

the Venezuelan offer, because it would place all the creditor nations on an equality. This complicates the negotiations, because it brings France and other nations, including the United States, into the controversy. France has a treaty with Venezuela regarding the French claims, which would be broken if a preference were given by Venezuela to Great Britain, Italy and Germany; and her minister at Washington has informed Secretary Hay that he has explicit instructions to insist that she shall not be discriminated against.

As Mr. Bowen had gone the full length of his authority in making his peace offer, he was unable to respond to the unfavorable reply of the blockading powers without further instructions from President Castro. It was, however, given out semiofficially, on the 30th, that he had advised the blockading powers that if they insisted upon their demand for a preference in payment, he would call the representatives in Washington of the other claimant powers and explain to them that Venezuela was being forced to yield to a settlement which would seriously affect the interests of France, Belgium, Norway and Sweden, Denmark, Holland and the United States. His instructions from President Castro arrived on the 1st. "The Venezuelan government desires equal treatment," wired President Castro, "for all the creditor nations in Europe and America, keeping in mind, in addition, its diplomatic convention and anterior stipulations." After Mr. Bowen had received these instructions he met with representatives of the blockading powers, on the 2d, and delivered to them a note which amounted to an ultimatum. A modified demand had been submitted at this meeting by the British ambassador in behalf of the blockading powers, proposing that they be allowed two-thirds of the 30 per cent. of customs receipts of the ports of La Guayra and Porto Cabello, and that the other claimant nations have the other third. Replying to this, Mr. Bowen refused point blank; proposing, however, that the question of preference, being now the only one at issue, be submitted to the international arbitration tribunal at The Hague. His note has not been published, but the news reports agree in saying it declares that the blockading powers have transgressed the rules of civilized nations in sacrificing human lives merely to secure a preference in the payment of debts. Re-

plies to Mr. Bowen's ultimatum are hourly expected.

In the midst of these negotiations the blockading vessels before Caracas notified the civil authorities of that Venezuelan city on the 3d, that the presence there of Venezuelan troops was objectionable to the European powers, and that if they remained the forts guarding the city would be shelled. It is somewhat significant that the Venezuelan revolutionists had just issued a manifesto urging a revolutionary attack upon Caracas. The same manifesto declared, with an assumption of knowledge of the purposes of the blockading powers, that the blockade will not be raised until Castro vacates the presidential office. The significance of this manifesto is heightened by the fact that the revolutionists have moved upon Caracas. A victory of President Castro over them was reported from Caracas on the 3d. It was gained by Gen. Alcantara, a graduate of West Point, in a battle with Gen. Ducharme on the Camalagua river, about 50 miles south of Caracas. The fight lasted seven hours, and the revolutionists were completely routed. They left all their ammunition behind and 250 men and officers as prisoners. But this report cannot be trusted altogether, for on the same day other reports came from Caracas which described the revolutionists as almost at the gates of Caracas, and told of great defensive operations to resist an attack upon the city. It is charged by the Castro government, and these various dispatches tend to confirm it, that the revolutionists on the land side and the blockading fleets off the coast are acting in co-operation.

Farther north, in the republic of Honduras, a civil war is just reported in connection with which the United States government has been appealed to for protection to American interests that may be put in jeopardy. This war has been precipitated by a contest over the presidential election. President Sierra, who was defeated for reelection by Senor Bonilla, refuses to retire from the office, and Bonilla has effected a military organization, with headquarters on the island of Amapalpa, to oust him. In consequence, therefore, of the probability of civil war, certain unnamed American commercial interests in Honduras have appealed for protection to the American government,

which has in response ordered Rear Admiral Casey to proceed immediately with his squadron from San Francisco to Amapalpa and report to the American consul at Amapalpa and the American minister to Honduras, with a view to protecting American commercial interests.

From the other side of the world, where a revolution against the Sultan of Morocco has for some weeks been in progress (p. 663), and the reports of two weeks ago described the Sultan's army as demoralized and his abdication as imminent, the latest news indicates his complete triumph. The revolutionary army was reported several days ago as being within 25 miles of Fez, and reports of the 29th told briefly of his repulse. For a time the news was conflicting. But on the 1st dispatches from Tangier were to the effect that the battle had been fought on the 29th and that the revolutionary army had been annihilated. Dispatches of the next day from the same source attributed the sultan's decisive victory to the desertion from the revolutionary forces, at a critical point in the battle, of a body of tribesmen whom he had bribed to perpetrate the treachery. On the 4th it was reported that the revolutionary leader had been captured.

Returning to our own side of the world for current news of permanent importance and present interest, we are led to Chicago, where negotiations on the street car question (p. 663) have reached the point of a conference between the committee on local transportation of the city council and the financial and legal representatives of the traction companies. The first meeting was held on the 4th. It was devoted to an interchange of views as to conditions of compromise, the 99-year franchise being claimed as valid by the corporations, while the committee insisted that it must be waived as a prime condition of any adjustment whatever. The representatives of the companies intimated their willingness to yield all claims in consideration of an acceptable compromise, but were indefinite when questioned as to their ability to secure the assent of stockholders and bondholders. Edwin Burritt Smith and John C. Mathis appeared as special counsel for the committee, under retainer from the corporation counsel.

