FRAUDS IN THE LAND OFFICE.

Arrest of John A. Benson, a Wealthy San Franciscan, for Alleged Frauds in a Dozen States and Territories.

Washington, Dec. 18, -John A. Benson, a wealthy San Francisco real estate operator, charged by the interior department with being the head of the alleged land frauds extending over a dozen Western States and Territories, to which Secretary Hitchcock referred viogrously and at length in his annual report, was arrested here today at the Willard Hotel, by Secret Service Officer John A. Bruns, Just as he was preparing to leave the city for New York.

The charge on which the arrest was made was bribery, it being alleged in the affidavit of Mr. Burns and in the warrant that Benson had paid \$500 to presence of the Pope he sank to his woodford D. Harlan, formerly chief knees, and pointing to his burden, Woodford D. Harlan, formerly child said:
of the special service division of the said:
"Your Holiness, the lamented Leo,
"Your Holiness, the lamented Leo, general land office, and now a clerk in that office, on March 15, of this year, for the purpose of extracting from him information regarding the investi-gation of his operations at that time being made by the land office. Benson that if I succeeded him I was to use it as I thought best, but that if another took his place, I was was taken before commissioner Taylor. He wished to have a preliminary hearing of his case postponed, and the date was fixed for December 30. He gave bail of \$5,000 for his appearance, when the Government attorneys will ask to have him held for the grand jury.

The statement was made by an offi-cer of the Government tonight that the information obtained regarding the alleged conspiricy implicate a number of persons at present employed in the interior department at Washington and elsewhere. Numerons arrests are expected to follow that of Benson in short order, and some employees who may not be arrested will be dismissed from the service.

The Government storneys stated, in asking for a large bail bond for Benson, that he had been guilty of bribery during his present visit to Washington, since last Monday, and in the interior department itself, notwithstanding that he was fully aware that his contraction with the alleged france were nection with the alleged frauds were fully known by the department."

from the service.

BRADSTREET'S TRADE REVIEW.

Wholesale and Jobbing Trade Light and Manufacturing Industry Slackens.

New York, Dec. 18.—Bradstreet's tomorrow will say:

Holiday and retail business generally is seasonably active, wholesale and jobbing trade correspondingly quiet, while manufacturing industry slackens partly for the above reasons, but also because of low water in streams or efforts to readjust operations to changconditions of demand and supply.

There are several continuously encouraging features noted. The car congestion of a year ago is conspicu oulsy absent this year and the rail-ways are handling the current excellent business offering with profitable results. Failures do not display more than the normal tendency to increase in number, and there is evidently less tension than exhibited a month ago.

The iron trade retains all the good feeling and advances in prices of pig iron reported in preceding weeks, and makers of finished products, most netably steel plates and structural forms, are apparently firm in their views. The cotton goods manufacturing trade is struggling with high costs and unsettled views as to finished goods prices and international curtailment

Business failures for the week ending with December 17 number 239, against 225 in the like week of 1902.

Arkansas Candidates Fight.

Hope, Ark., Dec. 19 .- During a joint discussion here today between the three candidates for the Democratic nomination for governor, a personal encounter occurred between two of the candidaes, Gov. Jeff Davis and Associate Justice Carroll D. Wood of the supreme court. Gov. Davis struck Judge Wood on the head causing blood to flow freely. As Judge Wood attempted to retaliate he was seized and kept from reaching the governor. Later he disengaged himsalf and struck the governor on the

The principals were arrested and placed under bond for their appearace in the mayor's court Jan. 15.

As Gov. Davis was closing his speech today, he accused Judge Wood of having gone to New York to secure information against Senator James K. Jones, in the last campaign for United States senator. The governor said he himself had fought Senator Jones in the open, but that Judge Wood had knifed him, and was a traitor.

Judge Wood quickly arose and said the governor would have to retract or be held personally responsible here-

"Why not now?" said Gov. Davis, accompanying the remark by striking Judge Wood with a cane. Officers interfered and prevented further trouble, after Judge Wood struck the governor on the arm.

This is the former home of ex-Senator Jones.

