

# Weekly Messenger

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## The Weekly Messenger

### THE BULL AND BEAR DISPUTE.

It is hard for a bull and a bear to come to terms, and if England was as truly a bull as Russia is a bear there would be little hope for peace between these two countries. But there is something more than brute beast in the English bull. The peace policy which Mr. Gladstone has adopted may yet prevent war. A telegram from England on the 9th of April announced that the Russians had attacked the Afghans, killing nine hundred of them. On the evening of the same day Mr. Gladstone, quoting the Russian minister, M. De Giers, said: "The Russian government hope that this unlucky incident may not prevent the continuance of the peace negotiations." This sounded very ironical from Russia and from the way that power has acted since one would not think that the Russian Government was really desirous of peace. But it is certainly true that it takes two parties to make a fight. England may allow of concessions to Russia in regard to the Afghan boundary, and Russia may deem it wise to be content. The settlement of the boundary by arbitration, as is now proposed, depends chiefly on the conception Russia has of England's strength. If Russia felt strong and was sure of winning, no arbitration could bring the matter to a peaceful issue, but she has doubt concerning her strength and recognizes her poverty in money. England has India to protect; Russia has India to gain. The odds in this struggle are not merely a few thousand square miles of Afghan territory but the peace and prosperity of the Indian Empire. England has no right to any part of Afghanistan, but will not permit Russia to encroach to within a safe distance of India. The prophesiers of peace and of war are pretty equally divided, and it is useless to speculate on the probabilities until there are further developments. This arbitration scheme will probably occupy some time, for it is necessary that both Governments should decide first what points are to be left to the arbitrators. Arbitration is a comparatively new system of settling disputes between nations and the extent of the power of the arbitrators is not so definitely laid down as it is with the referees and umpires who are arbitrators in our games of lacrosse, football or cricket. When there is a power strong enough to enforce it, there will be such a thing as a code of laws which will peacefully settle disputes between nations as they are now settled between individuals. Until that time there will be wars.

It will be interesting to know what different opinions are expressed concerning the present agreement between England and Russia. The St. Petersburg military organ, the *Stett*, expresses discontent at the settlement and coolly proposes to portion Afghanistan between England and Russia. Mr. Gladstone's policy is misconstrued by several English and Russian papers to be a concession in several important points which England at the beginning of the dispute would not

have agreed to. The *Moscow Gazette* says that the arrangement is not arbitration, but merely a respectable means of terminating the incident. Those who speak in such a way will find out before the boundary commission has finished its work that England will not make any compromise with Russia's encroachments on Afghanistan if they are such as would endanger Herat, and thereby give Russia a footing in Afghanistan which would be dangerous to India. A French paper predicts that the Afghans, aggravated by heavy taxation, will rebel, and that anarchy reigning in Herat, Russia will make this a pretext to march on that city to establish order. The Afghan army has in fact become greatly disorganized because the soldiers have not received their pay for some time. The opinion is freely expressed on all sides that there is only a short respite from war. Moderate papers and the public generally approve the present plan of settle-

ment if he is willing to act as arbitrator between Russia and England, and the King has agreed to accept the office, if requested to do so by England.

Sir Peter Lumsden, the Afghan boundary commissioner, has been recalled to England or has resigned his position as commissioner; it is not yet exactly known which. Mr. Gladstone announced that the Government had recalled Sir Peter Lumsden, but afterwards stated that he had been consulted upon the subject, and in conformity with his own views had been requested to return to England. It is believed that Sir Peter Lumsden was anxious for war, and attempted to make such movements as would prevent England and Russia from coming to terms, and that he was recalled because he could not agree with the policy of the home Government. It was rumored that the Earl of Dufferin had resigned his office as Viceroy of India, but this was untrue. Mr.



POUNDMAKER.

ment as it will allow England time to put her army and navy in perfect order for the final struggle which may very possibly come. Lord Granville has said that he could think of no better means of settling the dispute over the Pendjeh incident, which involved principally the honor of two officers, than to leave it to the decision of a third party. In this way the whole matter would be settled honorably for both sides. Russia has, in fact, asked the King of Den-

Gladstone has refused to say whether Lord Dufferin approved of the Government's course toward Russia. A vote of censure against the Government is to be moved by Sir S. Northcote.

The war preparations on either side are fewer. A small force of Russians, with four guns, now occupies Pendjeh. The Russians have completely won over the Sarikh Turcomans. There are reports that Russia is moving her forces on towards

Afghanistan, but these are not authentic. She may possibly have another very powerful enemy beside England should war be begun. China is disputing some territory which Russia has encroached upon. Now that the difficulty with France in relation to Tonquin has been settled, China has become more courageous, and has demanded that Russia fulfil her part of the engagement and send commissioners to meet the Chinese commissioners who have been waiting for several months. It is said that China has intimated that she is quite prepared to enforce her claim in regard to the frontier. The Russians have been constantly encroaching upon Chinese territory since 1860.

### TWO INDIAN CHIEFS.

The Cree Indians, who number about 25,000, are divided into three classes, the Swampy Crees, the Plain Crees and the Wood Crees. The first of these classes is composed of very degraded and effeminate Indians who have their territory North-west of Manitoba. The other two classes are more hardy than are the Swampy Crees. The Cree Indians have a far larger tract of country than any other tribe of Indians and extend from Manitoba in a north-westerly direction to the Rocky Mountains. Four of their chiefs have figured in the North-West rebellion. The pictures of two of them, Beardy and Big Bear, we gave last week. In this issue we give excellent pictures of other two, Poundmaker and Red Pheasant. Poundmaker is one of the most able, and probably the most dangerous, of the Cree Indians. He has always been noted for his grabbing character, and has distinguished himself as a great beggar among the begging Indian chiefs. His demands for assistance and reward, if he would consent to sign a treaty to go upon a reservation, have always been extravagant. He has not been upon his reserve, which is a few miles to the north-west of Battleford, for a great length of time, and up to a couple of years ago he was very much dissatisfied and was constantly roaming away from the reserve. Twice he settled down, as it seemed for all time, and became very much engrossed in farming, and from this time onward his name is frequently mentioned in the report of the Indian Department as an applicant for cattle, ploughs, seeds, and, in particular, a horse-power mill which had been promised him, but which, it would appear, he never received. His band numbers 164 and they have fifty-eight horses besides a large herd of cattle. Poundmaker neither made an attempt to take the barracks at Battleford nor to prevent Col. Otter from relieving the garrison. He waited to be attacked near his reserve with what result will be seen elsewhere.

Red Pheasant is famous as the commander of the band of Indians who broke in upon Mr. George Applegarth, their instructor, and pursued him over the plains as he and his family escaped southward. Payne, the instructor on the adjoining reserve, was murdered by Mosquito's band after which this band and Red Pheasant's abandoned their reserves and went northward to join Poundmaker, with whom it is believed they fought against Col. Otter in the last battle.