

while withdrawing from the disputed territory.

With this settlement of the comparatively trifling quarrel over the Tientsin concession, the Manchurian question, of which we told two weeks ago (page 775), resumes its prominence. At the time of our former report on this subject, secret negotiations between Russia and China were known to be in progress for the establishment of a Russian protectorate over Manchuria, which Russia has for five years past been gradually occupying. These negotiations were objectionable to both Great Britain and the United States as tending to the dismemberment of China, and to Japan as steps toward the appropriation of Corea by Russia. It was at that time feared that the upshot might be a general war, with Russia, supported by France, on one side, and Great Britain, supported by the United States and Japan on the other. The United States had gone so far as to warn China against making concessions to any power without the consent of the others, and Great Britain has done the same. But now this affair, in so far as it is a menace of war, has settled down to a possible conflict between Russia and Japan. Russia's secret negotiations with China had led up to a demand on Russia's part that China enter into two treaties regarding Manchuria, to be signed on the 26th. What these treaties are is not yet known, except as Chinese officials have vaguely divulged their terms. Russia declines to disclose them. A British diplomatic request of Russia for information is reported to have been curtly refused. Pending the date for signing, China begged the other powers to warn Russia instead of herself; but none of the powers has exhibited any disposition to go beyond the action of the United States in its hint to Russia through its warning to China. Three of them, however—Great Britain, Germany and Japan—have notified the United States that they will regard the signing of the Chinese-Russian treaties as freeing them from their obligations to preserve the integrity of China (see page 344), and will take such measures as they deem advisable for the protection of their own interests. This notice is understood to foreshadow a policy of Chinese partition. At a cabinet meeting on the 26th, the United States decided to make no protest against the

treaties, but to stand for the "open door" policy, if Great Britain, Germany and Japan do make the Russian-Chinese treaties regarding Manchuria the pretext for a general partition. Whether the treaties have been signed is not yet known, though the time limit for signing them, the 26th, has expired.

On the brink of a foreign war which her policy of "benevolent assimilation" is provoking, Russia is also in a state of domestic turmoil. Allusion was made to this in these columns last week (page 793). The trouble began on the 17th with students' riots in St. Petersburg and the university cities of Odessa, Kieff and Kharkoff. These disturbances have continued and have been supplemented with workmen's strikes and other demonstrations. Preceding the rioting, the minister of education was assassinated and the minister of justice was fired at. An attempt has been made also upon the life of the chief procurator of the holy synod. On the 23d there was publicly posted in St. Petersburg a call to "all intelligent members of Russian society to join the ranks of the students in the struggle for freedom." It is reported, too, that a mine, intended for the assassination of the emperor, has been discovered. Though indefinite and untrustworthy in their details, the reports that reach this country nevertheless indicate a general disturbance, and it is not improbable that Russia is, as some of the reports state, upon the brink of a revolution.

There is little news regarding the war in South Africa, except that the history of the peace negotiations between Lord Kitchener and Gen. Botha have been made public in a parliamentary document given out in London on the 22d. They began with a dispatch of February 22d from Sir Alfred Milner to Mr. Chamberlain, stating that Mrs. Botha had returned from a meeting with her husband, to whom she had carried a verbal message from Milner offering to meet Botha for a discussion of peace conditions with the understanding that the question of independence should not be broached. Mrs. Botha brought back a written reply from her husband proposing a meeting at Pretoria. This meeting took place between Botha and Kitchener on the 28th. Kitchener then proposed certain terms subject to modification by his

government. They were stiffened somewhat by Sir Alfred Milner and still further by Mr. Chamberlain. As finally offered, they proposed to grant, upon the cessation of hostilities and the surrender of all arms, a general amnesty "for bona fide acts of war;" to "move the governments of Cape Colony and Natal to similar action, qualified by the disfranchisement of any British subjects implicated in the war;" to bring war prisoners back to the country; to replace military law by civil administration, and "as soon as circumstances will permit, to establish a representative government;" to establish a high law court; to respect landed property, church property and orphan funds; to teach English and Dutch in the public schools, and use both languages in the law courts; not to extend the franchise "to Kaffirs in the Transvaal and Orange River colony before a representative government is granted;" and "as an act of grace, to set aside \$5,000,000 to repay the inhabitants for goods requisitioned by the republican governments." The significant thing about these negotiations is the fact that they were initiated by the British government in the face of its frequent notification to the Boers that they must surrender unconditionally. Next to that in point of significance is Botha's refusal to accept the terms.

It is evident that fighting has been renewed since the failure of the peace negotiations, but the news regarding it is not important in itself.

#### NEWS NOTES.

—The guillotine has been substituted for the ax by Sweden as the instrument for capital executions.

—Charlotte Mary Yonge, the famous author, died at Winchester, England, on the 24th at the age of 78.

—The New York prison village of Sing Sing, on the Hudson, has secured from the legislature a change of name to Ossining.

—H. H. Kohlsaat has sold the Chicago Evening Post to a syndicate headed by J. C. Shaffer. The rumored price was \$200,000.

—The various tin can companies of the United States have been consolidated in a trust under the corporate name of the American Tin Can company.

—The Chicago Record has been sold by Victor F. Lawson to H. H. Kohlsaat, who intends to combine it with the Times-Herald under the name of the Chicago Record-Herald. Such is the authoritative announcement.