

The War in the Far East.

No. 1.

By REV. C. K. HARRINGTON, YOKOHAMA.

Today, the eleventh of February, is Japan's great national anniversary. On this day is commemorated the founding of the Empire by Jimmu Tenno, in B. C. and also the promulgation of the constitution in 1889 A. D., the most important event since the Restoration. This year the day has a special importance, as it witnesses the proclamation by the Emperor to his brave and loyal subjects, of War with Russia. The war, indeed, was opened several days ago, in an informal manner, but the formal presentation to the country of the Imperial Will, was reserved for this red letter day of the national year. As it is probable that this war will not only vitally effect the future of the high contracting parties, but will also in its result have a very considerable influence upon missionary work in all Eastern Asia, I have thought that some account of the situation might be of interest to the readers of the MESSENGER AND VISITOR. Of course all news, in the ordinary sense of the word will have been carried by the cables long before a letter can come to hand, but some general account of things as they present themselves to a resident may be a welcome supplement to the telegraphic reports.

WHY JAPAN FIGHTS.

The *casus belli* is of course well known to all. At the time of the Boxer outrages in China several years ago, Russia took advantage of the disturbed state of that empire to take virtual possession of the vast northern province of Manchuria. This province she bound herself by treaty with China, and by promises to the various Great Powers interested, to restore to full Chinese control, and even fixed the dates on which the two divisions of the occupying Russian forces should be withdrawn. The first of these dates was, if my memory serves me, in June, the latter in October, 1903. In July, the Japanese government seeing that no steps were being taken to fulfil these promises, but that on the contrary Russia was constantly tightening her grip upon the region she had seized, began to urge upon the Russian court the discharge of her treaty obligations, and when October had passed and still the Czar's troops did not set their faces homeward matters assumed a very serious aspect. To make matters worse Russia, not content with what she had appropriated from China, began to encroach boldly upon Korea, which is Japan's traditional protectorate and sphere of influence, and the practical control of which is considered essential to Japan's future integrity and expansion. The other Powers having trade relations with Eastern Asia contented themselves with ineffectual remonstrances; they were too distant, or their stake in the question was too small, for them to set themselves seriously to the work of holding Russia to her pledges, and it began to be openly acknowledged that the possession of Manchuria was already in *fait accompli* and to be more than surmised that Korea also would soon fall into the Bear's capacious maw. But to Japan the matter was one of more immediate and vital moment, and with such moral support as she received from England and the United States, she pushed her demands upon the Russian Government. As the winter drew on the situation became more and more critical. While professing to the courts of Europe that her aim and expectation was a peaceful close of the negotiations Russia was daily making ready to hold Manchuria against all comers with the edge of the sword. The war cloud began to gather. People in Japan began boldly to say that an appeal to arms was inevitable, and the sooner it was made the better for Japan. Now we heard that war would follow close upon the rice harvest, and again, that as soon as the ice formed in Vladivostok harbor, the Japanese would strike. But a splendid harvest was safely gathered, and Jack Frost laid his crystal floors across the northern part, and still the resources of Japan diplomacy were being utilized to secure if possible a peaceful issue, and still Russian warships were streaming east through the Suez canal, and her land forces daily strengthening themselves on shore. It was not until Feb. 6th, that the final rupture took place, by reason of which His Majesty has made the Proclamation mentioned above. That Japan has good and sufficient cause for war, and that she has not entered upon it lightly or unadvisedly will be generally recognized throughout the world. The patience with which she made her attack, when the time came when words must give way to actions.

Indeed not merely the government but the nation as a whole has shown admirable self control. There has been a marked absence of anything like jingoism. The nation has looked upon the war as likely to be strenuous and costly to the last degree, and the extreme seriousness of the situation has been reflected in the attitude and temper of the people. On Sunday last, when news of the diplomatic rupture was abroad, and men knew that the next step was war, I passed through the principal street in Tokio on my way to hold a service, and apart from some flyers that the newspapers had sent out, there was no sign of anything unusual. One noticed neither depression nor elation in the faces of the people, quickly pursuing their wonted vocations.

That Japan would put her whole heart in to the great struggle was sure, but what excitement there was, was well down out of sight. And even when tidings came in almost immediately of the splendid achievements of the fleet, the joy of the people was wondrously decorous and restrained. Flags, smiles, and the jingle of the newsboys bells, that was all.

