

We close all day Monday, December 26.

THOMPSON, BELDEN & CO. Y. M. C. A. Building, Corner Sixteenth and Douglas Streets.

DESOLATION AT SIOUX CITY. Business Center of the Town in a Mass of Blackened Ruins. FIREMEN ARE STILL AT THE NOZZLE.

All Day Long Streams Are Poured Into the Northwestern National Bank Building—All Business Suspended.

SIOUX CITY, Ia., Dec. 24.—All is desolation in Sioux City tonight. There is little of Christmas joy and the season's greetings are said with heavy smiles.

Fire Is Dying Hard. The firemen are still at the nozzle. Still the fight goes on. The fire is dying hard, but it is dying.

Business throughout the city is practically suspended. None of the business houses in the burned section has opened for business.

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Passports Are Abolished. The minister of the interior has issued an important order, looking to the ultimate abolishment of the cumbersome passport system.

Abolition of the passport system in Russia will work complete revolution, not only in the social order, looking to the empire from constant surveillance by the police, but in many other ways increasing personal freedom.

Foreign commercial travelers at present are allowed to travel without the passport system. Their vocations must be stated in a passport and a special license, which costs \$25, is exacted before they can go abroad.

When the district attorney made his announcement, Daniel O'Reilly, of counsel for Miss Patterson, said: "This means that there will be a new trial. We are anxious that it will be called soon, and will make every effort to have it called as soon as possible."

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APPEAL TO FEDERAL COURT. Attorney for Election Officials Questions Authority of Colorado Tribunal.

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FARMERS IN SHOOTING AFFRAY. Shotgun Versus Revolvers, with the Former a Winner in the Contest.

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SCHMOLLER & MUELLER—1313 FARNAM STREET. A REMARKABLE PIANO OFFER.

Which Expires Dec. 31, owing to our FIRE LOSS AT SIOUX CITY.

Commencing Tuesday Morning, Dec. 27, and continuing only 5 days until 10 P. M. Saturday, Dec. 31, we will offer any new piano in our Omaha store (excepting the Steinway, which admits of no reduction).

AT ACTUAL FACTORY COST. Plus only the Freight and Selling Expense. THIS OFFER IS FOR SPOT CASH.

For Our Future Protection These Prices Cannot Be Advertised. By fulfilling every promise made, by advertising only what we have to sell—keeping faith with the public—this house has grown to its present position—the leading piano firm in the west—with large stores at Omaha, Sioux City, Council Bluffs and Lincoln.

Out-of-Town Buyers Should Take Advantage. Of the half fare excursion rates to Omaha all this week, from the nearest points in Nebraska, you can save enough on your piano purchase here to pay all expenses, 3 years' music lessons and have money left.

USE THE WIRE OR TELEPHONE. ADDRESS SCHMOLLER & MUELLER. Established 1859. 1313 Farnam Street, Omaha, Neb. Telephone 1625.

autograph letter to M. Leubet, but it is of a felicitous character. M. Leubet left here as convinced as ever of Russia's purpose to prosecute the war until victory is achieved.

General Kouropatkin reports having made December 23 a reconnaissance in force in the direction of the Japanese positions at Bentaspitze. The Russians forced an entry into Bentaspitze, occupied some of the entrenchments and repulsed the counter attacks of two battalions of Japanese, with great loss, the Japanese leaving nine prisoners in the hands of the Russians.

News at Washington. WASHINGTON, Dec. 24.—The Japanese legation today received the following cablegram from Tokio, dated today: "Port Arthur army reports that the right detachment occupied a hill on the east of Hsuangshan, then the Japanese made a fierce counter attack, but was repulsed. Our occupation is now nearly secured. This hill is situated one mile and a half south of 200-Meter hill. The bombardment of our heavy guns caused a great confusion on the part of the Japanese."

Paris, Dec. 24.—The officials of the Foreign office discredit the report from St. Petersburg circulated in the United States by a news agency to the effect that Am-Loubet favorable to the mediation of France in the war. They say they are not aware of the existence of any such letter and the report is believed to be an exaggeration growing out of Bompard's call on President Leubet December 13, when he presented a letter from Emperor Nicholas to the president, as called to the Associated Press at the time. Today M. Bompard gave out an authorized statement that Russia was resolved to vigorously carry on the war until decisive results have been secured. The ambassador has since said that the letter was not important or in connection with the war.

Use Liners for Scout Ships. HONOLULU, Dec. 24.—The steamer China, from Asiatic ports, brings definite information that the steamers Nippon and Hong Kong have left Yokohama for Singapore, and will act as scout ships in the operations of the Japanese warships against the Russian Baltic fleet. The steamer America will follow, conveying torpedo boats.

