

## THIRTY PEOPLE KILLED.

Collapse of a Crowded Floor in London, Ont., Results Disastrously.

Thirty-Six Buildings at Farmville, Va., Destroyed by Fire—Commerce, Tex., Nearly Wiped Out—Workman Decapitated—Accident in a Cotton Gin.

LONDON, Ont., Jan. 4.—Thirty persons are known to have been killed and many were injured by the collapse of a floor in the city hall last night. Last night closed the municipal campaign, and the hall was crowded to hear the addresses of the successful candidates. How many were injured will never be known, as those who suffered but slightly at once made for their homes or were cared for by friends. Both of the city hospitals are full, and many of the injured are at their own homes. The building was crowded to the very doors, probably 2,000 people being jammed in its narrow space. There was a lull in the proceedings when the audience called for several of the newly elected aldermen at once, and there was some delay in securing a speaker to address them. In response to numerous calls, R. M. Tootle was pushed forward to the platform on which the speakers stood. As he reached it there was an ominous cracking, and the raised platform on which the mayor and newly elected aldermen were seated seemed to pitch forward to the floor. There was a sagging of timbers and the next moment 150 people were hurled 20 feet to the floor below. A large safe stood in one corner of the hall and, with a huge steam coil weighing half a ton, came crashing down on the heads of the victims. Following the crash there was a wild rush for the doors. At the south door, where the majority of the crowd had entered, there was a terrible panic. Those in front were thrown down by the on-coming rush, shrieking and fighting for the door and safety. Only half of the rear door, a space of probably three feet, was open, and in the mad rush no one thought to open the other half and 500 people struggled through the narrow space, the strong bearing down the weaker.

### BIG QUANTITY OF TOBACCO BURNED.

FARMVILLE, Va., Jan. 4.—Fire broke out late Sunday night in the storage warehouse of Duval, Robertson & Co., commission merchants, and before it was subdued destroyed 36 buildings. The loss is estimated at \$150,000, on which there is an insurance of about one-third that amount. Among the buildings destroyed were 13 tobacco factories, a large warehouse, many small dwellings and workshops. Hundreds of laborers will be temporarily thrown out of employment. It is estimated that at least 1,000,000 pounds of tobacco were consumed, including a great quantity of the finest grades sold in this market. The origin of the fire has not been ascertained, though there is a belief that it was incendiary.

### A TEXAS TOWN NEARLY WIPED OUT.

COMMERCE, Tex., Jan. 4.—The biggest fire in the history of this city occurred last night, in which the entire east side of the town was swept away. The fire broke out in the Aresley building at midnight and spread rapidly. The post office, Odd Fellows' building, Thornton & Coley, grocers; W. F. Sayle, hardware and saddlery; J. B. Cook, furniture; Tipton Bros., grocers; Barker & Rutland, insurance and real estate; W. L. Irwin, meat market; R. B. Cummins & Co., grocers; R. C. Hill & Co., hardware, and P. V. Stewart, meat market, were burned. Most of the stocks were lost and the buildings totally ruined. The aggregate loss is estimated at \$100,000, with possibly \$30,000 insurance.

### A WORKMAN DECAPITATED.

NEW YORK, Jan. 4.—While at work on the underground cable and trolley system at Fourth avenue and Twenty-Third street the head of James Keegan was severed from his body, presumably by the sharp metal shoe of a trolley car. The decapitation was performed as neatly as if a keen-edged knife had been used. The accident occurred while the finishing touches were being made on the underground system at the crossing of the two thoroughfares. Keegan was alone at the time working in a dark chamber covered with planks. No one had been stationed to warn the young man of approaching cars, and the only light in the dark hole filtered down through the cable slots.

### FATAL ACCIDENT IN A COTTON GIN.

GUTHRIE, Ok., Jan. 4.—At a cotton gin located at Anvil, Lincoln county, John Bovarnick was caught in the shafting and hurled against the wall with great force, fracturing his skull and breaking his arms. He will die.

### A GIGANTIC DEBT.

Greater New York's Financial Obligations Reach the Enormous Sum of \$27,455,529.

NEW YORK, Jan. 4.—Mayor Van Wyck's message to the municipal assembly, which was read upon the organization of that body, treated at length of the financial condition of the greater city. The document was accompanied by lengthy tables, furnished him by the comptroller of New York, Brooklyn, Richmond and Queens. The figures indicated a net funded debt of \$27,455,529, and an assessed valuation of real estate of the entire city of \$2,464,763,192.

