of the resolution has yet been made.

A new phase of the memorable legal fight (p. 533) of the Chicago school teachers to compel the traction companies of this city to pay their taxes, has developed. The Federation of Teachers, under the leadership of Catharine Goggin and Margaret A. Haley, began this litigation because the deficiency in public revenues was a constant menace to the public schools. In investigating the reason for the annual complaints of shortness of funds, the teachers discovered that the traction companies were evading taxation on enormous franchise values, and after a litigation covering two years they won their case before the supreme court of the state, and the board of equalization accordingly assessed the Chicago traction companies at an amount (p. 534) that would yield an increase in taxes from them for 1900 of over \$2,000,000. But the companies still hold the taxing authorities at arm's length, and the school authorities announce the probable necessity of either cutting down teachers' salaries or closing the schools. In consequence of that announcement, the Teachers' Federation held a meeting at Masonic Temple on the 11th, which, after listening to Miss Haley, adopted an ad-

dress to "the parents, taxpayers and citizens of Chicago," saying:

The schools of Chicago are to be closed—the children are to be turned into the streets. Do you know why? Because the street railway and other companies refuse to pay this city the taxes that they owe on their franchises. The supreme court of Illinois says they owe these taxes. The state board of equalization, acting under the order of the supreme court, made the assessment on these franchises for one of the omitted years—1900. The corporations have applied to the federal courts to stop the collection of this tax, amounting to over \$2,000,000. These street railway companies, at the same time, are asking for renewal of these immensely valuable franchises from the city council. There is every indication that they will succeed in getting them. Do you not think these railway companies ought to pay what they owe before the city of Chicago considers the matter of granting them leases?

Accompanying this address the teachers are sending out for signatures a petition addressed to the city council. After a recital of the facts, it is as follows:

The undersigned protest against the renewal of any franchises to any of the present street railway companies, and petition that the city of Chicago do not treat with the said corporations until they have paid the taxes for which they are in arrears to the city.

At the same meeting the teachers adopted resolutions reciting the shortness of school funds, tracing the difficulty to apathy on the part of the public regarding the evasion of taxes, explaining their own work and its success in the courts, and resolving—

First, that the inconvenience of insufficient revenue should not be borne chiefly by us, who have done all that has been done to avert the situation that now exists; second, that in the alternative of closing the schools or cutting the teachers' salaries the schools should be closed, as that is obviously the only way in which the public can be brought to a proper sense of the alarming condition that now exists; third, that a copy of these resolutions be forwarded to the city council and the board of education.

NEWS NOTES.

—Gov. Nash, of Ohio, was formally inaugurated for the second time as governor of Ohio on the 13th.

—The Chicago Inter Ocean, formerly controlled by Charles T. Yerkes,