WHAT IRELAND NEEDS. (Continued from First Page.) there was practical unanimity. English education could be settled in the face of the conscientious objection of an enormous mass of Nonconformists, but Irish education could never be settled so long as any little handful of fanatics could be gotten together for the beat of an Orange drum. The settlement of that question was bound up with the prospects and success of the national movement in Ireland. Ireland was, in fact condemned today to a condition of ignorance by the action of a foreign government. Belfast was one of the only remaining places in the west of the settlement of this great question. He appealed to public opinion to take a reasonable and patriotic view of this question, bearing in mind that justice to the Catholics meant justice to the interests of Belfast.

MOTOR DUMPS KING ALFONSO. Ruler of Spain Has Narrow Escape from Injury at Madrid. MADRID, Dec. 24.—King Alfonso had a narrow escape while riding in a motor car on the Prado yesterday afternoon. The car, which he was driving personally, suddenly broke and the car overturned, but the king escaped uninjured.

FRANCE MAY SEIZE SIX PORTS. Crisis in Morocco is Reaching a Warlike Stage. PARIS, Dec. 24.—The crisis in Morocco assuming a warlike aspect, leading the government to consider all eventualities, including the possibility and even the probability of the occupation of a chain of six or seven of the most important ports giving France control of the Moroccan customs and communication with the outer world. This will not be definitely determined until the sultan responds to the French demands for redress. The occupation of ports is considered to be more effective than a naval demonstration, as the United States' demonstration at Tangier showed the Morocco was not to be unless a demonstration is accompanied by coercion, even the seizure of ports not bringing the sultan to terms. France is able to send a military expedition from Algeria. The French troops in Algeria number 50,000 and they are easily increased by 50,000, while the sultan's army does not exceed 30,000 men. However, Foreign Minister Delcasse is moving cautiously and is still hopeful that a resort to force will be unnecessary. Care also is being taken to avoid the sultan's proclaiming a holy war, which would arouse the Mohammedan fanaticism.

Greek Cabinet Resigns. ATHENS, Dec. 24.—The Greek cabinet resigned today in consequence of the defeat of the government in the chamber yesterday on a vote of no confidence moved by former Premier Deloyanis. The latter sharply criticized the government's general policy and M. Zaimis did the same. King George is considering whether to form a stopgap cabinet or dissolve the chamber and entrust M. Deloyanis with the task of forming a new cabinet.

REFORMS ON BROAD SCALE. Progressive Party in Russia Now Has Ear of the Czar.

PASSPORT SYSTEM IS GREATLY MODIFIED. Movement Means Much for Individual Freedom in the Interior—Powers Restored to Zemstvos.

ST. PETERSBURG, Dec. 24.—Current topics of a complete victory of the reactionaries and the definite shelving of all hope for early reforms on a broad scale, according to an authority very close to the emperor, are a decidedly false picture. Prince Svatopolk-Mirsky stands higher than ever in the emperor's confidence and esteem and the program of reform that is being worked out covers national, municipal and peasant administration.

The reforms will include an extension of powers of zemstvos and domnas (land council), especially in the matter of taxation and assessment and a crystallization into a law of the recommendation of the Witte commission and whole plan of reforms in the direction of a curtailment of the powers of the bureaucracy and decentralization. Moreover, it is understood that zemstvos are to be invited to send representatives to St. Petersburg for consultative purposes, and there seems even to exist a hope that something in the nature of zemsky statement, advocated by Loris-Melikoff may, after all, not be impossible.

Reverses Plev's Order. The zemstvos of the government of Tiver and of the district of Novotorsk have had restored to them the right to elect their presidents from among their own members. A year ago the late minister of the interior, Van Plev, had disapproved of the presidents elected by these zemstvos and replaced them with his own nominees. The restoration of the right to elect their presidents in the case of the two zemstvos mentioned is regarded as being a significant sign of the times.

Passports Are Abolished. The minister of the interior has issued an important order, looking to the ultimate abolishment of the cumbersome passport system. For the present the abolition of the passport system will only apply to Russians, and not to foreigners, although it is intended at the end of the war to abolish the system governing foreigners also. The state tax on the latter, however, will be removed, leaving only Red Cross and invalid fund taxes.

Abolition of the passport system in Russia will work complete revolution, not only in the social order, looking to the empire from constant surveillance by the police, but in many other ways increasing personal freedom. It is impossible under the present system for a peasant to leave a commune without an endorsed passport or a peasant and a native must secure a passport and a native must secure a special passport, costing \$7.50, before he can go abroad. The penalty for a native evading this law is exceedingly drastic, including corporal punishment if captured.

