

justified even by avowed socialists only by the claim that they would bring compensation in other ways; together with effort for the greater equality of opportunity which undoubtedly is desirable. True it is that the financial programme on which the Democracy has been so disastrously defeated in the two latest presidential elections, was itself socialistic in its essence, because it aimed to create a system of currency with an arbitrary basis of value. But there is every reason to believe that most of the ardent silver men failed to see the question from this standpoint, and thought rather that they were trying to restore an equilibrium that had been disturbed by what they considered as paternal legislation in behalf of the gold standard; and it is certain that Democratic leaders like Tom L. Johnson are anti-socialistic from every point of view, their advocacy of government ownership being limited absolutely to kinds of industry that are monopolistic by nature, and the only choice as to which therefore must be as between a public and a private monopoly.

Working along these lines, the Republican party has assumed a really closer parallelism to the historic Tory party of Great Britain than has ever been shown by any of our political organizations previously; evidenced, too, by the sympathy which it now openly avows for the toryism for which Chamberlain most conspicuously stands to-day. While the Democratic party, really changing front and at the same time to a considerable extent changing its personnel, has assumed much the same attitude as that held by the British Liberals toward such questions as have begun to present a more or less identical international significance. The truth would seem to be that our political and social evolution having been more rapid than that of our kin across the sea, we have yet just reached the status which has existed with them for some time back. For a century past, indeed, it has been social and economic questions, rather than purely political ones, which have occupied their attention, while with us the reverse has been the case up to the present generation. It is for this reason,

doubtless, that while their parties have been gradually modified and remolded so that their character has been utterly changed and yet their organic continuity maintained, new parties with us have risen and died and been recreated to embody the new issues as they arose; whereas now that we have a condition beginning to exist here that has long been seen abroad, we find in the Democratic ranks the same class of minds and to some extent the same individuals who founded the Republican party 45 years ago, the change having come about almost imperceptibly and without disturbing the organic continuity of the party, although its doctrine and its personnel have both been so thoroughly modified—just as the British Liberals have been evolved from a chrysalis of a hundred years ago that would be considered somewhat retrograde by the British Conservative of to-day. Until the past decade or two, it was always the Democratic party which stood for the conservation of existing institutions, and held itself in solid array against the new propositions brought forward by the Federalists, the Whigs and the Republicans; but now the positions are reversed and it is from the Democratic side that the fresh impulses are coming, with the not unnatural concomitant that until these have gained sufficient force, its ranks are disorganized and weakened, while the new aligning goes on. In this position they have just placed themselves on the same side of such questions as are international in their relations with the British Liberals; but up to the time that this transforming came about, it would be a great mistake to consider the two organizations as in any sense parallel.

Judging from the past, it is not unnatural that the prediction should be frequently made that our political organizations are on the eve of fresh dissolutions and reformations; but now that we have reached a parallelism with British parties which did not before exist, it is really their experience to which we should look for the basis of prediction. That experience would seem to point to a maintained continuity of organization that by no means implies a persistence of issues

or even of the same class of issues; nor yet a true continuity of personnel—the absorption by the liberal side of new thought and the minds in which new thought is awakened taking the place of the creation of new party organizations. The history of our own politics for the past generation and particularly of the Democratic party, would seem to indicate that we have reached this stage and that the lines of our political progress for the future must be entirely different from those of the more distant past; and that American like British liberalism will fit itself to take up the tasks which it must meet, by gradual modification through infusion of new blood expressing itself in new creeds. What those tasks will be is already beginning to be unfolded, and it is only one of the phases of the pending struggle that we must face the question whether the strong arm of government is to be invoked for the purpose of aiding the few to extend abroad in colonies their power to command the labor of others, or whether we are to confine our communal forces to the simple duty of protecting each citizen from the aggressions of either his fellow citizens or of foreigners, and leave all a free field and no favors. * * *

NEWS

Definite public action was taken in the United States this week to secure the neutrality of this nation, now being violated, with reference to the war in South Africa. The movement was set on foot on the 12th at a business meeting of the Chicago Branch of the American Transvaal league, held at Masonic Temple, Chicago. From the evidence presented at that meeting it appears that agents of the British army, stationed at New Orleans, have for a long time been buying mules and horses at that port for belligerent uses in South Africa; that they have shipped these animals upon British transports at the port of New Orleans to other agents of the British army, in South Africa; and that upon the arrival of the animals at South African ports they have been sent directly to the seat of war. This, it was argued at the meeting, is not commercial trading, but is a use by the British of American ports and waters for the renewal and augmentation of military

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