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PEACE OR WAR?

(By a Regular Contributor.) A war-cloud that in reality menaces hangs over the far East, Russia and Japan threaten to come into conflict at any moment. Possibly before these lines are in print the thunders of conflict will be heard along the Korean coast. Still at this moment, there is yet a hope that peace may prevail. If the Czar, who has been preaching peace so long, has really been in earnest, and has not been playing the part of a rank hypocrite, his influence may check the grasping paw of the Russian Bear, and restore confidence to Japan and to that Empire's Korean protégés. But the Czar may be one of those who preach to others that which they do not wish to practise themselves. The utterances of the Czar have been "as full of virtuous precepts as a copy book;" but while he was giving expression to all those delightful sentiments, his armed legions were multiplying, and his forces were being massed along the Eastern frontiers. With the Trans-Siberian railway at her command, Russia has a mighty engine to batter the walls of smaller powers in the Orient. There is no doubt that Japan is stronger than Russia on the ocean, and may possibly be able to cripple the best fleet that the Czar can send against her. But a great ocean victory, or even a series of them, cannot settle the conflict. Russia has her millions behind that she can summon up, at will, and pour into Korea. Even though the strength of the Mikado be such that victory should come to him all along the line; still would Russia, in the long run be likely to gain the ultimate triumph. She has the population, the armies, the resources, the situation, and the patience and tenacity necessary to take full advantage of them. For generations has Corea acknowledged the guardianship of Japan, and the Japanese are by no means willing to relinquish their claims. Russia, like a huge glacier, is ever slowly, ponderously, but almost imperceptibly, moving onward towards India, Corea, China, Japan—in a word, towards the entire Orient. And when the Bear of the North sets up his abode in any new section of the world, it is no easy matter to dislodge him. It is true that Russia appears less anxious for war than Japan; but it is to postpone, for a time, the conflict, and not to avoid it ultimately, that Russia desires. And in this she has her deep designs. Her enemy, more vivacious and spirited, is simply boiling over with haste to strike a blow. Japan feels conscious of great strength, especially on account of her splendid navy; she also feels that she has justice upon her side, and that the majority of the Powers agree with her. It is to be hoped that Providence will avert this war. If even the conflict were to be confined to Russia and Japan the affair would not be to had—great as the struggle would be; but the danger is that the fiery maelstrom would almost inevitably drag into its vortex other European Powers. Neither Great Britain, nor France, nor Germany could look on with indifference; their respective interests in the Orient would be too clearly at stake. It would be most unfortunate if the twentieth century were to be ushered in amidst a cloud of conflict such as marked the opening years of the nineteenth century. One hundred years ago all Europe was ablaze as the conquering Corsican swept, in triumph, from frontier to frontier. There was not a country on all the continent but was involved, to some degree, in that whirlwind of destruction. Were it unhappily to come to pass that, over a strip of land, in the far East, two such powers as Russia and Japan were to come to blows, the effects would be felt, not only in Europe, but all over the civilized world. Half a century ago the Crimea was the bone of contention, and the names of Sebastopol, Inkerman, and Balaklava have remained to tell the story of British, French, Turkish and Russian antagonisms. If Peace be not soon declared to be the order of the day, we may yet find Corea figuring in history even as has figured the Crimea. During the coming weeks all news from the far East will be watched with extra interest. Be it good or ill it will affect us all, for it will affect the great nations of the world—and it will tend either to restore universal confidence or to menace the equilibrium that has for so long a time prevailed. The eyes of Europe are upon the Orient, and wherever Europe's interested gaze is fixed, we have more or less an interest in the results. It is to be hoped, however, that better feelings will prevail and that Russia will not force a war by a continuation of her grasping policy to a point that verges on exasperation.

REMINISCENCES OF MISSIONARY LIFE.