## A STARTLING DISCOVERY.

All \$100 Silver Certificates, Representing \$26,000,000 in Currency, to Be Called In.

WASHINGTON, Jan. 4.—All of the \$100 silver certificates now in circulation in the United States, representing \$26,000,000 in currency, have been called in by Secretary of the Treasury Gage. For the present the issuance of such certificates will be stopped. This order is the result of the discovery of one of the most dangerous counterfeits ever discovered—one which even deceived the officials of the treasury department here, and was not discovered until the attention of the officials at Washington was called to the clever imitation of a \$100 silver certificate, head of President Monroe, by John Cramer, of the sub-treasury at Philadelphia. Mr. Cramer brought to the secret service officers the counterfeit certificates, five in number. These bills had been turned into the sub-treasury by two leading banks and the Philadelphia custom house, which had received them as genuine.

In view of the dangerous character of the counterfeit, Secretary Gage decided to stop issuing and to call in all \$100 silver certificates. These will be exchanged for silver certificates of smaller denominations, and the plates destroyed. As soon as new plates can be engraved a new series will be issued. Assistant treasurers at all of the sub-treasury cities will be requested to send to the treasury in Washington all \$100 silver certificates in their possession, and to request all banks, trust companies and other moneyed institutions to do the same.

Secretary Gage desired the statement made that in his judgment it was unsafe for business men or others to accept silver certificates of this denomination, and in case any were now on hand they should be sent to the banks for transmission to Washington.

### AGAINST HANNA.

His Republican Enemies and Democrats Organize Both Ohio Houses.

COLUMBUS, O., Jan. 4.—Representative Mason, anti-Hanna republican, was elected speaker of the house on the first ballot. Mason received the 47 solid votes of the democrats and these were reinforced by the votes of nine anti-Hanna republicans. If these men refuse to vote for the re-election of Senator Hanna, his defeat is certain. He had pinned his faith to Boxwell for speaker and decided to stand or fall by him. The test vote was 56 to 52 in favor of anti-Hanna men.

Senator Burke, of Cleveland, was absent when the senate was called to order, and the democrats organized and secured control of that body. Alex. Caine for clerk and other Hanna candidates were defeated, the vote standing 18 to 17 against Hanna. The election of a United States senator seems now to depend upon the democrats. The anti-Hanna republicans have accomplished all that Charles L. Kurtz promised. They have secured enough of the republican members of the legislature to stand against Mr. Hanna—united with the democratic minority—to defeat him. Will the democrats be able to control their entire force and deliver it to Mr. Kurtz to be used in electing an anti-Hanna republican? This is the great question now. Another minor question is whether Mr. Kurtz will be able to keep his men in line. The Hanna managers are arranging to bring tremendous pressure to bear upon the bolters.

### OPPRESSOR OF CHINA.

Li Hung Chang Declares That This Act of War is Wholly Unwarranted.

NEW YORK, Jan. 4.—The Herald publishes an interview its correspondent obtained with Li Hung Chang in Pekin, Sunday. Li said:

The forcible occupation of Kiao Chou by Germany is a direct violation of existing treaties and of international law. The pretext made for this act of war was the murder of two missionaries by robbers in the interior of the province of Shan Tung. The Chinese government offered immediate and full redress for this outrage, punishment of the criminals, dismissal of the local officials and large compensation for all losses. Anxious to avoid hostilities, the Chinese troops were withdrawn from Kiao Chou when the Germans landed, and in spite of strong public feeling prevailing throughout the country for the defense of the Chinese territory against aggression, my government has not sent reinforcements to Kiao Chou.

Outlaws exist in China, as in all countries. Neither treaties, law nor religion can entirely suppress crime anywhere in the world, though they condemn and punish the criminals. There are places in every country where lawlessness abounds, and to such a place as Shan Tung the German missionaries determined to go, knowing that the inhabitants themselves were often victims of these bandits. Unfortunately, China has not yet recovered from the effects of the late war, and our country requires a period of peace to carry out the work of reform lately begun.

### Working for a Reprieve for Durrant.

SAN FRANCISCO, Jan. 4.—Theodore Durrant's attorneys will again seek to obtain the aid of the federal courts and will ask Judge Morrow for a writ of habeas corpus. While this legal contest is being conducted, another appeal to Gov. Budd will be perfected in the hope that he will be induced to grant Durrant a reprieve until all the legal points at issue have been fully determined.

