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AND TEMPERANCE HERALD.

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TORONTO, FRIDAY, MARCH 13TH, 1885.

MEN, WOMEN, AND THINGS IN GENERAL.

As shrewd observers predicted, the excitement in England over the fall of Khartoum, is already subsiding into a calm. Nothing in the way of active hostilities against the Mahdi can be undertaken before autumn. It seems to be the settled policy that General Wolseley shall remain at Korti, or Dongola, or some other defensible point on the Nile until the water rises sufficiently for an expedition to reach Khartoum by way of Berber. Meanwhile, steps are being taken to lay a railway towards Berber from Suakim on the Red Sea. This will prove a costly undertaking, and as it progresses the British taxpayer will be more and more disposed to put to himself the question: "What is the expedition for?" The answer is hard to find. Unless to suppress the slave trade England has no moral right to interfere in the Soudan, and there has not been as yet any declaration of an anti-slavery crusade. The Soudanese rebelled under the Mahdi against their Egyptian oppressors. These people have a moral right to their own form of Government, and if they wish to have the Mahdi for a ruler it is no concern of England's. That this view of the matter commends itself to a large proportion of the British people is evident from the cordial approval of speeches made in favor of the immediate evacuation of the Soudan, and probably the feeling will grow as the sad fate of Gordon fades from the public memory. If the Mahdi is as astute as he is generally supposed to be, he may negotiate with Wolseley for the retirement of the English army, and the close of the present year may yet witness, instead of the British in possession of Khartoum, an alliance between the Mahdi and Queen Victoria. Stranger events have happened, for such an alliance is obviously in the interest of both parties to the present conflict.

The threatened trouble between England and Russia in Afghanistan may lead to war, but it is much more likely that it will not. Such a war would be extremely expensive to both nations, and the interest in dispute is not very important to either. Before an ultimatum is sent to either party it is not improbable that the intervention of Germany may be sought or offered. At their advanced age neither the Emperor nor Bismarck would care to see such an upheaval in the sea of European politics, and if they resolve that there shall be no war about Afghanistan, diplomacy will soon find a way out of the present quarrel. Russia cannot go to war without Germany's neutrality being secured, for a large section of Russia is inhabited by un-Russianized Germans who might at any time take steps looking towards the restoration of their district to the fatherland. Moreover, Russia is virtually insolvent. She has been spending money very

unprofitably in pushing her conquests in Central Asia, and a war with England means an expenditure which would tell far more heavily on her than on a country with an elastic financial system and a powerful fleet.

The great age of the German Emperor and Chancellor, above referred to, is a matter of far greater importance to the world than is generally supposed. The former will be eighty-eight on the 22nd of the present month, and the latter will be seventy on the first of April. There are numerous indications that Bismarck's physical powers are rapidly failing, and for all practical purposes of state his career must close with that of the Emperor, if not before. William's successor on the throne of Prussia will be the present Crown Prince, Frederick-William, the husband of Queen Victoria's eldest daughter, and it is highly probable that he will succeed his father on the Imperial throne of Germany also. The Crown Prince is a man of good abilities, who distinguished himself as a general in the Franco-Prussian war, and who has decided views of his own, not quite in harmony with those of his father, in state-craft. The iron hand of the present Government will under him be greatly lightened, and in all probability he will do something to give the German people a measure of constitutional rule. The present rapid growth of socialism in Germany is largely due to the intolerable burden of her much vaunted military system. All that is needed to enable her to dispense with a great part of the burden is a close alliance with England, and there is good reason to believe that with the Emperor and his Chancellor the obstacles to such an alliance will disappear from the scene.

An old-time Democrat has written a curious letter to President Cleveland, and the New York *Tribune* has published it. The writer, who is said to be a man of prominence, if not of influence, advises the President, as the only means of firing the Democratic heart, to adopt what may be called a Jingo policy—that is one of annexation of territory—and in support of his view he cites the policy of the Democratic party under the administration of President Polk. During that term, from 1845 to 1849, the Oregon question was settled, Texas was annexed, the Mexican war was carried on, and the Southern Pacific Slope was added to the Union. The only countries which now remain to be annexed are, of course, Mexico on the south, and Canada on the north, and the writer of the letter does not hesitate to advocate their absorption even if an exercise of force should be necessary. In all this he doubtless voices the sentiments of many of the old Democrats whom Lowell satirized in his "Biglow Papers," but he does not speak the mind of the people of the United States at large, or even of the modern Democratic party. No policy of forcible annexation is likely to be popular with them, and it is doubtful whether, at the present moment, any considerable proportion of them feel any desire to see either Mexico or Canada added to their territory.

Of all men, President Cleveland is one of the least likely to be carried away by any of the delusions of Jingoism. He has risen to his present high position by the exercise of very practical business abilities, and his administration is likely to be of a practical character. His plain duty is to do his share in making and keeping the public service pure and efficient, and this he will do unless he belies his past record. Visions of military glory have no attractions for such a man. He is the first purely civic occupant of the Presidential chair since Lincoln and Johnson, and his election is to some extent an indication of the passing away of the military spirit. It would be much more like what we know of the new President to cultivate friendly relations with England and Canada, even to the extent of favouring a measure of reciprocal free trade between this country and the United States. The obstacles in the way are neither few nor small, but a strong-willed President bent on carrying out a liberal trade policy might easily make this a sharply defined issue. It is just as well for Canadians to bear this in mind when they are planning their own commercial future.

Why will public men persist in countenancing the degradation of a noble word, and even aiding in it. Not very long ago Mr. Beaugrand, mayor-elect of Montreal, in a published letter relating to municipal matters, used the term "politics" in the limited sense of political partisanship. About the same time the Hon. C. F. Fraser, on the floor of the