Letter to C. M. Hurst.

Dear Sir: The Trustees of Fair Ground, Cobleskill, N. Y. were glad to pay 15 cents a gallon more for Devoe; and no wonder. Two other paint agents said it would take 150 gallons of their paint to cover the buildings.

Our agent put it at 125 or less. It

took 115. We saved them 35 gallons of paint and painting (worth \$4 to \$5 a gallon, as the painting costs two or three cents a gallon on 115 gallons. Say tinued to be the leading theme in the Ohio. The machine flew for three pedition to the Congo Free State and admitted into the United States on cisco fast train from the South, eight

Yours truly F. W. Devoe & Co., New York. THE POPE RECEIVES \$10,850,000.

Pope Leo Leaves in Care of Cardinal Gotti \$9,000,00 Which Was Turned Over to Pope · Pius.

Rome, Dec. 18.-According to the Tribuna, the Vatican had sudden wealth poured into its coffers today.

Cardinal Gotti, prefect of the Propaganda, accompanied by Monsignor Marzolini, one of the late Pope's secretaries, drove to the Vatican today, and carried a mysterious package to the apartment of Pope Pius. They were immediately admitted, and remained for two hours.

Intense curiosity was aroused by this act, and it soon became known that the bag contained 445,000,000 francs

(\$9,000,006) in bank notes.

When Cardinal Gotti entered the presence of the Pope he sank to his

just before his death, confided to me the money, which I now lay at your feet, saying that if I succeeded him I to turn the money over to him after a period of four months had elapsed. This I now do in the presence of Mon-signor Marzolini, who has been the only other person to share the secret."

The Pope was much affected.
The Tribuna goes on to relate that just about the time this scene was being enacted in the Papal apartments, an electrician, while removing the hangings in the late Pope Leo's chamber in order to get at the electric light wires, found in a hole in the wall, sev-

through the sinking fund commission.
The report through Secretary Means for the present year shows that only about \$800 has been paid out for losses about \$800 has been paid out for losses and that the amount of insurance now carried by state and county buildings, except the hospital for the insane and the State colleges amounts to about \$580,000 and that the yearly premiums amount to about \$5,000. The surplus now on hand is \$11,000. Under the law no personal property and nothing but buildings belonging to the respective counties and to the State are insured and since this law went into out this Government had instructed a effect in 1901 only \$840 has been paid out in losses. The rate is about two-thirds the rate charged by the insurance companies. - Columbia Record.

The Print Cloth Market.

Fall River, Mass., Dec. 18.—Sale Cold weather is still an important in the print cloth market for the week has been made, the policeman, is jusstimules to heavy wearing apparel and will reach a total of about 300,000 tified in claiming that the pocketbook, pieces. The cloth market has grown stronger during the week, the principal feature being an advance of 1/sin to him (the policeman) on the ground regulars from 3% to 31/2. The advance that he was the rightful owner?" it is the general opinion, was due to the many curtailment rumors, or to the further advances of the cotton market. There has been talk of curtilment during the week, and nothing in this direction is looked for right away.

The New Judicial District.

Washington, Dec. 18.-Col. William Elliott, of Beaufort, is here, mingling with his former associates in Congress It is well known that Col. Elliott takes a personal interest in the bill, creating a new judicial district in South Carolina, for he hopes to be appointed Judge of the new district time until "the Senate had become when established. He has been discussing the subject with his friends here and he fears that the contention over the Johnson-Aiken-Croft bills may defeat the original project. He has been in consultation with Senator Tillman and other members of the should be resisted without regard to delegation, and it is proposed that a party." compromise be effected by which the best features of the three bills shall be merged into one Act, and thus stand a better chance of favorable action during the present Congress.

Remarkable Surgical Operation.

