

# Messenger and Visitor.

THE CHRISTIAN MESSENGER,  
VOLUME LX.

THE CHRISTIAN VISITOR  
VOLUME XLIX.

Vol. XIV.

ST. JOHN, N. B., WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 28, 1898.

No. 52.

What the English Editor of the Review of Russia Said. Mr. William T. Stead, the English Editor of the Review of Russia, has recently returned to London from a visit to Russia and other parts of the Continent. Mr. Stead was received by the Czar who conversed with great freedom and dwelt at length upon his proposal for the disarmament of the nations. Speaking last week at a great public conference held in St. James' Hall, London, favoring the Czar's peace proposals, Mr. Stead gave the following as the substance of what His Majesty had said to him on the occasion alluded to above:

"I look out over the world: I study our civilization, and I do not find it very good. I see nations all engaged in seizing or trying to seize all territory not yet occupied by European powers. I look at the results. They do not seem to me to be good. For the native races, what does imperial expansion mean? Too often opium, alcohol and all manner of foul diseases, a great gulf between the governed and those who rule, and crushing taxation upon the natives for the blessings of this civilization. And for the nations who seize what does it mean? A continual increase of suspicion, jealousy and rivalry; the heaping up of fleets and armies in order to take part in a scramble with the world, with the result that the army and navy are swallowing up more and more millions that should be used for the welfare of the people and the advancement of the world.

"On top are a few very rich and comfortable; down below, with an ever-increasing pressure of taxes for armaments, is the great mass of poor people whose position is not very good. There is an ever-increasing multitude of those below with their brooding discontent ripening into Socialism and developing into all kinds of anarchy. No, I do not find our civilization good. Why do we make it so? We have at the present moment arrived at this stage that we have put all our very best manhood in the army. So much is this the case that we cannot mobilize the whole fabric of the social community.

"War has become so expensive that no State can stand the strain of protracted war without having to look bankruptcy in the face, and we are so perfecting our modern weapons of destruction that no army can go into the field without losing so large a proportion of its officers that when the war is over, even if that army be victorious, the war will have inflicted irreparable loss on the country. What with disconnection caused by mobilizing, what with empty exchequer, what with decimated ranks of leading and governing men, I see nothing before any nation but a terrible heritage of revolutionary anarchy."

**Russia Desires Peace.** There are said to be indications of something in the way of an overture on the part of Russia toward a better understanding with Great Britain in reference to affairs in the far east, and if Russia really desires such an understanding there is probably no doubt of the willingness of Great Britain to meet her in a reasonable spirit and to arrange on equitable terms the matters in which they are mutually interested. While the Czar is generally credited with the most sincere convictions, and the loftiest motives in connection with his proposal for disarmament, it is perhaps quite as generally believed that, so far as the Czar's official advisers are concerned, Russia's peace policy is quite as much a matter of prudence as of principle. "It becomes more and more evident," writes Mr. Henry Norman, "that Russia must by hook or by crook insure herself against external complications. Her treasury is drained dry by demands for the army, the navy and the trans-Siberian railway. She is spending money like water at Port Arthur. She has discovered that the Siberian railway will disappoint the hopes of commercial development, and is unfitted at present for military purposes on a large scale. She must have 200,000,000 rubles in order to provide the army with quick-firing artillery before she can fight on land. Macedonia is seething, and an explosion may come at any time, when she would have to move an army. Famine is devastating whole territories.

Leprosy is spreading and has five thousand victims, many recruits being rejected for this disease. An external loan is absolutely essential to her and hitherto she has failed to raise it on favorable terms in Berlin, in Paris, or in London. Under present circumstances, therefore, it is not to be expected that Russia should desire to rush into war with Great Britain; and though the latter may be ready to make a diplomatic use of the present situation to insure her interests in the east from Russian aggression in the future, she is not likely to exhaust the resources of diplomacy in that direction.

**Reciprocity in Lumber.** In the negotiations for reciprocity in trade which the Joint Commission has in hand, one of the principal objects on the part of Canada is to secure the removal of the heavy duties which the United States now imposes upon Canadian lumber. This duty of \$2 per thousand feet is practically prohibitive of a business in the cheaper kinds of spruce and hemlock lumber which would be very profitable for Canada. It is understood that the McKinley administration is not averse to such a measure of reciprocity, which without doubt would be strongly in the general interests of the United States, but the lumber kings of the Northwest are able to marshal in their interest a sufficient number of Senators to prevent a reciprocity treaty with a free lumber clause receiving the necessary endorsement in the Senate, which requires a two-third vote. It is said however that a proposal to reduce the lumber duty from \$2 to \$1 per thousand would be approved. Whether or not the Canadian Commissioners will consider such a reduction a sufficient inducement to abolish the export duty on logs is uncertain. It is said, however, that Canadian lumbermen were not averse to such a compromise when the Dingley bill was before Congress in 1897, and it is recalled that such a course was followed by Sir John MacDonald's government in 1890, when the McKinley bill reduced the American duty on lumber from \$2 to \$1 per thousand.