Foreign commercial travelers at present are allowed to travel without the passport system. Their vocations must be stated in a passport and a special license, which costs \$25, is exacted before they can transact business in the country. Whether this license will be modified with the abolition of the passport it is impossible to say at present. A strong effort was made in 1887 to abolish passports. This measure was then shelved until 1888, when a special commission investigated the subject and decided that it was impossible to abolish the passport system. Since then the law has been enforced with the greatest severity.

Demand a Liberal Policy. MOSCOW, Dec. 24.—Expressions of sympathy with the reform resolutions passed at the recent conference at zemstvo representatives raised a storm at the session of the All-Russian society here yesterday evening. A statement signed by twenty-eight members endorsing the zemstvo resolutions was introduced by a member. The president objected, but notwithstanding his protest the communication was read. A representative of the Kostroma branch of the society was heard to cheer when he announced that the Kostroma branch had adopted a similar resolution and demanded the termination of the war. The president thereupon left the hall and the assembly proceeded to elect a new president. Excited speeches continued to be made until late at night.

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CHURCHES AT NEW YORK. Salvation Army Will Feed Fifty Thousand People Today—Great Exodus from the City.

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YULETIDE IN GREAT BRITAIN. Christmas Spent is Abroad in the Land Despite the Heavy Fog. ROYAL FAMILY AT SANDRINGHAM. Ambassadors and Mrs. Choate Are Guests of Baron Mount Stephen in Hertfordshire—Evans and Family Go to Paris.

MURPHY WILL BE RELEASED. Puggill Nelson and His Manager Will Agree on Division of \$9,000 Check. SAN FRANCISCO, Dec. 24.—Battling Nelson will not prosecute his manager, Teddy Murphy, who left for San Francisco today, but a detective to answer charges of embezzlement. The check for \$9,000 found in Murphy's possession was cashed and the money deposited with the property of the manager. Murphy and Nelson signed a paper agreeing to the fact that Nelson has been released on his own recognizance and Murphy will be released on \$1,000 bail. Nelson and Murphy both say that an amicable settlement can be reached and further legal proceedings are not expected.

ROYAL FAMILY AT SANDRINGHAM. Ambassadors and Mrs. Choate Are Guests of Baron Mount Stephen in Hertfordshire—Evans and Family Go to Paris. LONDON, Dec. 24.—The Christmas spirit was abroad throughout England today, notwithstanding the continued heavy fog which normally acts as an extreme depressant. Not for years has London had such a thorough dose of that pea soup atmosphere for which the metropolis is famous, but the population which grumbled during the week changed their moods today and, accepting the inevitable, prepared to spend a merry Christmas, even welcoming the fog as a Christmas gift and friend of olden days. In all the great homes in England Yule log is burning. From Sandringham to the humblest residence, relatives who are scattered throughout the rest of the year are gathering to spend the English Christmas. It is estimated that 1,500,000 persons went out of London today. To those who witnessed the tremendous rushes at every station the wonder was that any persons could be left to people London. But the exodus leaves no appreciable mark in the streets, which are thronged with millions of shoppers and sightseers, though the fog limits the scope of vision.

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NEW CHARGE AGAINST NEGRO. Heat Another Colored Man on Election Day and is Accused of Interfering with Rights of Citizen. NEW YORK, Dec. 24.—A charge, the like of which never has been obtained in a United States court in this district within the memory of the oldest court official, was preferred today against Henry Jones, a Louisville (Ky.) negro, when he was arraigned before United States Commissioner Shobe. The charge against Jones was interfering with the rights of a citizen in that he had John Supperton, another negro, so severely that Supperton was unable to vote at the last presidential election at Louisville. Secret services were rendered by Jones for some time and finally located him in this city. When arraigned before the commissioner today he waived examination and extradition formalities and will be taken back to Louisville immediately for trial. The complaint against Jones was sworn out by Chief Flynn of the United States secret service.

LEBANON COLLEGE. FIRE RECORD. LEBANON, Pa., Dec. 24.—The main building of Lebanon college at Annville was destroyed by fire tonight. The loss is \$70,000, with an insurance of \$50,000. The origin cannot be located.

WRONG IDEA. Don't get the wrong idea into your head that starvation is good for Dyspepsia. It's not. Those who have not studied the subject very deeply, or with trained scientific minds, might THINK so. All specialists in stomach and digestive disorders know that it is best for dyspepsia to eat WELL FEED.

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