### May Unite Methodist Churches.

WASHINGTON, Jan. 4.—Friday next about 150 delegates representing the Methodist Episcopal church and the Methodist Episcopal church (south) will meet in joint session here. It will be the first fraternal meeting in a quarter of a century of the two divisions of the church, and its object is to reunite all the Methodists under one banner.

## NOTHING BUT FREEDOM.

Gen. Gomez Says Insurgents Will Not Accept Autonomy.

No Objection to an American Protectorate—Offer of Autonomy an Insult to Patriotic Soldiers—Cuban Success Predicted.

NEW YORK, Dec. 31.—A correspondent of the Herald has just returned to Havana after having visited the camp of Gen. Gomez. After a long and perilous ride through country infested with Spanish troops, he reached Gen. Gomez's camp on December 18, and found the general in excellent health and spirits. The correspondent put before the general the programme of autonomy in order to secure his opin-



GEN. MAXIMO GOMEZ.

ion. The general smiled contemptuously, after glancing over a copy of a Havana paper containing the terms, and said:

There is no use wasting time in discussing these terms. It makes no difference whether they may be regarded as liberal or not. The fact remains that we are not fighting for autonomy, but for independence. This Spain seems utterly unable to realize. We have been told that the autonomy offer is an act of liberality by the mother country to induce the patriots in arms to resume their allegiance to Spain. That is worse than folly. It is an insult to the men fighting for freedom. There is not in the Cuban army one officer so base as to accept such terms. We will not even listen to any overtures and any person entering our camps for such a purpose will be put to death in accordance with my general orders.

Continuing, Gen. Gomez said that he had no faith in the ability of Spain to immediately plant autonomy, even in the sections under Spanish control, but whether she succeeded or not, the matter was of no moment to the men in the field, who would continue to fight, animated by a love of freedom and an absolute confidence in ultimate success. The correspondent asked Gen. Gomez for his opinion as to American intervention and the annexation of Cuba to the United States. He replied:

Intervention does not necessarily imply annexation. I would gladly accept the former, as I would accept aid from any quarter, although I believe if left alone we will achieve our own independence unaided, and I am loath that we should be robbed of any share in the honor of the expulsion of the Spaniards. As far as annexation is concerned, I cannot admit its possibility. To that proposition I make the same reply as I do to the autonomy plan—that our object is independence. We have among us young men who have sacrificed everything to this sacred cause. For myself, I am an old man, who now has but one object in life, and that is to see the flag of Cuba supreme from Cape Maysi to San Antonio.

We have already made fearful sacrifices and we stand ready to make more in order to achieve this glorious end. I know that the people of the United States will never balk us in this, our hour of victory. The idea of arbitrary annexation of this territory is inconsistent with the principles upon which the American republic is founded. If in the future, after Cuba has won her freedom, and it is demonstrated that she is capable of self-government, it became apparent that her interests would be advanced by incorporation into the United States, I would be the last to object if an application should be made for the honor of admission to the great sisterhood of states. That is a very different thing from annexation.

Asked as to his views on an American protectorate over the island, Gen. Gomez replied that he had no objection, believing it would carry a guarantee of peace at home, with the respect of all nations, and would permit Cuba to work out her destiny under the most favorable conditions. In return, he believes that Cuba should, in her commerce, favor the United States above all nations.

### WOULD DISPENSE WITH THEM.

Pension Commissioner Evans Wants the Business of Attorneys Cut Off.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 31.—Commissioner of Pensions Evans has been giving some attention to a proposition whereby the services of pension attorneys engaged in the prosecutions of claims before the office may be dispensed with and their work done by officials under government supervision. Informally he has been discussing the matter with members of the house committee on invalid pensions, but is not yet prepared to outline the details of his plan. The present system, he says, is wrong, and should have been done away with long ago. Discontinuing the services of the attorneys would result in a great saving to both pensioners and the government, and liability to frauds in issuing pensions would be reduced to a minimum. Under government supervision, the pension bureau would have direct control of the persons appointed to look after the cases, whose business it would be to see that all honest claims were promptly and intelligently presented. The commissioner notes the fact that \$13,500,000 has been paid out during the past 13 years to pension attorneys by applicants for the prosecution of their claims.

## ST. LOUIS SUB-TREASURY.

Many Bankers Think the Government's Surplus Should Be Deposited There.

St. Louis, Jan. 1.—In response to an inquiry yesterday Chief Clerk C. G. Ricker, of the St. Louis sub-treasury, said:

Five months ago there was on deposit in the New York sub-treasury \$198,000,000 of gold and silver and in the national treasury at Washington \$211,000,000. We had at the same time on deposit in the St. Louis sub-treasury \$25,000,000, which is about the limit of one vault capacity. The amount now on deposit here of bullion is about \$18,000,000. If this city were made the depository for all the bullion, immense vaults would have to be constructed here and I think it possible the money could be accommodated without the necessity of a separate building. In other words, we may have the vault room, but not near enough vaults.