Sioux City, Ia., Dec. 21 .- An operation having no parallel in the surgical world was performed at St. Joseph's hospital today by Dr. William Jepson, who has the chair of surgery at the State university. John Norstrom of Daubury, Conn., fell from a load of hay, striking on his head and breaking his neck. He has been almost paralyzed for several weeks, and Dr. Jepson decided to operate on his broken neck. Accordingly a portion of the third cervical vertebrae was removed, the false growth of tissue was cleaned out and the bone replaced. The patient is doing well, with every prospect of recevery. Operations have been performed for the relief of a dislocation of the lumbar vertebrae, but no other case is known in which the cervical situated so near the madulla oblongata, the seat of he vital bodily functions, has been successfully removed and replaced.

Richmond, Va., Dec. 18 .- The governor today signed the bill appropriating \$10,000 for a Virginia State building at the St. Louis exposition. The structure is to be a reproduction of the mansion at Monticello, the home of Jafferson.

Douglass, Ga., Dce. 19.-Lee Cribb. who was convicted of the murder of Emmett White, a young white boy aged 18, was hanged here yesterday. Cribb, while under the influence of tion Court; third, if its submission to whiskey, attempted to terrorize the town of Nicolas, killing the town marshal of that place and afterward republics to come to her aid. shooting young White to death.

The relationship of the Unied States cents a gailon on 115 gailons. Say \$140.

That's how to count the cost of paint. The cost of putting it on is \$3 or \$4 a gallon. You see what that means. Go buy Devoe.

The cost of buy Devoe.

The cost of putting it on is \$3 or \$4 a gallon. You see what that means. Yours truly

The cost of buy Devoe.

The cost of putting it on is \$3 or \$4 a gallon. Yours truly

The cost of putting it on is \$3 or \$4 a gallon. Yours truly

The cost of putting it on is \$3 or \$4 a gallon. The machine flew for three descended to the congo Free State and admitted into the United States on close is train from the South, eight elsewhere in Central Africa. Prof. equal terms with Cuban sugar, and it is not doubted that Germany, France, was confined to one Senator and was one miles an bour, and then gracefully descended to earth at the spot selected by the men in the navigtor's car as a by the men in the navigtor's car as a by the men in the navigtor's car as a by the men in the navigtor's car as a by the men in the navigtor's car as a by the men in the navigtor's car as a by the men in the navigtor's car as a by the men in the navigtor's car as a by the men in the navigtor's car as a by the men in the navigtor's car as a by the men in the navigtor's car as a by the men in the navigtor's car as a by the men in the navigtor's car as a by the men in the navigtor's car as a by the men in the navigtor's car as a by the men in the navigtor's car as a by the men in the navigtor's car as a by the men in the South, equal terms with Cuban sugar, and it can be descended in the form the Congo Free State and admitted into the United States on car and it can be descended in the form the South, equal terms with Cuban sugar, and it can be descended in the form the South, equal terms with Cuban sugar, and it can be descended in the form the South, equal terms with Cuban sugar, and it can be descended in the form the South, equal terms with Cuban sugar, and it can be descended in the form the South Cuban sugar.

Senate particular in the form the South Cub Senator Hoar's resolution, calling upon suitable landing place. The machine for the Scientific Congress, to be held Olney in President Cleveland's adminbenator from s resolution, calling upon suitable landing place. The machine for the Scientific Congress, to be need of the Green Congress, to be need of the President Cleveland's administration was adverse to such demands. Black and White, Century and all the relative to the November revolution in its force from propellers worked by a little of the primitive but the question promises to be re-

MR. ROOSEVELT CENSURED.

the Senate as Usurpation.

The President Called Severely to Account by Senator Hoar, One of the Ablest and Most Distinguished Members of his Own Party.

Washington, Dec. 17.-The Senate today was the scene of a most important debate on the Isthmian canal question, as affected by the President's recognition of the independence of the Republic of Panama. The discussion began with a speech by Sena-tor Hoar on his resolution of inquiry and lasted several hours. In addition to Senator Hoar's address there were speeches by Senator Gorman and Senator Foraker. All three were notable utterances and of historical interest.

Senator Hoar confined his remarks to his resolution, and they were carefully written out and read from manuscript. He held that this country had not yet received full official information concerning the Isthmian revolu-tion, and criticised in sharp terms the conduct of this country, as shown by what has been given out.

