

# Messenger and Visitor

THE CHRISTIAN MESSENGER  
VOLUME LXVI.

THE CHRISTIAN VISITOR  
VOLUME LV.

Vol. XX.

ST. JOHN, N. B., Wednesday, November 9, 1904.

No. 45

**Japan's** In view of the prejudice which exists in some quarters against the employment in important positions of men who have reached or passed middle age, it is interesting to note that the men who are with so large a measure of success, organizing and leading to victory the armies of Japan are most of them no longer young. According to the Japanese 'Mail,' the ages of the foremost generals of the land of the Mikado who are active in the present war are as follows:—

Marquis Oyama (field marshal)	62
Count Nodzu	63
Baron Kuroki (first army)	60
Baron Oku (second army)	58
Baron Yamaguchi (fifth division)	58
Baron Nogi (at the front)	55
Baron Nishi (second division)	58
Baron Kodama (chief of staff)	52
Prince Fushimi (first division)	46

The Marquis Yamagata, who has been busy with the work of military organization in Japan and active in the war councils at Tokio is 66 and the average of ages of the distinguished generals who are assisting him is 56 to 57.

## How the Japs

how the Japanese soldiers proceed in the matter of bridge building. Near the camp of the correspondents he watched the pioneer company erect

a bridge some two hundred and fifty feet long and seven feet above the water at the centre. There was no apparent hurry or bustle, no shouting of orders, no wrangling, no noise. The battalion worked like a silent, well-oiled machine, and it took just four days from the time the men entered the sacred pine forest of deceased Chinese ancestors and began to fell the trees until the last plank was laid, the guard rails placed and the bridge ready for traffic. The largest timber used was about eight inches in diameter. Axes played a very little part, and broad one-man Chinese saws and a linked or sectional folding cross-cut saw took their places. The two-man folding saw is particularly interesting, consisting as it does, of six inch lengths of thin spring steel, half an inch wide, linked or flexibly riveted, end on end. The saw-teeth are the same size and set as in the ordinary cross-cut saw. By girding a tree with this saw and grasping a handle in each hand, one man can actually cut down a tree, but usually it is used by two men. In one day all the piles, cross timbers and brace ties were cut in this forest.

## Rockall and Compass Deviation.

The wreck of the steamer *Norge* was one of the saddest maritime disasters which the year has recorded. On June 28 last the 'Norge,' a Danish steamer, struck the Island of Rockall, to the west of Hebrides, with the result that the ship broke up and some 600 lives were lost. In connection with this disaster, says the London *Telegraph*, Dr. August Krogh of Copenhagen asks the somewhat perturbing question: 'Can the compasses of modern ships be influenced by magnetic disturbances to such a degree as to imperil navigation?' "According to her course, the 'Norge' should have been twenty-five miles to the south of Rockall, and Dr. Krogh assumes that it is impossible to account for the difference between the ship's real position and that of the reckoning, without assuming a sudden and large change in the deviation of the compass. He forwards to 'Nature' depositions made by two captains in corroboration of this view. The first of these is by Capt. Hveysel, of the steamer 'Carl,' who states that on a voyage from the United States to Denmark he found, by careful solar and stellar observation, that in a very short time, when in the neighborhood of Rockall 'both of the compasses of the ship had acquired a hitherto unknown easterly deviation of 10 to 11 degrees. A faint northern light was visible, and the captain attributed to this cause the magnetic disturbance. Toward midnight the compasses were observed to return to their normal deviation.' The second evidence is that of Capt. F. W. Hurner, of the British ship 'Elixir,' of west Hartlepool, who came into the vicinity of Rockall Island on a voyage from Florida to Linnham, in Sweden. He found that between noon, June 24, and noon, June 25, the compasses deviated nine degrees. 'I was steering,' he says, 'to pass twenty miles north of Rockall, and found by June 25 that I had passed forty-five miles north of it.' In other words, if he

had been on the south side of the island his ship would have suffered the same fate as the 'Norge.' Disturbances of the compass needle like these are not unknown; and the peril they involve would justify inquiry by the governments of Britain and Denmark to discover whether there exists something about Rockall's seagiat pyramid to account for them.

## The Elections.

In reference to the results of the general election for the Dominion Parliament, held last Thursday, the MESSENGER AND VISITOR cannot probably give its readers any information not already in their possession. Everyone who took an interest in the matter—as most people did—knew on the day following the election that the Laurier Government had been sustained by a larger majority, than it had in the last Parliament. This result, it is unnecessary to state, is a serious disappointment to the Conservatives who, if their published predictions agreed with their expectations, had strong hopes of defeating the Government. Probably during the contest many eager partisans on either side persuaded themselves that the country was in danger of going to the bow wows if the result were not favorable to their own party, but in their calmer moments they will gratefully admit that, whether under Liberal or Conservative leadership, there are few Governments in the world whose functions are more satisfactorily performed than that of the Dominion, and none which Canadians would care to exchange for their own. According to the latest reports at hand at time of writing, the Liberal majority in the next Parliament will be sixty-four, without taking account of the elections still to be held in the few out-lying constituencies, which however will not seriously affect the general result. The results according to Provinces are given as follows:—

	Liberals.	Conservatives
Quebec.....	54	11
Ontario.....	39	47
Nova Scotia.....	18	0
New Brunswick.....	7	6
P. E. Island.....	1	3
Manitoba (one to be held).....	6	3
Northwest Territories (one to be held).....	7	2
British Columbia (one to be held).....	4	0
Yukon (to be held).....	—	—
Totals.....	136	72

Liberal majority at present 64.

