

It consists of five members—Admiral Dewey, Gen. Otis, Chas. Denby, President Schuerman and Prof. Worcester. Denby is the only member of the commission not yet at Manila.

Nothing has yet been done in Spain with reference to ratifying the Paris treaty. The attempt to carry out its provisions has resulted in the resignation of the Sagasta ministry, as we reported last week, and now in the dissolution of the cortes. A nominal success was achieved on the 22d of February by the Sagasta ministry, in connection with the appointment of the committee to examine the bill for the cession of the Philippines to the United States. Four ministerial candidates were chosen, and three in opposition. But it became apparent in the voting that the opposition could muster a majority, and this encouraged their leaders to propose a counter measure on the Philippine matter. Consequently, on the 1st of March the Sagasta ministry resigned, hoping that the queen would dissolve the cortes. But the queen at first decided to appoint a new cabinet. For that purpose she asked Silvela, the conservative leader, to undertake the responsibility of forming one. Accordingly, on the 4th the following cabinet was sworn into office:

Senor Silvela, premier and minister of foreign affairs; Senor Dato, minister of the interior; Marquis Villaverde, minister of finance; Senor Duran, minister of justice; Gen. Polievaja, minister of war; Marquis Pidal, minister of public affairs and of the colonies; Admiral Camara, minister of marine.

Upon entering upon its duties the new ministry adopted a policy of protection to industry, commerce, and agriculture; reform in municipal and provincial administration; sweeping army and navy reforms, and general financial reorganization. And as the first step, it decided on the 5th to abolish all ministerial pensions. Ex-Premier Sagasta tendered to the new premier the support of the liberal party, of which he is leader, on all questions relating to the integrity of the nation and the perpetuation of the dynasty. Having seated a conservative cabinet, the queen decided to dissolve the cortes. This was accordingly done on the 7th. A new chamber will be elected in April, and the cortes will reconvene in May. The effect of the dissolution of the cortes upon the Paris treaty has not yet been determined. It is held by the new premier, however, that the treaty can be ratified without the sanction of the

cortes, and therefore that the dissolution will have no effect in that particular.

During this ministerial crisis in Spain the prosecutions of military officers, previously begun, upon charges of misconduct in the American war, have proceeded. Admiral Cervera is being prosecuted for the disaster to the Spanish fleet at Santiago. Capt. Diaz de Moreu of the destroyed Cristobal Colon is also under prosecution in the same connection. Another victim of these proceedings is Gen. Linares, who was in supreme command in Santiago at the time of the capitulation. His second in command, too, is to be tried. And so are Admiral Montejo, the Spanish commander of the battle of Manila bay, and Capt. Gen. Augusti, late governor general of the Philippines.

China is now threatened in a new direction. Italy comes forward with a demand for a share of Oriental spoils, and threatens to back up the demand with a squadron. Specifically, the Italian demand is for a 99 years lease of San Mun Bay as a coaling station and naval base, on the same conditions as those under which Germany holds Kiao-Chou. This bay is one of the indentations made in the Chinese coast by the Eastern Sea, and is located a little to the south of Ning-po. The demanded concession includes three islands off the coast of Chekiang province, with a right to construct a railway from San Mun Bay to Po Yang lake, and preferential mining rights within a "sphere of influence" covering the southern two thirds of Chekiang province. The Italian minister of foreign affairs, in answer to questions in the Italian chamber of deputies on the 3d, confirmed the reports on this subject, and said that notice of the intention of Italy had been given to the other nations in China, all of which were friendly to the project. The United States was one of the nations to receive this notice. Great Britain is understood to be engaged directly in instigating the Italian government. China has objected to granting the demand. The Chinese foreign office returned the dispatch, with a declaration that the Chinese government is unable to accede to its requirements; and the terms of the refusal were resented in Rome as "insolence." Preparations are making there to enforce the demand with a fleet. Meanwhile diplomatic inter-

course has been suspended by Italy and marines have been landed at San Mun Bay, from an Italian war ship. At last reports Italy was in possession, and the Chinese government was offering to apologize for the terms in which it had couched its reply to the Italian demand. In China it is believed that the Italian seizure of San Mun Bay is the beginning of a concerted attempt on the part of the European powers to parcel out the Chinese empire.

In addition to her difficulties with European powers bent on partitioning the empire among themselves, of which the Italian invasion noted above is a flagrant instance, China is wrenched with civil war. Vague reports of it have reached this country at intervals during a period of many months, and brief accounts of the matter were given on page 11 in Nos. 8 and 16 of *The Public*. According to the latest mail advices, thousands of rebels in the central provinces of Hoonan, Honan, Nganhoei, Kiangsee, and Hoop have succeeded in combining their forces and in establishing their authority over an immense territory. In a succession of terrible battles they recently defeated the imperial troops, and four walled cities and 75 walled villages had already been captured by them. They were then preparing to make still further important captures. Famine caused by oppressive taxation is the only explanation of the rebellion so far reported.

Passing from the subject of civil war in China to politics in the United States, we note the final adjournment of the 55th congress. This occurred at noon on the 4th. The president had signed the bill appropriating \$20,000,000 for the purchase of the Philippines, and the house had refused to sustain its committee's report vacating the seats of congressmen who had accepted commissions from the president in the volunteer army. The objection to their holding seats was constitutional, and stress was laid upon the danger of permitting presidential appointees, and especially military officers, to acquire a foothold in the house of representatives. Owing to the failure of the report, which was largely opposed by democratic votes, Mr. Bailey announced that he would not be a candidate for democratic leader in the next house. The Nicaragua canal question was disposed of for the present by a compromise