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Life in Port Arthur.

Letters are reported to have reached Che Foo from Port Arthur bearing date of June 23. These letters contain no war news, but give some idea of the general conditions prevailing in the besieged city. One writer says the civilians, though knowing something of what is occurring, are ignorant of the progress of the war. Little information leaks out. Most of the non-combatants have caves in the hills or underground cells, where they spend the nights in safety. Bands play occasionally in the parks, and the prices of food are slightly higher. The Chinese are suffering severely in many ways as a result of the fighting. The food on the junks is provided by the government to enable the Chinese to leave Port Arthur. The Red Cross nurses, in the absence of regular work, have established eating houses for the needy. Some of the Chinese are still working on the new shipbuilding works.

Fruit in Ontario.

The prospects for the fruit crop in Ontario are said not to be very good. Reports received by the Provincial Superintendent of Horticultural Societies, show that the plum crop will be very light all through the Province, and in some sections the trees have been so badly injured by frosts that they are being taken out. Apples promise to be a good crop generally, although some of the tender varieties have suffered severely by the frosts. Strawberries will be a light crop. The damage in the northern section of the country is greater than was at first thought. Peaches will be a very light crop. In Essex, Kent, and Brant counties there will be practically no yield at all, while in Welland and Lincoln the crop will be very much reduced.

Trade With Jamaica.

Jamaica's imports from this country last year amounted to about \$600,000 only, and if it is true, as Mr. G. Eustace Burke, commercial agent for Canada in Jamaica, states, that of four million dollars worth of goods imported into Jamaica from the United States, every item, whether farm product or manufacture, could just as well have been supplied from Canada, then it would seem that there are possibilities of trade between this country and Jamaica, which it is worth while to look after. To assist in developing trade between the two countries, Mr. Burke proposes to establish at Kingston, Jamaica, a permanent Canadian exhibition and sale depository which shall give traders and consumers an opportunity throughout the year of inspecting and obtaining importations from Canada. Everything will be done, Mr. Burke says, to interest the local trader and reach the consumer, with a view to turning trade into Canadian channels. Messrs. Pickford and Black, steamship agents, Halifax, are said to have consented to convey to Kingston, free of freight charges, all sample shipments and exhibits addressed 'Anglo-Canadian Commercial Museum, Kingston, Jamaica.' Mr. Burke appears to be very zealous in prosecuting this undertaking and quite sanguine as to the large value of the results to be accomplished.

Japan's Attitude Religiously in the War.

In connection with the conduct of the war, as in other circumstances, the Japanese Government has shown a tolerant and liberal spirit towards the peoples of different religious faiths. The correspondent of the London Times at Tokyo, writes: "Japanese statesmen have endeavored to remove all trace of religious and racial prejudice from the war. Soon after the outbreak of hostilities the Minister of War announced that two teachers of religion would be permitted to accompany each division, and victualling and transport facilities would be provided for them. The Minister made no reference to the creed of these chaplains. There was room to infer, however, that the privilege would be extended only to the Buddhist and Shinto churches which have an officially acknowledged status. Christianity would thus have been excluded. The Christians busied themselves at once to secure eligibility. The British Minister was finally approached, and his consultation with the Japanese Foreign Secretary disclosed that the Government of Japan held thoroughly liberal views, and was ready to repose confidence in such chaplains as the Christians might select. Thus an arrangement was finally effected that, in addition

to the two religious teachers mentioned in the original instructions, there should be attached to the first, second and third army corps six Japanese and six foreign Christian evangelists, all entitled to the same privileges and immunities as the delegates of Buddhism and Shintoism. In connection with the negotiations relating to chaplains Premier Katsura took occasion to say: 'Regarding religion as an essential element of civilization I have uniformly tried to treat all religions with becoming respect, and believe it to be an important duty on the part of Statesmen under all circumstances to do their utmost to prevent racial animosities. And so in 1895, at the time of the China-Japan war, my soldiers had no sooner set foot on the Liaotung peninsula than I took special pains to see that the greatest care was exercised by them in extending protection to Christian believers and the churches planted by English and French missionaries. As the present war is against Russia, a professedly Christian nation, I have felt that redoubled efforts should be made to see that no unworthy sentiments are tolerated, that we should adopt an unbiased and equitable attitude towards all, and that the whole nation should give practical effect to the policy clearly set forth in the Imperial edict, that the war has no other object than the safety of the empire and the peace of the far east. I sincerely hope no other one will be betrayed into the error of supposing that such things as differences in race and religion have anything whatever to do with the present complication.'

The Leveling Process in India.

Writing in the *Congregationalist* of present religious trends in India, Rev. Robert A. Hume, D. D., alludes, among other things, to the leveling process which is now going on among the people of that land. Dr. Hume says: "Everything tends toward the leveling of the people. Educational opportunities are fitting the lower castes for a higher social scale. Railroads and street cars, where persons of every caste unavoidably crowd one another, easily modify caste. Laws and courts of law which make no distinction on account of the origin of men, level classes. Aside from the direct teaching of Christianity, its indirect influence through the literature and history of the West serves to reveal the worthiness of those who were once depressed and renders them unwilling to acquiesce in their traditional depression, and also makes the upper classes willing to record equality to men somewhat according to their worth. This gradual leveling up of the community and other religious influences are rapidly disintegrating caste which is the main element of modern Hinduism and a powerful element in Islam also. The *Amrita Basar Patrika*, the most intensely conservative paper in India, says 'Our Social system is dying; caste is losing its hold on the Hindu mind. The Hindus are getting more selfish, they have become more indifferent about religion than ever their fore-fathers were.'

