

sorting to conscription, he proposed additional inducements to volunteers.

From Spain the only news of permanent interest relates to the Barcelona riots, which were reported last week (p. 745) to have subsided. Owing to the Spanish censorship of news, it is not yet positively known whether that report is true; but so far as censored reports can be confirmatory, it is confirmed by Madrid dispatches of the 4th to the effect that several strikers arrested for participation in the "recent" Barcelona riots were shot that morning. The same dispatches report seizures of papers at houses of "anarchists" which reveal a widespread plot now frustrated. They tell, however, of two new strikes, one at Cadiz and the other at Ferrol.

Since our last report regarding the civil war in Venezuela (p. 633) the news from that quarter has continued to be gossipy and untrustworthy; but it seems possible to gather from it all some statements that are really worthy of belief. Early in the year the name of a new revolutionary leader, Gen. Matos, came into prominence. He sailed from Martinique on the 2d of January, with 300 men, on board the British steamer *Ban Righ*, which he had purchased, and after fitting it up as a formidable warship had rechristened the *Libertador*. Before sailing, Gen. Matos issued a manifesto setting forth as the primary object of the revolution the removal of President Castro from office. Upon learning of this expedition President Castro formally denounced the *Libertador* as a pirate. The expedition appears to have been landed on the Venezuelan coast prior to January 11, and to have taken possession of the village of Cumarebo, in the state of Falcon. There is good ground, also, for believing the report that about the 7th of February the *Libertador* attacked and sunk the Venezuelan warship *Gen. Crespo*, making her captain and crew prisoners and taking possession of her war material. The latest report is from the island of Trinidad. It asserts that on the 2d of March the *Libertador* bombarded the Venezuelan port of Guiria, on the Gulf of Paria, for the purpose of covering the landing of more insurgent troops, and that these troops were on the 3d preparing to march upon Carupano, a town of 12,000 inhabitants about 100 miles to the west.

From the neighboring republic of Colombia, where also a civil war has been long in progress (see p. 663), there came on the 2d from Colon reports of a battle on the 21st of February, at Rio Frio, in the state of Magdalena, in which, after four hours' fighting, the insurgents were defeated.

Colombia has taken unexpected action with reference to the Isthmian canal (p. 663), which may influence the action of the United States in that matter. A meeting of the shareholders of the Panama Canal company had convened at Paris, France, on the 28th, to receive a report from the directors regarding the proposed sale of their canal to the United States for \$40,000,000; and at this meeting the president of the company announced the action which the government of Colombia had taken. He said he had received on the 27th from the consul general of Colombia at Paris a telegram warning the company that it must not transfer its concessions in Panama to another nation without first securing a modification of articles 21 and 22 of the agreement of the company with the Colombian government. Article 21 provides that—

the grantees, or those who in the future may succeed them in their rights, may transfer these rights to other capitalists or financial companies, but are absolutely prohibited to cede or mortgage them under whatever consideration to any nation or foreign government;

and article 22 imposes a forfeiture of all rights under the grant as a penalty for violation of article 21. Officials of the Colombian legation at Washington explain the warning notice to the Panama Canal company by saying that their government is preparing the terms of an agreement by which the canal company may transfer its rights to the United States under certain conditions to be stipulated by Colombia.

On the 3d the subcommittee of the United States Senate committee on interoceanic canals agreed to report against accepting the offer of the Panama Canal company. This subcommittee, composed of Senators Pritchard, Mitchell, Turner, Kittredge and Foster, had been appointed especially to investigate the legal questions involved. Senator Pritchard was absent from the meeting of the 3d and Senator Kittredge reserved the right to make a minority report,

but the other members reported that the complications in the way of a transfer of title to the United States are insurmountable, and that therefore the United States should not become a purchaser of the Panama company's title and properties.

In American politics the principal news of the present week comes from Ohio. The Willis tax bill, described last week in editorial correspondence, at page 742, was adopted by the Republican caucus at a brief meeting on the 25th, and on the 26th was unceremoniously rushed through the lower house, by 69 to 26. On the 27th, after listening to an argument by Mayor Johnson in support of the bill allowing Cleveland to establish municipal ownership of the street car service, in the course of which he guaranteed that if the bill were passed Cleveland would have "a municipal railway, run on civil service reform principles, with a two-cent fare, and the street car system wholly out of politics," the House committee on municipal affairs agreed to report in favor of indefinitely postponing consideration of the bill. The only Democratic member of the committee present voted against this recommendation. Both the tax bill and the municipal ownership bill, in connection with the action of the Republican majority, are likely to be burning issues in Ohio politics.

While Mayor Johnson was thus endeavoring to obtain legislative permission for the establishment of municipal ownership of the street car service in Cleveland, in which he is defeated for the present by a party vote, he relaxed none of his efforts to secure a three-cent fare for that city, under a franchise which requires the grantee to surrender to the city whenever the latter gets legislative authority to establish municipal ownership and makes the demand. In order to forestall the plans of the existing companies to bribe frontage owners, an injunction was obtained; and for the same reason, as explained in editorial correspondence last week (p. 743), it became important to give one name to a long street which now has three. This matter came before the city council on the 24th (p. 744) and was then referred to a committee. After a public hearing, the committee voted, 4 to 2, to recommend the change; and at the council meeting on the 3d, though a motion to suspend the rules and adopt the name-changing ordinance was lost for lack of a