Bearing upon this question, the Municipal Voters' League, which is cred-

ited with having reduced the number of "boodle" councilmen to an important minority, embodied in its eighth annual report, issued on the 30th, the following explanation:

Definite action on the general traction question cannot be much longer delayed. Important franchises begin to expire on July 30 of this year. The present attitude of the companies gives some promise of an early settlement. Everything depends upon their prompt recognition of clearly defined and reasonable public demands. The general principles which should govern renewal grants have been defined in many platforms of the league, and 55 of the 70 members of the present council were elected on these platforms. The right of future municipal ownership undoubtedly will be preserved, and present indications point to the early passage of an adequate enabling act to that end by the legislature. There appears to be substantial agreement upon the policy of a provision for a referendum vote upon the renewal ordinances upon proper petition of the voters. The council, through its appropriate committee, is faithfully and intelligently working on the whole question at issue. The Municipal Voters' league wishes to reiterate its entire confidence in the integrity, intelligence and fairness of the men having this matter in charge.

But the Municipal Ownership clubs of the city are not so confident of the good faith of the majority in the city council. At a meeting of club delegates held on the 3d it was decided to take measures to secure a large attendance of the members of the central executive committee of these clubs at all the public conferences between the traction company and the local transportation committee of the council, for the purpose of watching the proceedings.

A similar distrust was manifested by the Chicago Federation of Labor, which, at its regular meeting on the 1st, adopted unanimously the following resolutions:

Whereas, The people of Chicago, by a majority vote of 115,000, declared for municipal ownership of the traction lines; and, whereas, the city council at a recent meeting of that body voted to recommend to the legislature the enactment of the so-called "Jackson enabling act," the terms of which absolutely prevent the city from ever obtaining municipal ownership; and, whereas, the policy of the Chicago Federation of Labor has been and is in favor of municipal ownership of municipal utilities; therefore be it—

Resolved by the Chicago Federation

of Labor, that we oppose the passage of the so-called Jackson bill by the legislature; and be it further resolved, that it is the sense of the Chicago Federation of Labor that there be no grant of franchise for any period of time to any street railway company or corporation whatsoever in or under the streets; and be it further resolved, that if an ordinance carrying a franchise is presented to the city council every trades unionist be requested to attend the council meeting at which said ordinance is presented to aid the city council in its deliberations upon said franchise; and be it further resolved, that every alderman voting for a franchise granting Chicago streets to any street railway corporation is a public enemy and should be punished at the ballot box; and be it further resolved, that the legislative committee of the Chicago Federation of Labor be and is hereby directed to draft a municipal ownership bill for presentation to the state legislature in opposition to the so-called Jackson bill, and that copies of these resolutions be sent to every member of the city council; and be it further resolved, that no traction or other company be allowed to construct, maintain, or acquire ownership of any subway in any public street or other thoroughfare, but that the city own, construct and maintain all subways for the public good, the same to be utilized by all public utilities and a reasonable rent to be assessed by the municipality.

Akin to the movement in Chicago for municipal ownership of street car lines is the movement there for municipal ownership of lighting systems. The subject came before the council on the 2d, when an enabling act was adopted for submission to the legislature. This act would enable the council of any city desiring municipal ownership of its gas or electric lighting plants or both, to submit the question by referendum to the people, a majority of the popular vote to be decisive. The initiative is not restricted to the council, as in the "Jackson" bill on traction ownership (p. 663), but may be taken by a petition of ten per cent. of the registered voters. Under the authority thus proposed, any city so deciding could construct, purchase, condemn, lease or operate gas or electric lighting plants. An attempt was made in the council to fix the number of registered voters necessary to submit the question to popular vote at 20 per cent instead of ten; but this was defeated, as was also an effort to require a two-thirds majority at the polls.

In the anthracite arbitration pro-

ceedings (p. 681) the employers ended their case on the 30th, and the miners began their rebuttal on the 2d. It is now understood that the closing speeches will begin on the 9th.

Two serious street car strikes are reported, one from Indiana and the other from Connecticut. The Indiana strike began on the 25th. It affects South Bend, Mishawaka, Elkhart and Osceola, and is made to enforce the following demands:

Nine-hour day schedule; adjustment of grievances by arbitration; reinstatement of ten conductors and motormen, discharged for acting as officers of the union in presenting grievances; recognition of the union; twenty cents per hour on city runs, \$2.25 per day on interurban runs and 25 cents per hour for overtime.

To meet the emergency the company imported professional "strike breakers," and this led to violence. According to newspaper reports of the 2d from South Bend, the street car company there had been forced by mobs of men and women numbering from 2,000 to 3,000 to cease operations. The Connecticut strike is at Waterbury. Here, too, professional "strike breakers" were brought in by the company, and owing to the resulting disturbances the governor ordered out the two companies of militia at Waterbury and reenforced them with 14 companies and two Gatling guns from Hartford and New Haven. This was on the 1st. When asked why he had taken such action he replied:

Because the situation demands it. I hesitated about it, but every effort has been made by the local authorities in Waterbury to avert violence, and to-day it seemed apparent that wisdom dictated prompt and energetic action if law and order and the welfare of the city and state were to be conserved.

The strikers at Waterbury number only 80 men, but they are reported to be receiving the sympathy and financial support of 8,000 union men and women of their city. On the 2d ball cartridges were distributed to the troops. It appears from Associated Press reports of the 3d, that although there have been numerous individual cases of violence on the part of the strikers or their sympathizers, the first rioting occurred on that day and consisted in a concerted attack with stones by "strike breakers" upon an omnibus containing 12 passengers, nine of them women, which was being driven by union men as a substitute for the tied-up street cars.