There was no reservation in Senator Gormans' utterances. He practically alleged that the situation in Panama had been created to make a campaign issue, and said that unless further light was thrown on the subject he

would oppose the Panama treaty.
Senator Foraker took Senator Hoar to task for his remarks reflecting on the Administration. He defended the Administration for its attitude toward the Panama revolt. A heated colloquy took place between Senator Foraker and Senator Hoar, during an effort of the Massachusetts Senator to explain

more fully his position in the matter. Senator Hoar said he was in favor of the Isthmian Canal, but was anxious "That the canal be built without taint

or suspicions of national dishonor."
"What we want to know is," he said, "did this Government, knowing that a revolution was about to take place, so arrange matters that the revolution, whether peaceable or otherwise, should be permitted to go on without interruption, and whether our national authorities took measures to prevent Colombia from stopping it?"

Senator Hoar quoted the correspondence bearing upon the revolution, and asked, "Why this great anxiety before any disturbance had occurred" It was clear, he said, that if the correspondence so far printed included all the inman-of-war to prevent Colombia from doing anything to prevent it. I want to know, and the American people want to know and have a right to know, whether this mighty policeman on the Isthmus, seeing a man about to attack which has been taken from the victim by the assailant, should be turned over

Senator Gorman took the floor as soon as Senator Hoar had concluded and there was from the start evident interest in what he might say. He began with a reference to Senator Hoar's speech and complimented that Senator highly on his attitude, and alluded to the Democratic attitude on the canal question. On the latter point he said that Democratic Senators generally are as favorable to the construction of the canal as are Republicans.

Senator Gorman said the facts were all that were desired, and he proceeded to refer to the extention of the executive influence, saying that this influence had been extended from time to practically the agent of the execu-

The affair in Panama, he declared. was "the most flagrant act of transgression that has ever taken place in the history of the country, and it

Chinese Treaty Ratified.

Washington, Dec. 18.-The Senate, in executive session today, ratified the treaty "for the extension of the commercial relations' between the United States and China, and then removed the injunction of secrecy. No opposition was manifested by any Senator to the treaty, though Senator Nelson, Republican, of Minnesota, made a long speech in which be criticised the convention as making insufficient provision for the trade of the United States. He said it indicated that the hand of Russia had been shown against this country, making it impossible for the United States to receive the concessions needed in the way of open ports. He blamed Russia for this condition of affairs and warned the Senate that we may yet have trouble with that country] over the Manchurian ques-

Senator Lodge, of Massachusetts, urged the importance of having the treaty ratified at once and said that the State department considered immeidate action as essential. He declared that the ratification probably would have a bearing on the settlement of the far Eastern question. There was no division on the motion

Paris, Dec. 18.—The "United Colombian committee" here, gave out a statement today, saying that Colombia would, first, seek through a commission to induce the United States to recognize Colombia's rights under the treaty of 1846; second, if the comission fails, Colombia will ask for the submission of the question to The Hague Arbitra-The Hague Court is refused, Colombia will go to war and rely on the Latin

Norfolk, Va., Dec. 18.-A successful trial of a flying machine was made small engine.

THE COTTON BOOM CONTINUES.

His Panama Coup Denounced in Price in New York Approaching Thirteen Cents a Pound.

> New York, Dec. 17.-Liverpool ca bles were up today, owing to a scare of shorts and aggressive bull tactics, and this caused the New York cotton market to shake off the lethargy recently noted. First prices were at an advance of 17 to 27 points. January sold at 12.40, March 12.70, May 12.80 and July 12.77, these being new high records for the two last positions, and net gains on the active months of 21 to 29 points. Liverpool house bought here as well as in their home market, and commission houses, though in many cases selling for profits, also had orders on the buying side. Of course, the gains are timeless in the series and the series are the se the gains, particularly in reference to the later positions, which had passed all previous records, brought on heavy realizing, and shortly after the call these months reacted from the highest, but generally speaking, the market

> All the day the market continued to show strength. There was more or less irregularity, and trading was not so active as has frequently been the case. The market was flooded with bullish news from the South. The highest point was reached in the afternoon, when January sold at 12.59, March 12.80, May 12.90 and July 12.93, these being net gains of 35 to 42 points.