It will be seen that the Conservatives have made slight gains in Quebec and in P. E. Island, but in all the other Provinces they have lost ground. Nova Scotia has gone solidly for the Government, even Mr. Borden, the Opposition leader, failing to retain his seat. During the period of his leadership Mr. Borden has won the respect of his opponents as well as the confidence of his supporters, and there will doubtless be general regret on both sides of the House if he is not to find a place in the next Parliament. It is to be noted that Hon. Geo. E. Foster again enters political life as member for North Toronto, and, as in the past, he will be a strong force in his party and in Parliament. The only member of the Government who failed of re-election was Hon. A. B. Aylesworth, who had recently been taken into the Cabinet. In New Brunswick Hon. Mr. Emmerson has been returned by a large majority, and a majority of the constituencies will send men to support the Government. It is to be noted, however, that St. John City and York County have elected Conservatives by large majorities, and York County also has chosen to be represented by an opponent of the Government.

## The North Sea

### Tragedy.

A coroner's inquest has been held at Hull, England in reference to the death of the men killed on the steamer *Crane* by shots fired from a vessel of the Russian fleet in the North Sea. Naturally the interest in the inquest was intense, and it was impossible to accommodate the crowds that wished to listen to the evidence. The British Government, the Board of Trade, the officers of the Gamecock fleet, and the relatives of the deceased and wounded fishermen were represented by counsel; but the Russian Government did not participate. The proceedings occupied only about three hours. The testimony consisted of medical evidence by which it was proved that the death of Smith and Leggett was the result of shell and machine gun wounds; then an expert identified fragments of shells by private

marks, which he said were undoubtedly Russian, and the stories of captains and mates of the trawlers. These latter related that while they were engaged in their regular work the ships of the Baltic fleet in two squadrons emerged suddenly from the haze, and throwing the glare of their searchlights on the Gamecock fleet, without warning and disregarding flare and green lights, the fishermen's signal and though within actual speaking distance of one vessel commenced a cannonade, which the fishermen at first, not realizing the danger, enjoyed, thinking it was a sham fight. The firing lasted half an hour. To each of these witnesses was put the vital question regarding the presence of a foreign vessel or torpedo boat. Each with equal positiveness denied that at any time preceding or during the firing was a Japanese, British or any foreign vessel seen by them or the accompanying fishing fleet. It was also stated that there were no Japanese among the crews and that none of the trawlers carried arms of any description. The jury's verdict was as follows:—"That George Henry Smith and William Leggett were at about 12.30 a. m., on October 22, while out fishing with trawls aboard the British steam trawler *Crane*, with board of trade marks exhibited and regulation lights burning, killed by shots fired without warning or provocation from certain Russian war vessels at a distance of about a quarter of a mile." At the request of the British Government, represented by the Earl of Dysart, solicitor of the treasury, this conservative award was rendered by the first court of inquiry preceding the session of the international tribunal. The Government asked the jury not to find a verdict of wilful murder or manslaughter because "delicate negotiations are going on which should not be made more difficult; and that they ought not to let any one think they had prejudiced the case before having heard both sides." In consequence the jury simply set forth the facts proved by the evidence of physicians, expert on explosives and the trawlers themselves.

## Lynching in the South.

Alluding to recent cases of lynching in the Southern States and the attitude of Government authorities toward the lynchers, the *New York Independent* says: In accordance with the verdict of a court-martial approved by Governor Terrell, Capt. Robert M. Hitch, who was in command of the militia at Statesboro, Ga., when the negroes Reed and Cato were burned at the stake, has been dismissed from the service for gross neglect of duty. Lieutenant Mell, who was in command at the camp while Captain Hitch was at the court house, is sentenced to be suspended for one year and to be publicly reprimanded. A reprimand is also ordered for second Lieutenant Grimer. As the result of four months' work by detectives employed by Governor Hayward, five of the white men accused of lynching Kite Bookard, a negro, at Eutawville, S. C., have been arrested and will be tried. Bookard had threatened to strike an offensive and drunken white. For this he was arrested and placed in jail, from which he was taken in the night and murdered. The lynchers mutilated his body and threw it into the river. In his charge to a Federal grand jury at Huntsville, Ala., a few days ago, District Judge Thomas G. Jones laid down a new theory of Federal jurisdiction with respect to the lynching of negroes, having in mind the recent lynching of Maples at that place. Maples, he said, was entitled under the thirteenth Amendment, as a citizen of the United States, to be protected against the lawless violence of a mob of white men, if such violence, designed to deprive him of the right to be tried, was directed against him because he was a negro. Private John J. Smith, of Nebraska, a white man of good character, a member of the Hospital Corps in the regular army at Fort Mott, N. J., and a veteran of the Spanish war, recently married a negro woman, who, as a member of the Volunteer Red Cross Society, had cared for him during an attack of yellow fever. The Post Surgeon at Fort Mott recommended that he be discharged "for the good of the service." This recommendation has been approved by General Grant and the Surgeon General of the Army.

## The War.

It is gathered from the despatches from the East, that during the past week there has been increasing activity in the hostile armies which are facing each other in Manchuria. The fighting reported has not been of a very important character, but it is believed that important movements are soon to take place. Port Arthur still holds out, but if credence is to be given to the reports coming from unofficial quarters, the besiegers have made important advances of late and the condition of the fortress has become so nearly desperate that its fall may be regarded as imminent.