

the suggestion that the United States is supplanting the countries named, the "Bulletin" says:

"If this be true, the process so far has been a decidedly slow one. Our exports to Asiatic Russia for the nine months ending with September were \$1,508,687 against \$1,287,746 for the corresponding nine months of the previous year—a gain of just \$220,941. This is something, however, and might encourage us to hope for considerable gains in the near future did the capacity of the Russian Empire as a whole to absorb our products show any tangible increase. In spite of the Count's idea that there is a growing market in Russia in Europe for American machinery, our exports thither are at present on a declining scale. For the first nine months of last year they showed a total of \$6,830,271, against only \$5,937,894 for the same period of this year. In other words, they have decreased \$892,377, or over four times as much as they have gained in Asiatic Russia. This is not encouraging, but there is the consoling reflection supplied by Count Cassini that "the national resources of Russia are only partially developed, and the call for the ingenious machinery manufactured in the United States will be unlimited."

There is one kind of ingenious machinery which Russia does not need to buy or borrow from us, and that is the mechanism it employs to kill foreign trade. For example, when Batoum was taken from Turkey, Russia gave a distinct pledge that it should remain for all time an open port for the ships and commerce of all nations. The last pretence of regard for that pledge was thrown aside when the law was promulgated, to take effect next year, prohibiting any vessels except those under the Russian flag from trading between ports on the Black Sea, of which Batoum is one, and Russian possessions in the Far East. It is thirty-nine years since Vladivostok became part of the Russian possessions in the Far East, and, did Russia entertain liberal ideas about trade with that part of the world, it might be supposed that she would show it in trying to make her great Pacific port another Hong Kong or Singapore. A British transport and trading company has just found out to its cost that in the commercial lexicon of Russia there is no such word as liberal. Some three years ago the company erected tanks at Vladivostok for the storage of kerosene which it brought from Batoum. When the new navigation law was declared, the company was confronted with a prohibition of this trade, and it invoked the aid of the British Foreign Office to obtain a suspension of the law in its favor. But the Russian Government declined to make any exception for the benefit of tank steamers, and the company is reduced to the necessity of disposing of its property to Vladivostok on the best terms it can get and taking its tanks away. If the Russian Government had kept its word, Batoum would be a free port; if it stood for the open door in the Far East so would Vladivostok. As matters stand there can be no trade between the two except in Russian bottoms. The commercial world could hardly have a clearer intimation of what it has to expect should further territory in the Far East fall into Russian hands."

The Russians are clever and skillful at the game of diplomacy, but Count Cassini has evidently completely failed in his attempt to divert attention to new Russian markets for American goods, while the door to commerce in Northern China is being closed against the United States and other nations.

Public opinion in the neighbouring Republic cannot be misled by the Russian ambassador. In his statement that China is making such rapid progress in the erection of cotton mills as to make her a dangerous competitor in the world's markets for cotton goods, the "Bulletin" replies that China does not grow enough cotton to clothe the people of the smallest of its provinces, and then remarks:

"It is difficult to see what purpose can possibly be served by conjuring up this bogey of Chinese competition in cotton textiles; but, whatever the purpose, it is about as shallow a device as a clever diplomatist could be driven, under stress of circumstances, to adopt. The value of the cotton cloth sold by manufacturers of the United States to China in the last nine months was greater than that of all our exports to European and Asiatic Russia for the same period, and unless the experience of the past is quite worthless as a guide to the future, the possession of the Chinese market on equal terms with all nations will be worth in the near future ten times all that the Russian Empire can possibly offer. There is no reason why the Government which Count Cassini so ably represents and that of the United States should not continue to be on the best of terms, but this desirable end can be accomplished only by a more strict observance than Russia seems disposed to yield to the counsel of "Hands off in China." No amount of polite generalities about the great satisfaction with which Russia would view the transfer to St. Petersburg of American exhibits at the Paris Exposition and the consequent expansion of trade between the two countries will affect the suspicion with which people in the United States are beginning to regard the designs of Russia in North China. No security has ever been offered, no assurance has ever been hinted at, in regard to the preservation of the open door in Manchuria where Russian authority is virtually supreme, and where the sovereignty of China has been reduced to a mere fiction. On the contrary, there is every indication that Russia intends to close the door of commerce in that province as effectually as she has done it in other parts of Asia which have fallen under her dominion."

Altogether, it is quite evident that the eagle is following the movements of the bear much more closely than the latter likes, and in the carrying out of any agreement between China and Russia the United States is quite likely to make something more than diplomatic protests if her growing trade with China is threatened by Russian greed.

With the United States following every movement of the Russian bear in Northern China, and refusing to be lured away by the promise of any pickings in the way of trade along the line of the new Trans-Siberian Railway, with Japan ready to spring upon those who robbed them of much of the fruits of victory over the Chinese, and with other European nations fully sensible of the strength of Great Britain's navy, the danger of any intervention in South African affairs is not sufficiently apparent to yield much comfort to Dr. Leyds or to give shape to the visionary schemes of that political dreamer, Mr. Steyn of the Orange Free State.