The market closed firm, net 32 to 41 points higher, with sales estimated at 1,000,000 bales.

Betwixt Hell and the Iron Works.

The long and the short of the canal business is that the administration having taken the bit in its mouth, has also the whip in its hand, and means to buck it through, willy nilly, and that those of us who want to get the canal and to be honest, can either stand aside and let her go, Gallagher, or make common cause with the transcontinental railway ring in op-position, and, in the event of beating

the treaty, lose the canal.

Thus, literally, we find ourselves betwixt hell and the iron works. It is a case of be-damned if we do, and be-damned if we don't; the moral accountabilities rest, however, upon the bronco-buster, who can be relied upon to keep the Ten Commandments lighted in the vestibule of the white house whilst rifling Colombia across the way in the back office of the state department. In the face of such a

dilemma, what is a poor girl to do? She might take to the woods but soon or late, she would have to come out for meat or drink. The most virtuous damsel most live. In the olden time, when convents were provided for the distressed and the devout, Virtue was able to seek her refuge is struck, in manacling the assailing party, and whether, after the assault science to the winds and would debauch the very grandmother Superior eral trend of negroes away from farms even of his own beloved order of the to cities. Holy Zebra!

At least we need be in no hurry. We are not bound to say our catechism according to the Quay-Addicks reform ritual, nor cry "amen" every time the president opens a jackpot with prayer. We are not bound to accept P. Bean Vanilla even as a second Elijab Dowie. We may still question the Gray Wolves of the senate. We may still look those Forty Millions in the mouth, and cry "wo" to the Mule. In short and in fine, the administration having gone in to make a spoon or spoil a horn, must come out with hands, if not clean, yet not reeking with loot and blood-with skirts not redolent of tragedy and scandalwhich it deliberately invited when ignoring the alternative Nicaragua clause of the Spooner act, it undertook to confirm the steal clause of that act to the skunks in Washington and the bucket shops of Paris, repudiating the while the Monroe doctrine, which it had voluntarily sworn to support, and foully gobbling Panama in defiance of all our boasted trade prospects with Latin America. to say nothing

about the moral sentiment of mankind. As democrats, we are answerable for none of these things. Nothing seems more certain than that the way before the administration will be, and every step of it, beset by obstacles surmountable only by sheer force. - Louisville Courier-Journal.

Democrats Win in Boston.

Boston, Dec. 15,-The Democrats won an overwhelming victory in the municipal election today, Mayor Patrick Collins being reelected by 27,000 plurality, the largest ever given a mayoralty candidate in the history of this city. The board of aldermen next year will be solidly Democratic and that party will have a large majority in the common council.

The city as usual favored licensed liquor selling by a large majority.

Nashville, Tenn., Dec. 18.-Walden University, a colored institution, is burning. Sudents, male and female jumped from the windows. Three dead bodies have been removed from under as in all time past." the window where they fell. It is said there are many more in the burning building. The injured are estimated at fifty, and every ambulance in the city has been brought into requisition.

Hagerstown, Md., Dec. 18.-Gen. Henry Kyd Douglass, Stonewall Jackson's chief of staff during the Civil War, died at his home in this city tonight. A general failing in health, including mental trouble, was the cause of his death. He was 63 years old. His sister, Mrs. Beckenbaugh, and her son and daughter, are the only survivors. Gen. Douglass never

yesterdy near Kitty Hawk, N. C., by sells, whither he went to seek facili- clause, it expects that British sugar Wilbur and Grville Wright, of Dayton, ties for the dispatch of a scientific ex- from the British West Indies shall be

FUTURE GOTTON GROPS.

Manufacturers' Record Investigates the Prospect.

Some People Think the Limit of Production has been Reached. Others that there is no Limit.