The "Slocum" Inquiry.

As has been already intimated in these columns, the Coroner's inquiry into the cause of death of persons who perished in the *General Slocum* disaster has brought to light facts exceedingly damaging to the officers and owners of the steamer, and to Steamboat Inspector, Lundberg, who last month gave the *General Slocum* a certificate of fitness. The inquiry was concluded last week and the verdict, rendered after nearly four hours deliberation, pronounced the Knickerbocker Steamship Company, the captain of the *Slocum*, the commander of the company's fleet and others, criminally responsible, and warrants for their arrest were issued. The mate of the *Slocum* was declared to have acted in a cowardly manner, and the misconduct of Lundberg, the Steamboat Inspector, it was recommended, should be brought to the attention of the federal authorities. The charge in each case was manslaughter in the second degree. Bail was fixed by the coroner in amounts varying from \$1,000 to \$5,000.

Pneumatic Postal System.

A vote has been passed in the Dominion Parliament providing \$165,000 for the installation of pneumatic tube system in connection with mail service in Toronto. As plans and specifications have already been prepared, Toronto is assured

of the establishment of the pneumatic system in the near future. The matter of a site is now receiving the attention of the railway authorities and the City Council, and it is thought that before the close of the year a system may be in operation, which will make Toronto, as regards postal service, one of the best equipped cities on the continent. Sir William Mulock, Post-Master-General, has announced that it is intended to deal similarly with Montreal, and it is probable that in due time the pneumatic system will be extended to other cities of Canada.

The British in Thibet.

We have received the following communication in reference to the "Thibetan War."
"In a recent number of the *Messenger and Visitor* (which I always read with pleasure) I noticed a brief editorial on the "Tibetan War." I read it very carefully, but saw no word of condemnation, for what some English papers call "another piracy." Indeed it was a tacit approval of the invasion and intended conquest of this helpless little people. I understood, just before leaving Wolfville, that Dr. Boegs (missionary) also approved of the conquest. Now, you may know of a justifiable reason for this; I confess I do not. Will you be so good as to give what you consider the justification; or rather the facts of the case: the casus belli. As I am not expecting to criticize your utterance. I may now say, that, though this is of a piece with our 59 wars, extending over 100 years, if it is for the purpose of "opening trade,"—of compelling the Tibetans to be friendly and sociable,—of teaching them our modes of "civilization,"—for "collecting" unpaid or outlawed "debts,"—or for the beneficent purpose of "making Christians of them," then I beg you to allow my voice to be heard in condemnation of all such, to me, unchristian, unmanly, ignoble and diabolical procedure! That is I cannot reconcile a war of invasion and conquest, with the "love to my neighbor," including my enemy, that causes me to do to him as I would he would do to me," and that "does him no ill;" with that "peace with all men, without which no man shall see God;" with the attitude, and spirit, and humility of Jesus Christ, "without which we are none of his" etc; I cannot reconcile joining a mob, or company, no matter how big, and doing to my neighbor in the end of the earth, what, if I did to my neighbor across the street, would send me to the penitentiary or the gallows! Can you help me out of the difficulty?
Yours very truly,
J B HEMMEON

June 24, 1904.

In reference to Mr. Hemmeon's observations we may say that our references to the British Expedition in Thibet have been of a quite distinctly historical character. We have thought that our readers had a right to know what was taking place, but we have neither approved or disapproved the course pursued. In fact we have considered that the information in our possession in reference to the matter was insufficient to justify a very definite opinion as to its moral complexion. It may be that there are facts to justify Mr. Hemmeon's belief that the mission of Colonel Younghusband to Thibet meant an "invasion and conquest" of the country. If so they are not within our reach. That Mission at least purported to be of a peaceful character, to secure consultation with the Thibetan authorities in reference to treaty stipulations which they had persistently disregarded. There has been fighting and bloodshed, which is most regrettable, but it is to be considered that this has been due to the misguided conduct of the Thibetans in persistently attacking the British embassy. It does not seem probable that there had been any desire on the part of the British Government to inflict injury on Thibet, but it is a probable supposition that the mission of Colonel Younghusband was in part prompted by a well founded suspicion that Russian intrigue was operating in Thibet seriously to the disadvantage of British interests. Mr. Hemmeon would of course hesitate to intrude himself unbidden upon his neighbor's premises, but if he had reason to believe that a powerful enemy was establishing himself there to the peril of both himself and his neighbor he might think that circumstances sometimes alter cases. We have no desire to defend the British Government in any unrighteous procedure, but we think that this incident and others must be judged in accordance with known facts—though the facts may be incomplete—rather than in accordance with assumptions unsupported by proof.

The French parliamentary committee investigating the charges that agents of the Carthusian monks attempted to bribe French officials with the view of securing a revocation of the order expelling the monks from France, has received a letter from Don Michael, head of the Carthusian order, declining to give the name of the person who solicited from the Carthusians money to secure the authorization referred to.