THE NISSHIN AND THE KASUGA.

Of course all the preparation for war during these months has not been upon the Russian side. Though Japan was practically ready for action, defensive and offensive, in fleet, army and forts, from the beginning, and every day spent in diplomacy was an advantage to the enemy, she has been busy in many ways perfecting her weapons and her plans. She has strung her bow and filled her quiver. Day and night her arsenals and ammunition factories have thundered. Her army and navy were put in shape to take the field and the sea at a moment's notice. The only striking event in her preparation was the purchase of two warships which had just been built at Genoa for Argentina, and were now offered for sale by that republic. Both to prevent those being added to the Russian navy, and to strengthen her own fleet, they were bought up for her by an English company, and dispatched post haste to Japan, manned by English and Italian crews. These ships renamed by the Emperor the "Nisshin" and the "Kasuga" are now coming up the China coast, and are due in Tokio Bay next week. There was much anxiety felt for their safety till they had passed the Suez Canal, as it was feared Russia might try to sink them in the Mediterranean, and indeed it is said that an attempt to destroy one of them while yet at Genoa had barely failed of its purpose. Sailors say, when the bow-sprit is toward home, and the good ship speeds on its way with a free sheet and a flowing sail, and a sea that follows fast, that the girls at home are pulling at the tow-line. 50,000,000 Japanese hearts were pulling at the tow-line of her new-bought war vessels and they have been coming east at a splendid speed. The Japanese are preparing a rousing welcome for them, and especially for the English mariners and officers on board. The assistance Japan has received from England in the purchase and delivery of these ships, the buying up by England of two Chilean warships that had been building in England and which Russia was taking steps to secure, and indirectly by the sending of the Tibetan expedition to distract Russia's attention has excited a very cordial feeling in this country toward her Anglo-Saxon ally, and even in the midst of her war she means to take time and money to express it. Welcome Societies have been formed, thousands of dollars subscribed, and a regular program of fêtes, sight-seeing and jollification prepared.

A Tribute to the Rev. D. M. Welton, D. D.

By E. M. SAUNDERS.

The passing away of Dr. Welton has touched a tender chord in the hearts of thousands in the Maritime Provinces by whom he was well known and beloved. It was most fitting that a memorial service should be held for him last Sunday in College Hall at Acadia. Dr. Sawyer from personal knowledge, spoke of his labors as student and professor at Wolfville. Dr. Keirstead who succeeded him as pastor at Windsor was well qualified to place before the people his gifts and excellencies as preacher and pastor. President Trotter from direct knowledge referred to his work at McMaster University. Hearty, intelligent and appreciative references to the man, the student, the minister and professor characterized the addresses of these brethren. All hearts were open to receive such tributes to the memory of one so well deserving acknowledgments of praise.

To me personally the departure of Dr. Welton has opened the way for a panorama of scenes and a flood of memories reaching back to earliest childhood. Together we saw and enjoyed the beginnings of life under the skies and amid the scenes of the Annapolis Valley; and what a place it then was for boys to begin life. No telegraph posts, no roads of iron disturbed the repose of that historic valley. The schoolhouse was open twelve months in the year, and eight hours a day, except on Saturday when it was mercifully reduced to four hours. Supple, vigorous spines were the backs to the long plank seats. The rod was in the master's hand, but I never saw it descend upon the back of little Daniel Morse Welton. He was an exceptionally good boy—pure in speech, amiable in disposition and affable in manners, and loved by all including the teacher. He was in lessons called a "smart boy" in those days. Being in the reminiscent period—two years the senior of the departed—many scenes of these early days pass and re-pass before my mind. Those serious, golden autumns, the departure of the song birds, the garnering of harvests, especially the fruits, red and yellow, from the bending branches of the well-laden apple trees, the bang, bang of fowling pieces suggesting the falling and flight of partridge, plover and pigeons, come to me vividly from the inexhaustible accumulations of remotest memories.