Baltimore, Dec. 20.—The Manufacturers' Record, in continuation of its discussion of the cotton crop, as presented last week, has submitted to the commissioners of agriculture and the presidents of all the agricultural colleges of the South, to several hundred leading cotton manufacturers, oil mill men, commission merchants, bankers, growers and others the following inquiry:

Is there danger of a permanent decrease in cotton production in the

South? If so, is it due

(1) To deterioration of seed by reason of the best seed being sold to oil

(2) To a decline in the fertility of the soil by reason of bad cultivation under the tenantry system; or

(3) To a lack of farm labor since the industrial development of the South has drawn many hands from the country to the cities. or are all three o

these factors to be reckoned with?

The Manufacturers' Record begins with the publication of replies in this with the publication of replies in this week's issue, and expects to continue for several weeks to present the views of the best-informed people of the South on these questions, so vital not only to this section, but to the whole world. Dealing with the replies, it

"The letters published today deal mainly with the conditions which prevail in the Carolinas and Georgia. Following these will come next week letters from the far South, in which the conditions may be presented as entirely different from those in the upper South. The letters published show a wide diversity of views, but show a wide diversity of views, but the predominant note in all of them, with few exceptions, is that scarcity of farm labor will make it difficult for the South to increase its production of the south to i cotton. This scarcity is due in part to the tendency of the white tenant farmer to cotton mill employment, most pronounced in the older textile communities, where he and his family secure more profitable work than on the farm, and in part to the trend of more active negro laborers away from agriculture to mining, railroad and kindred work. It is pointed out that this condition, which is becoming more pronounced every year, would make it difficult for the South to pick a larger crop, even if it could be raised. This condition presents an urgent need for immigration to the South to Russia. mills and of negroes in mining and in railroad construction, and in the gen-

claimed that there is no deterioration in the possession of the foreign lega-of seed, but that, on the contrary, tions. farmers have been careful to use the best seed for planting, though a few writers insits very strongly that there is a deterioration in seed, claiming that the best seed are sold to the mills and that the fertilizers used are not equal to the seed for the maintenance of the fertliity of the soil, and that thus the consumption of seed by oil mills is a disadvantage in the long run. Comparatively few admit any deterioration in soil, and where this is reported, it is claimed to be due to the thriftlessness of the negro tenants, who do not appreciate the importance of maintaining the fertility of the land. With scarcely an exception. however, the small crops of the last few years are claimed to be due, not to any of these causes, but to the abnormal weather conditions, which cut short the yield. While some think the South has practically reached, under present conditions, its maximum output of cotton, there are other equally well-informed men who claim that there is scarcely any limit to the increase of the cotton crop of the South. This side of the case is presented by one of the most careful investigators of the South, who says that there has been no deterioration in the seed and none in the soil, and to

this adds: " 'We have made two short crops, from causes that have, in the past and will continue to recur from time to time. We may next year make 225 pounds of cotton per acre. The acreage will probably be 30,000,000. This will give us a crop of something like 13,500,000 bales. Manufacturers have taken many people from farms. Those left on the farms work better, because of better conditions and rewards. The South is not yet seriously suffering from lack of farm labor, but has reached a point where the labor, formerly much idle, has been absorbed in profitable employments. It is a good time for quite a lot of thrifty immigrants to come South. The range of cotton production per acre seems to be about 150 pounds on the low side to 225 pounds on the high side. It seems to be ranging up and down now, about

Now for Cheap Sugar.

Washington, Dce. 17.-The President signed the Cuban reciprocity bill the debris, imprisoning twenty emafew minutes before 1 o'clock this ployees. All the electric lights went afternoon.

The President then issued a proclamation, reciting the passage of the Cuban reciprocity bill and declaring the Cuban recipromity treaty to be effective ten days from today.

Now that the bill has become a law, a question of great interest has arisen, namely, the effect of the reduction of the duty on Cuban sugar upon importations of sugar from other countries. Boston, Mass, Dec. 18 .- A London The British Government has served cable tonight says that Prof. S. P. formal notice upon the State depart-Verner has arrived here from Brus- ment that under the favored-nation-

RUSSO-JAPANESE CRISIS.

The Outlook is Gloomy in the Far East and it is Feared That War Cannot be Averted.