A number of prominent bankers and others who were seen expressed the belief that it would be a good thing to have the surplus gold and silver owned by the government deposited here, but few of them agree with Congressman McCulloch that there is any danger of its seizure even in the event of war with some other country.

### NEAL CASE REVIVED.

Montana Negroes Making Desperate Efforts to Prevent Johnson's Extradition.

BUTTE, Mont., Jan. 3.—The negroes of Montana are making a renewed effort to prevent the extradition of Joseph C. Johnson, who is making a hard fight to escape being taken back to Missouri, where he is wanted for eloping with Kate Neal, a white girl of Sweet Springs. It is said that Johnson's attorneys are in receipt of a letter from Miss Neal, which was written from Kansas City, after her return there, in which she asserted that Johnson was in no wise to blame and that she brought the whole trouble on herself by following him about. She claimed to have come west with Johnson without any solicitation from him. Johnson is not a married man, as has been stated.

### GIANT PAPER TRUST.

It Will Have a Capital of \$50,000,000 and Will Control All the Big Mills.

ALBANY, N. Y., Jan. 3.—The statement is made that the print paper manufacturers have perfected their combination and on January 14 will formally take possession of the various mills which are included in the trust. The new company will be known as the International Paper company, with a capital stock of \$50,000,000. There are now 16 companies in the combination. The aggregate capacity of these mills is 1,387 tons a day. There are five other mills which will eventually come into the combination. In all probability the smaller mills will be shut up unless the combination should be driven to the full production of the plants under its control.

### AUTONOMY A FAILURE.

President Has Received Advice to This Effect from Consul General Lee.

WASHINGTON, Jan. 3.—Autonomy in Cuba is already a failure, and the administration has been officially informed of the fact. The reports will not be submitted to congress, at least for the present, for fear of an outbreak of indignation, but the information is in the hands of the president, and he begins the new year face to face with the necessity of adapting his Cuban policy to rapidly changing conditions. Consul General Lee and every consular officer on the island has sent in reports that although the scheme of autonomy might have been temporarily successful last year it is impossible now.

### SURPLUS FOR DECEMBER.

Government Receipts Were Nearly Two Million in Excess of Expenditures.

WASHINGTON, Jan. 3.—The total receipts for the month of December amounted to \$59,646,698, and the expenditures \$27,095,000, which leaves a surplus for the month of \$32,551,698. These figures, however, include the receipts and payments on account of the Union Pacific transfer. Independent of the Union Pacific account the surplus this month is \$1,736,494. For the six months of the present fiscal year, exclusive of the Union Pacific payments, there is a deficit of \$4,165,000, but including the Pacific payments there is a surplus of \$95,454.

### NO GOLD STANDARD.

China Will Not Adopt It for Fear It Would Injure Domestic Trade.

TACOMA, Wash., Jan. 3.—Li Hung Chang has decided that China will not adopt the gold standard. The matter was recently brought up by a large number of wealthy Chinese, who were earnestly in favor of a single gold standard. The proposition was referred to Li Hung Chang, who decided that, while the commercial interests of China in her relations with other countries might be subserved by the single gold standard, it would be detrimental to her domestic trade, which was of far the greater importance.

### OSAGES ARE EXTRAVAGANT.

Statistics Show Them to Be the Wealthiest of Indian Tribes.

CHELSEA, I. T., Jan. 3.—Statistics not only reveal that the Osage Indians are the richest Indians in the world, but the most extravagant. Annually for the past four years they have drawn about \$350 per capita and now they have nothing of value to show where their money all went to, but are in debt to the traders to the extent of \$150 per capita. There are 1,600 Osages, 900 being full-bloods. They have a trust fund of \$5,500,000.

## IT PRESENTS ITS PLAN.

Main Points in the Report of the Monetary Commission.

Presents What It Considers to Be Defects in Our Present Currency System, and Suggests How It May Be Reformed.