My second mission in Leeds was in the spacious Church of St. Mary's. It lasted for three weeks and was well attended from the first day. The crowds around the confessionals seemed never to decrease, but there was no confusion as each person had a ticket and was not allowed to present himself or herself out of turn. A poor woman came to me one day and asked for a ticket for her son who had been a bad boy, but promised her that he would come to confession if she got a ticket for him. I gave her what she required, and he came to me that same evening. His predominant vice was intemperance by which he was led, of course, into the committal of many other crimes. I gave him the tectotal pledge and he commenced his confession. He was to come to me again on Saturday evening, and, in fact, he made his appearance, but he had broken his pledge and was too much the worse for drink to be able to continue his confession. In the middle of the following week he turned up again, and this time he was all right, because he had not received his pay and had nothing wherewith to purchase what had been destroying him, body and soul. I told him to give his ticket to his mother, who would come at four o'clock the following Saturday, and keep a place for him till he himself should arrive. When I was examining these tickets I saw her and she told me her son would surely come between seven and eight o'clock for he had kept sober all the week. She was a long way from the confessional, but was gradually working her way nearer and nearer to me as those before her were disposed of. By eight o'clock she was next to the confessional, but there was no sign of her son. Nine o'clock struck, and then ten, and still he was not there. At eleven o'clock there were about twenty persons waiting to be heard, but he was not one of them. None of them had tickets except herself, and that was not for her but for her son. At half-past eleven we were to leave the confessionals and return to the presbytery. I spoke to the heart-broken old mother and asked her to bring her son to me on Sunday, the day on which we were to close our mission. From the foot of the steps leading up to the Church, narrow streets of small houses, mostly inhabited by the poorer Irish, led straight to the bottom of the hill and in one of the lowest of these streets the mother and her son resided. There had been a slight shower of rain and little streams of water were trickling down the gutters, not two inches deep. When the poor mother came near her own house she saw the body of a man in one of the gutters. His face and mouth were in the water. She gently turned him over. Ah! it was the dead body of her own son. Some one had cruelly and foolishly treated him just as he was starting to go to St. Mary's. The taste of liquor was too much for him, and this was the sad result. During the mission another sudden death had occurred, but of a totally different nature. A beautiful little boy, by name and by nature an Aloysius, had served my Mass one morning. He was remarkable for his innocence and piety. He had made his First Communion and had been confirmed a few months previously, and seemed to have preserved the graces of those sacraments unimpaired. He went to school as usual after his breakfast, but took suddenly ill. One of the Fathers was immediately sent for and the boy received the last sacraments, in the school, in the presence of the Sisters and his school fellows. He died a short time later on. His funeral was largely attended. But the effect upon the school children was something marvelous. For a considerable period afterwards it was remarked that they seemed to be all like angels and saints. It is thus that death under any circumstances must prove either a warning or an example. The fortnight's mission which I gave in Deal, on the southern coast, was made memorable chiefly by the attendance of the marines. Their barracks were on the outskirts of the town. Some of the officers and a great many of the privates of this useful body of men, who are half-soldiers and half-sailors, were Catholics and the little chapel at Deal was more than crowded by them. Every facility was afforded them so that they could have their share in the benefits of the mission, and the men were not wanting in availing them-

two separate occasions, and was also engaged in two important missions there, and some retreats. It was very difficult to obtain land in this place for building purposes. A piece of ground was at last purchased, together with two old houses. In one of these houses the Fathers resided for a time, but the other was demolished, thus leaving land, though, in the shape of the letter L, for the future church. In the meantime a temporary wooden chapel was erected, and fitted up in the most devotional manner for public worship. The congregation at that time was very large, consisting almost exclusively of hard-working but generous Irish. There was but one family in the parish who kept a servant. The necessity for a permanent church was evident to all, but the difficulty consisted in obtaining the ground on which another house was standing. This house belonged to a Jew who was a manufacturer of cedar boxes of cigars. I may here remark that nearly every house in the street, Great Prescott street, was inhabited by Jews. The owner of the house in question was a wealthy man, and was at this time building a much larger and more modernly equipped establishment, in a neighboring street. We had paid a thousand pounds for each of the two houses we had already acquired, but they were considered very dear at that price. So Father Cooke went to call on Mr. C., and announced the object of his visit, which had been anticipated. The following colloquy then took place. "So you are Priest Cooke. And what do you want with me?" "I want to buy this house which you are leaving, if we can come to terms." "Oh, indeed! and what will you give me for it?" "I will pay you eight hundred pounds for it." "But you gave one thousand pounds for each of the other two houses you bought." "Yes, I did; but they were not worth it, and besides this house is not as good as they were." "Well, Priest Cooke, as I am moving away and shall not want this place any longer I will let you have it for two thousand pounds and not a penny less. I would rather give one thousand pounds to get you and your Popish Irish out of this street altogether." Father Cooke, not in the least depressed, for he had great faith and had set his heart on getting the ground for the future church, called on a Mr. Young, a sincere friend to the Fathers, and laid the matter before him. This gentleman, who was a fervent convert, and an influential man, and had been made a Knight of St. Gregory by Pius IX., told Father Cooke that he would do the best in his power for him. There was a lawyer living in the neighborhood who was notorious for his hatred of everything that was connected with Catholicity and was sure to be engaged in every case in the Criminal Court where a poor Catholic was the defendant. So Mr. Young went straight to this gentleman and asked him to undertake the case, telling him that on the day the matter was settled he would give him a cheque for the amount decided on, but that he would not pay more than eight hundred pounds. Mr. C. was well acquainted with the character of this lawyer, and therefore never suspected that he was acting as an agent for Father Cooke. He tried hard to get at least nine hundred pounds for his bargain, but finding that the other was determined he at last said, "Your client shall have the house, for I am willing to sacrifice the old hundred, so that Priest Cooke shall not get hold of it." But the moment he discovered how he had been deceived he removed to the house he had just fitted up, both as a residence and a factory, went to bed, and would neither eat nor drink until he starved himself to death. It was reported that his last words were imprecations against Father Cooke. It is only fair to state that the other Jews in the street were totally different from this miserly old reprobate. They were very friendly with the Fathers and with the members of their flock. They would hang out flags and banners from their windows on festal occasions, especially when we were visited by the Cardinal the Princesses of the royal house of France, or the Duke of Norfolk. On one occasion I went to the Court House to prove an alibi in favor of an excellent young Hebrew who was accused of striking a man, in an adjoining street. I had seen him in an opposite window, talking to his mother, at the very time which had been sworn to by the man who had been assaulted as having been the time when he was struck by him. The magistrate complimented the young man on his having a priest to stand up for him, and he was instantly discharged. The other Jews never forgot me for it, and always saluted me respectfully whenever we met. The street in which we lived was one of the oldest residential streets in London, and was the first in the metropolis to have numbers

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