London, Dec. 21.-The morning newspapers display increasing alarm over the aspect of affairs in the far east, rather from the fear that some unforseen incident may precipitate a conflict than from any belief that the resources of diplomacy have become exhausted, the opinion being still almost universal that both Russia and Japan are anxious to avoid war.

The Morning Post, which is inspired in the Japanese interest, makes a suggestion which may possess significance—namely, that Japan should cut the Gordian knot by declaring a protectorate over Corea. The paper contends that such a solution would commend itself to all the powers with the exception of Russia and that it might even be welcomed at St. Petersburg, if it be true that Russia does not desire

The special cablegrams from the far east published in this morning's newspapers throw no new light on the situation, but all are agreed that Japan has not sent an unlimatum to Russia.

The correspondent of The Daily Telegraph who, after a tour of Man-churia, has arrived at Nagasaki, expresses the belief that there will be no war, certainly not before the spring. and Russia does not want a war before she has consolidated her position in Manchuria. She is apprehensive, however, of the strength of the Japanese fleet and over the atitude of Chinaand Great Britian.

AS REUTER'S AGENCY SEES IT. London, Dec. 20.—Reuter's Telegram company has learned that considerable anxiety exists in the best informed circles of London regarding the possible outcome of the situation in the far east. Fears, it is said, are expressed that the Russian government may have overstepped the bounds which would make a continuation of peaceful negotiations with Japan possible. It tions, and that Japan's reply must necessarily be cast in this sense.

Apart from the delicate state of the negotiations between the two nations, Renter says, it is also known that Russia is assuming a more defiant attitude, and the outlook may be regarded as more gloomy than it hithertohas been although it cannot be said that the resources of diplomacy have been completely exhausted.

The statement concludes by saying that there is as yet no actual news of fresh developments, and that no ultimatum has been sent by Japan to-

THE SITUATION GRAVE.

Pekin, Dec. 20 .- The report cabled from Tien Tsin to London to the effect that Japan had sent an ultimatum to Russia is discredited here and no in-"With but few exceptions, it is formation of a corroborative nature is

> While the knowledge of the legations on the situation leads to the belieff that the sending of an untimatum is improbable, the prospects of war areevidently increasing. The British legation some days ago received a telegram indicating that war was possible and the Japanese legation is officially informed that Russia's recent reply to the Japanese proposal

was unsatisfactory. While no news has been received atthe Japanese legation that Japan hassent an ultimatum to Ruslsia, it is recognized at the legation that a gravecrisis is approaching. Maj. Gen. Yamani, the Japanese military attache and the Japanese colonel who has been instructing Gen. Yuanshai Kai's

troops have both started four Japan. The native press recently reiterated a circumstantial story to the effectthat in the event of Manchuria being retained by Russia it was the intention of Great Britian to establish a protectorate over the Yang Tse valley as compensation and to appoint a viceroy therein so that her prestige in the far east would be equal to Russia's. Some of the native papers give Wai Wu Pu of the Chinese foreign board as authority for the story. This fiction is largely credited and gravely discussed and is creating hostility against Great Britian. It is suspected that the story has been fostered by unfriendly agencies appointed for the purpose and the British legation is investigating its origin.

ANOTHER RUMOR.

London, Dec. 21 .- The Daily Mail's Pekin correspondent declares that a few Manchu nobles who are under Russian influence are delaying the conclusion of an alliance between China and

Terrible Boiler Explosion.

St. Louis, Dec. 21.-Seven boilers in the power house of the St. Louis transit Company exploded tonight. killing three employees, injuring six and wrecking the building. The explosion broke window panes several blocks away. The brick walls of the boiler house were thrown outward and the heavy truss roof, after being thrown high in the air, dropped directly over out and darkness prevented prompt work in rescuing the injured, whose cries could be plainly heard. Fire broke out in one portion of the debris. but was extinguished before it gained much headway.

The cause of the explosion is not known. Several street car lines were brought to a standstill for a time for lack of power, but other power houses were hastily connected and the cars were soon put into operation.

Kanass City, Mo., Dec. 21.-In a wreck today at Godfrey, Kan., of the "Meteor", St. Louis and San Fran-