Then came the winter when the crystal brooklets, brooks, rivulets and rivers, following in their serpentine courses from hills and vales in which we had bathed and angled for speckled trout, flowed no longer through grassy fields and green meadows, but under floors of ice and carpets of

snow, falling, dashing and gurgling from mountain sides, making their way to the main rivers, the Digby and Minas Basins, the Bay of Fundy and the great Atlantic. As these streams went singing their happy way to the great sea, so the lives of the boys went merrily on to larger and larger life, and then to the shoreless ocean. The boyhood of Dr. D. M. Welton was optimistic even to the borders of visionary. No memory like that of Spring in the Annapolis Valley. What light and shade! Dr. Rand's poems do not exaggerate them. Even now I can feel the tingle in my veins of the new wine of those spring days. But I would not have it understood that old age is autumn—it is spring. Life's winter is past. Life is full, the buds are bursting, the fields are carpeted with the richest greens. Light is clearest, the perfumes most odorous and how sweet the vernal music.

What gleeful days were those of spring time to boyhood in the Annapolis Valley. What mothers filled our "dinner baskets"! What fathers gave us homes and example. The time has been when Jamaica rum flowed freely up and down the Valley. But the burning liquid never wet the lips of those mothers of pure hearts, pure speech and devoted lives, who reared the generation to which D. M. Welton belonged. In the veins of some of them flowed the best Puritan blood. John A. den and his wife Priscilla of the Mayflower had numerous descendants in the Valley. The writer thanks God that the current of this holy ancestry was in the veins of his own mother. Of like spirit and character were the parents of D. M. Welton. That Major Parker, after helping to batter down the ramparts of Louisbourg and win the Plains of Abraham, had made this Valley his home. Forty-five miles over a brittle road on horseback went he and his wife to reach a conference meeting at Horton, Wolfville, where they united with the church by baptism. After this his house was a meeting place at this outpost of the church. The words great, grand and father make the connection between this grand old man and D. M. Welton. From such sources came the mingled tide of heroism and piety which coursed in the veins of that boy. I seem now to hear his mother's sweet music and to see her cheerful face as she moved among her children. How motherlike was her tone when she spoke to "Dan." The reign of rum had become history when D. M. Welton came upon the scene. Rev. I. E. Bill, father of the Rev. I. E. Bill, now of Toronto—eloquent, tireless and fervent—had been the chief leader in "the great reformation" in 1829 and onward. Then they were reformations, literally so—now too often revivals and nothing more. Over four hundred in about four years of the first of his ministry were buried by I. E. Bill into the name of the Trinity in the limpid streams of the Valley. Coincident with this work of the Lord was the first temperance campaign; and of this, too, he was leader. These movements gave Christian fathers and mothers to the Valley. Agur's prayer had been literally answered for the people. They had neither poverty nor riches.

In such conditions D. M. Welton began life. His spirit from the first was responsive to the best influences of home, school and church. I take the liberty to sketch one scene among the many which float in the realm of my vision. The school was released for its hour at midday. The hilarious shouts of the boys, the concussion of balls struck and flying through the air, the dodging and running of the youthful competitors were the sights and sounds of the playground. And all this in harmony with the rush of life in field and forest, where the birds newly arrived from their southern homes were pouring out their clear, ringing notes to swell the chorus of the life throbbing spring. This little playmate came to me with the request that I would give him a name. I dropped all and went, not knowing the purpose of his calling me from the playground. When we had got to a secluded place in a grove, where the buds were bursting and the mayflowers blooming, he stopped and said seriously to me—"My mother told me that if I would be a good boy, pray to God and love Jesus, I would go to heaven where my baby sister has gone. "Now," said he, "let us kneel down here and I will pray and then you pray. I at once declined to pray myself, but willingly agreed to kneel down with him. I was much impressed with the fluency and fervency of his prayer. One sentence I remember well—"O Lord I feel so happy when I am praying that I do not know when to stop."

Shortly after this, a young minister from New Brunswick by the name of W. C. Ridout, came to the place. On the mountains and in the valley west of our home a remarkable revival followed his preaching. At last he came to the neighborhood in which we lived, and the work began there with great power. There were nursing fathers in the church then as now. A little boy made known his love for Christ in the meetings and at the conference, being timid, was assisted to his feet by the tender hands of one of our deacons. He related his experience, was accepted for membership and was baptized if my memory is correct when he was ten years old.

Much did we talk about Horton Academy and Acadia College. We had heard Dr. Crawley pleading for them; had seen the teams leave the place loaded with lumber to be driven thirty-five miles to unload at Wolfville for the building of Acadia College. What Jerusalem was to the