them considerable friction arose. Russia, as she has done over and over again in the past, tried the game of "bluff,' by pretending to be pained at her intentions being distrusted. The Brititsh Government took this very coolly and quietly, but, by a course of firm but courteous conduct impressed the Russians with the undesirability of giving any reasonable ground for being regarded as preparing to seize Manchuria and annex it to the Russian Empire. The upshot of the affair is reported to be that England is satisfied that the stand taken by the Czar is really required to protect his subjects and his railway in the Chinese province and that, as soon as China is able to maintain order therein Russia will withdraw. The northern Bear is, however, a very wily as well as stubborn animal, and will need to be watched. Japan has its eyes also on Manchuria, whether covetously or not, is doubtful, but the Czar will have to reckon with that power should he slice away part of China and tack it on to his Empire. One-half of Manchuria, or Mantchooria, was ceded to Russia in 1858. It is very rich in minerals, cattle, has valuable crops of cereals and medicinal herbs; it is indeed the cream of the Chinese Empire. The Mantchoos, who number about three and a half millions, are superior to the ordinary Chinese, and have long been the dominant race. Such a province, containing 400,000 square miles, is a prize worth fighting to obtain.

The Inspector's Letter Last Week. A letter signed "The Inspector," in last issue, was so excellent and timely, that it was particularly unfortunate for one paragraph to have been spoilt by a line having been accidentlly dropped in placing the type ready for the press operator. Fortunately, however, the line had no direct bearing on the subject of the letter. The paragraph should have read: "All the above refer to the town of Cobourg, but if "Ariel" will be kind enough to help me out in this case, I shall probably be able to apply his explanations to some similar discrepancies in other towns." "Inspector" quotes the ancient phrase: "Whom the gods would destroy, they first make mad." We hope these personages have no such intention in regard to us, but we certainly became very "mad" when the above mechanical accident was discovered.

Life Insurance Companies in Court. Suit has been brought by a prosperous Canadian life insurance company against another company of the same class, in a business sense, claiming damages for libel. The injury on which the claim is based is said to have been done by the defendant company having issued advertising literature which reflected upon the complainant company. Unless settled out of Court, the case is likely to have a protracted career, as both partites have purses long enough to keep the legal game alive for years. Knowing nothing of the merits of the case, we may be allowed to suggest the advisability of the matter being referred to some impartial person who would act as "amicus curiae," or arbitrator. A charge of this kind, however well sustained, however just, is not likely to be a source of profit or to have results commensurate with the costs of prolonged litigation. The company against which the charge is made would do well also to consider this, and, as it is the accused party, it would be wise to weigh calmly whether it would not be the more desirable course to seek some less costly mode of settlement than probably two or three years litigation. The insurance field is wide enough for both companies, but both will find a lawsuit wasteful of energy, of time, and of money. Agents of insurance companies would do well to avoid casting reflections upon other companies. It only provokes retaliation, which is very well calculated to injure both..

Fire Losses Reduce a City's Revenue. The Superintendent of Insurance for Illinois devotes a portion of his report for 1900 to the question of Fire Inspection. He regards it as well known that "a very large proportion of fires result from incendiarism, criminal carelessness and preventable causes." He points out that by preventing the unnecessary destruction of material wealth and tax-paying property, so much is saved to the State. "Nor is the State alone benefited by the diminution of the fire waste. In the determination of premium rates in fire insurance the loss ratio is the most important factor. Such measures, therefore, as will effectually reduce the loss ratio will ultimately decrease the premium rates, and the insurer will directly profit in decreased rates." Were this realized in Montreal, as it would be were our citizens to reflect on the matter, there would be prompt measures taken to improve the city's fire protection. The Superintendent goes on to say: "A system of inspection which shall determine the cause of fires and secure the prosecution of those criminally responsible for them will not only secure the punishment of the guilty and lessen the loss from similar causes, but will relieve the honest insurer from the burden of high premium rates." The above passage needs to be sounded in the ears of every property owner in this city, more especially those who charge the fire insurance companies with "imposing exorbitant taxes," as one merchant declared was the case. In regard to the system of fire inspections under State legislations, the Illinois Superintendent says: "Experience in several States shows that a system of investigation of the causes and origin of fire by a State fire marshall or deputy fire marshalls, with authority to take testimony under oath, and to cause the arrest and prosecution of per-