Washington, Jan. 3.—The report of the monetary commission appointed under authority of the convention of business men held in Indianapolis last January has just been made public. Following is a synopsis of the document:

It retains practically unchanged the existing metallic money. The existing gold standard on which business has been done since 1879 is maintained, on the ground that the industrial interests demand certainty as to what the standard shall be. To this end, it is urged that the United States shall remove all uncertainty as to the meaning of "coin" in its obligations, thereby saving the taxpayer by its ability to borrow at a low rate of interest. No attempt is made to remove the existing silver dollars, nor to change their legal tender quality; on the contrary, a place is provided for them in the circulation by forbidding the issue of any paper money other than silver certificates in denominations below ten dollars.

### A Dangerous Practice.

It is regarded by the commission as dangerous to maintain the present practice of using government demand obligations as money. They were issued because there were no resources in the treasury; and so they depreciated, drove out gold, furnished a fluctuating standard, increased the national debt enormously, caused a change in prices whenever the credit of the paper standard fluctuated, and by causing unexpected changes in the level of prices gave rise to extraordinary speculation, increased the severity of commercial crises, and placed the small producer at a disadvantage with the large operator.

### Should Be Withdrawn.

For these and other reasons the commission strongly urge the government to withdraw its demand obligations now used as money, decline to provide gold for exporters and put the burden and expense of maintaining a redeemable paper circulation upon the banks. In order to meet the demand obligations, the present reserves of gold in the treasury furnish a sufficient sum to be set aside in the division of issue and redemption; and to meet possible contingencies the secretary of the treasury is authorized to sell bonds whenever the reserves need replenishment. In this way, or from surplus revenue, the demand obligations (that is, United States notes and treasury notes of 1890) can be removed in such a way that the cost to the country can be reduced; while this will also give the inestimable advantage of ceasing to use demand obligations as money, simplifying our currency, and adding to confidence in the certainty of our standard. By the plan of the commission the withdrawal of government paper is so arranged that contraction cannot possibly take place; if United States notes are canceled their place will be taken by the gold paid out for them, or by the expansion of bank notes (under the new system proposed).

### Good Word for the Bank Note.

The demand obligations of the United States were not a necessity based on property; they were only a debt. On the other hand, a bank note is never issued (fraud, of course, excepted) except for a consideration in negotiable property of equal or greater value. The bank note comes forth as the sequel to a business transaction, and is based on the active property of the country which is passing between producers and consumers. This property is always negotiable and always equal to the duty of meeting the note liability. Bank notes are as sound as the business transactions of the country. The currency of the country, moreover, should increase as the transactions of the country increase; hence the rigid unchanging inelasticity of the government make them an inelastic part of the circulation, while by the very process of their issue bank notes alone can be automatically adjusted to the changing transactions of the business community.

### To Secure Absolute Safety.

In amending the present national banking system, the commission were actuated by a desire to secure absolute safety to the note-holder; to make the notes uniform and of equal currency in all parts of the country; to create an elastic system, which, while expanding in response to increasing transactions, should healthily contract when transactions diminish; and which would help in a better distribution of banking facilities throughout the western and southern states.

In view of the scarcity of United States bonds, they cannot long be regarded as a basis of circulation. Moreover, any bond security of a high character yields a low rate of interest; and in a time of stringency, when borrowers need loans and the market rate of interest is high, there is no inducement to buy these bonds to increase circulation. Hence, under the present system, when notes should be most needed, it is least profitable to issue them.

### Plan of the Commission.

While providing for a partial use of bonds for securing notes (25 per cent. of the capital) the commission proposed that notes beyond this should be issued on all, instead of a part of, the resources of a bank; and within a few years that no special bond security should be required. Banks may issue notes up to 60 per cent. of their capital, without restriction; for issue beyond 60 per cent. and up to 80 per cent. they pay a tax of two per cent.; for those beyond 80 per cent. and up to 100 per cent. they pay a tax of six per cent. These notes would be a prior lien upon all the resources of the bank, and, in addition, upon the stockholders' liability. Moreover, all banks issuing notes contribute five per cent. of their circulation as a permanent guaranty fund. For daily redemptions, banks should keep a five per cent. redemption fund in the hands of the comptroller of the currency. Banks of \$25,000 capital may be established in places of 4,000 inhabitants; and branches of banks are also permitted.

### A Story of Rothschild.

Here is a good story of Lord Rothschild, head of the Hebrew community in London. He once received a Christian visitor on some ticklish question of business, and the talk between the two at last became heated, his lordship losing his habitual calm and flaring up pretty fiercely. "Well, my lord," said his visitor, reining in with a desire to throw oil on the troubled waters, "I hope you are not going to eat me." "My religion forbids me," returned his lordship, with quiet scorn, which was as near a way of calling a man a pig as could well be.—Philadelphia Press.