

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 gossippy 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

three-fourths vote, the affirmative vote, 13 to 8, disclosed so large a majority that the adoption of the ordinance in regular order is regarded as assured.

At the same council meeting the three-cent fare ordinance came up for second reading. The debate turned upon the clause providing for municipal ownership at the option of the city at any time in the future. The president of the council moved to strike out this clause. He asserted his belief that the municipal ownership scheme was the main object of the ordinance, and that it was not expected to make money with the three-cent roads. To this Mayor Johnson replied, explaining that the clause was inserted so that the city could obtain the road for the actual cost of construction if it so willed at any time by paying merely for the outlay of the company, and without paying a fictitious value for the company's franchise. He declared that no matter how firmly a member might be opposed to municipal ownership he ought not to strike from the ordinance the provision which allowed the people in the future, should they ever desire to place the road under the control of the city, to do so. The mayor said that he believed that passengers could be carried profitably for two cents in Cleveland, and added:

Personally, of course, I am in favor of municipal ownership. I would be in favor of it if the city could not make a cent, even if the city lost five cents on every passenger who is carried. I am in favor of municipal ownership because, like all other improvements, like parks, boulevards and public buildings, it would tend to add to the greatness of Cleveland. I want municipal ownership because it takes the street railroads out of politics and because I believe that it is a paying investment for the people of Cleveland.

The hostile amendment was defeated by a vote of 17 to 4, and the municipal ownership clause remains in the three-cent fare franchise, which, from all present appearances, will be finally adopted at the council meeting on the 10th.

More complete reports than were available last week (p. 745) have since come to hand regarding the delegate conference of the People's Party of Kansas, held at Topeka on the 21st. Three-fourths of the counties of the state were represented. The conference was called to order by Chairman

Ridgely. Its temper was supposed to have been indicated by the vote for temporary chairman. Grant W. Harrington, who was regarded as favoring the merging of the party with the Democrats, received only 106 votes, while Walter N. Allen, who opposed this policy, received 213. But Mr. Harrington was named for permanent chairman in the report of the committee on permanent organization and the report was adopted by the conference. The committee on resolutions divided. Ten of its members presented the following majority report:

First, we recommend that a state convention of the People's party of Kansas be called for the purpose of nominating a state ticket.

Second, We demand a vigorous campaign in favor of our state ticket and for the promulgation of the principles of the People's party.

After a heated debate, lasting nearly three hours, this report was adopted by the conference by a vote of 198½ to 165½. The minority report, which was defeated, was as follows:

Resolved, That we request and advise the Populist state committee to call a Populist state convention to meet at the same place and on the same day of the meeting of the Democratic state convention, for the purpose of operating with the Democrats in formulating a state platform, embracing the fundamental principles contained in our platforms of 1896 and 1900, national and state, and for the further purpose of having an equal number of places assigned on the combined state ticket to the Populist party. And we further advise that when the platform and places on the ticket are amicably arranged so that the Populist convention can select their candidates from their own party to be placed on the combined ticket so selected and nominated, they place such ticket on the ballot under either the Democratic or Populist name, as may be agreed upon by the combined conventions.

Resolved, further, that we advise that the Populist convention should select its usual state committee and maintain the party organization, and wait for further developments.

The Kansas Populist of the 28th is of opinion that the defeat of the minority resolution was not a "middle-of-the-road" victory, but—

judging from their expressions in the debate, the majority of those who supported the resolution that prevailed were in favor of cooperating with the Democrats in this Fall's election in some way, but were opposed to making a public declaration of an intention to do so until the

Democrats manifested an inclination to meet us half way, at least.

By no means least in order of political importance is the situation in Colorado with reference to the Bucklin Australasian or home rule tax amendment, about which there seemed last week (p. 746) to be possible indications of a change of sentiment in the Colorado Senate. The Barela bill, to repeal the submission clause of the amendment, which, if effective, would virtually kill this constitutional measure, was on the 21st ordered printed by a vote of 15 to 12. But it now appears that there was no hostile significance to that vote. On the 27th the committee on constitutional amendment, reporting on the bill and referring to its proposal to repeal so much of the Bucklin amendment as requires the submission of the amendment to the people, advised:

First. If the sections sought to be repealed by this bill are a part of the constitutional amendment, then this body has no power to act in relation thereto.

Second. If the sections sought to be repealed by this bill are not a part of the constitutional amendment, then this bill does not fall within the governor's call and this body has no power to act in relation thereto.

Third. The passage of this bill would accomplish no result, as the constitutional amendment would still have to be submitted under the provisions of section 2, article 19 of our constitution

Two members of the committee joined in a minority report recommending that the bill be considered in committee of the whole. These reports were hotly debated in the Senate on February 28 and March 1, and on the latter day the Barela repeal bill was postponed until April 15. As the legislature will probably adjourn before that date, this bill is now regarded as dead. Similar bills are pending in the House, however, and the Bucklin amendment may yet be headed off by its enemies from coming before the people of the state.

NEWS NOTES.

—Col. Francis W. Parker, the distinguished educator, died on the 2d.

—The centenary celebration at Paris in honor of Victor Hugo's birth closed with the presentation to the city for a museum of the house once occupied by the great Frenchman.

—Mayor Jones, of Toledo, refused to sign an elaborately embossed certificate of welcome to Prince Henry