**Work of the Joint Commission.** The Joint Commission which has been in session lately in Washington, and previously in Quebec, with a view of settling difficulties and effecting better commercial relations between the United States and Canada, has adjourned for the Christmas holidays. The Commission will resume its work on January 5th. It is said to be the intention of the Commissioners to proceed with their work as rapidly as possible, with the hope of concluding it before the end of January. It is of course very desirable that Congress shall deal with the report of the Commission during the present session, otherwise the adoption of the treaty which the Commissioners are expected to frame will be delayed for another year at least, while the whole business will hang in suspense; for it is not easy to predict whether the action of the United States Senate will be to confirm or to nullify the work of the Commission. The chances of getting the matter dealt with by Congress during its present session depend largely upon the time which the Senate shall consume in dealing with the treaty of peace with Spain, which it is understood will be submitted for consideration immediately after the Christmas recess. If the provisions of that treaty meet with strenuous opposition and become the subject of prolonged debate in the Senate, as seems not unlikely to be the case, the consideration of the matters in which Canada is especially interested would stand a good chance of being crowded over into next year. What are the present and prospective results of the work of the Commission cannot of course be stated with

confidence, since it makes no report of its proceedings. It seems, however, to be understood that certain statements contained in Washington despatches concerning the results so far reached may be accepted as approximately correct. On the authority of such statements, we have it that a treaty, covering practically all points under consideration by the Commission, will be signed and that some matters of reciprocal trade relations will be adjusted, but that these will be fewer in number than the Canadian commissioners had hoped for in opening negotiations. Negotiations in connection with lumber and agricultural products. The Canadian commissioners, it is said, have presented a very full statement covering the lumber trade, the gist of which is that forest products are so large a percentage of Canada's exports, and yet are relatively so small compared with the United States total forest products, that liberal concessions on this point are essential to satisfy public sentiment in Canada and could be made without serious detriment to the United States. Practically the same statement has been presented concerning agricultural products. The Canadian commission has urged that Canada is a larger consumer per capita of American manufactures than the whole western hemisphere south of the United States. Further, it is urged that last year Canada gave the United States a \$40,000,000 free list, and in view of these facts some essential concessions must be made to the Canadian farmers, it being represented that agrarian sentiment is fully as important to the Dominion as it is to the United States.

**The Chinese are understood to be making experiments with a view to adopting more modern equipments and methods of warfare, but gunpowder in the hands of the Chinese would appear to be as yet quite as dangerous to themselves as to their enemies.** A late despatch from Shanghai states that a powder magazine situated in the centre of the Chinese camp at Hangchow has exploded with the effect of throwing down the houses on a square mile of ground and killing troops to the number, it is estimated, of three thousand. Hangchow is a port situated in the Province of Chekiang, at the head of the Hangchow Bay and the T'sientang-Kiang River, the southern terminus of the Imperial or Grand Canal. By the treaty of peace with Japan, the port was opened to foreign commerce in 1895. It is a silk manufacturing centre, and its population is estimated at 800,000. American and French missions are situated there, and the Mission buildings are reported to have been damaged, but no lives were lost among Europeans.

**Cairo advices say that Lord Kitchener is organizing a campaign for the recovery for Egypt of the Soudan provinces still held by the Mahdists.** Soudanese levies will form a large part of the army of conquest. The Khalifa was last reported from Dufur, in the region of the oases in the heart of the African desert, a thousand miles west of the Nile. That province and Kordofan, a few hundred miles to the eastward, are still held by the dervishes. Lord Kitchener realizes that the long desert marches and the impossibility of using water transportation will render the conquest an exceedingly difficult one. His plan is to make use of the Soudan tribes, after proper training, as they are more familiar with desert warfare than the British regulars. The Sirdar has therefore proposed to Lord Cromer that a force of 5,000 Soudanese drawn from the Shiok tribe be utilized to assist in the campaign. Lord Cromer has given his approval, and the organization of the tribesmen into regiments will begin at once.