

## A Year of War.

BY C. K. HARRINGTON.

Blue skies smile upon Japan keeping Festival Day, this auspicious eleventh of February. Mount Fuji, the king and priest of all the Sunrise land, stands forth fair and shining in his ermine robes. In city and hamlet the streets are gay with the red and white of the Sunrise-flag. Men remember that this is Japan's Natal Day, commemorative of the founding of the Empire by the first Sovereign, Jimmu Tennō, in 660 B. C.; and also her Constitution Day, on which, 16 years since, His Imperial Majesty Mutsuhito, the reigning emperor, promulgated that constitution which at once gave Japan a place, as regards civil liberty and enlightenment, in the front rank of nations. They recall, also, that it was on this day, three years ago, that public announcement was made of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, by which Japan entered fully into the fellowship of modern nations; and, especially, that on the eve of this day last year the Emperor's proclamation was made to the nation that war had been declared against Russia. With the return of this great national anniversary we naturally look back over the past twelve months. When I wrote my last letter to the MESSENGER AND VISITOR, headed "The War in the Far East," and foisted "Feb. 11, '04," the great struggle had just opened. Three days earlier, indeed, Admiral Togo off Port Arthur, had "fired the gun heard round the world"; the Russian fleet drawn up off the Tiger's Tail had received its first shattering blow; and under the muzzles of the enemy's guns in the harbour of Chemulpo the van of Japan's First Army had landed in Korea. But it was on the 11th that the message to the nation was made known and that official tidings of Japan's initial successes were received by the country at large.

It has been a great year, not only for the nations most directly concerned in the conflict waging, but for the whole world. What the outcome of the events now in progress will be, for all the Yellow races, and for "All the Russias," and for the modern world at large, it would need a bold man to prophesy; but it is safe to say that providence is marching on with mighty steps. A new era has begun. We expect to see a new Japan and a new Russia, and incidentally a new Korea and a new China, as a part of the results of the present making bare of the arm of God in the eyes of the nations. Not that the sword is mightier than other and gentler forces through which he has been working. This conflict is not merely the clash of two great aggregations of brute force, the collision of gigantic fighting machines hurled together by the Mikado and the Czar. Behind it and in it there is a conflict of ideas, a collision of ideals of civilisation, a shock of moral and intellectual world movements. Every blow which Yamato Hime no Mikoto, the Virgin Daughter of Japan, has driven home through the collops of fat on the ribs of the Russian Bear, has received much of its effectiveness from the moral and intellectual quickening which has come from fifty years of contact with the thought and life of the west. The modern army and navy is the Hammer of Thor,—of the Warrior Princess Yamato,—and the native vigor and valor of the nation is the arm which wields it; but through the heart of Thor the new thought and life from beyond the sea direct the blow.

The story of the war for the year past is too well known, at least in its salient features, to the gentle reader of the MESSENGER AND VISITOR, to need re-telling. He has had his secular morning paper with columns of news from the front almost daily, and the clear and comprehensive summary of each week's events in his excellent religious weekly. Even if he has been discouraged from any close attention to the details of the conflict by the outlandish names,—Japanese, Korean, Chinese, and Russian,—which have swarmed in the war columns of the daily papers, like the frogs and flies in Egypt of old, he has at least become aware that the year past will go down to history as

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for the doughty Islanders. A year ago Russia had in eastern waters the flower of her Navy, a splendid fleet counted equal to the entire sea strength of Japan, and worth in hard gold forty or fifty millions sterling. If you look for that fleet today you will find two or three damaged ships in practical blockade at Vladivostok, and a few d'armed fugitives in neutral ports along the China coast; but as for the fleet as a whole, the tides of the Pacific ebb and flow through its shattered hulls. That cruel raider, the Rurik, has quenched his fierce heart in the chill depths of the Japan Sea. The dashing Novik lies broken on the sands at Korsakov. The Petropavlsk, with Admiral Makaroff and his Staff is under the shining tide in the Port Arthur offing. Most of the other ships, however, are sunk in shallow water at Chemulpo and Port Arthur, and the thrifty Japanese are hoping to add many of them to their own navy. There is even some bold talk of throwing a dam across the mouth of the harbour at Port Arthur, a distance of 600 yards, and pumping the harbour dry, instead of undertaking to raise the great number of ships lying sunken there, one by one.

What of the Mikado's Fleet at the end of this strenuous year? As all the world knows, in every movement of importance, whether in blockades or in joined battle on the high seas, success both in strategy and in stroke has been

with the Japanese. Of course their navy has not emerged unscathed from a year's perils. There was one dark day, May 15th, when word came of the loss, through collision in the murk of a stormy night, of the Cruiser Yoshino; and the destruction, by a floating mine in the high seas, of the fine Line-of-Battle Ship, the Hatsuse; and the number of smaller vessels which have come to grief is not in the aggregate small. But practically the available fighting strength of the Fleet may be considered unimpaired, and to-day the gallant bluejackets are looking about, so to speak, for new worlds to conquer. On February 6th of last year Admiral Togo led forth his squadron from Sasebo to strike the first blow of the war; and on the same day of this year he took his journey from Tokio to direct the attack on the new Armada from the Baltic, and to carry the war, "if necessary, not "into," but unto, "Africa."

But leaving the navy to march forth to new achievements down the "Wet Sea Ways," let us ask what account the land forces have been able to give of themselves. The boys in Khaki have not been outdone by the boys in blue. We expected great things of the Fleet, for the Japanese are a nation of islanders and take to the water like ducks, and we knew that in the navy they had a first class modern fighting machine, well found and reliable in every way. But how would the Army come through its maiden struggle, its first collision with a western Power, and that Power, no less than the Great Bear, the dread of the nations. The gentle reader can imagine the anxiety with which we waited for tidings of the first meeting of the opposing forces on land, and then for the news of the first great engagement. But as the world knows, when the news came it was invariably one of victory, and soon whenever the bells of the "extra" boys set the streets jingling we would say to ourselves, "I wonder what good news there is to-day from the front."

On this national holiday, the wounded soldier lads lying in the hospitals, as they sip their tiny cups of tea; and the lonely parents of these wounded soldier lads, and of the brave boys yonder amid the Manchurian snows, and of the many thousands above whom those snows are already drifting, as they gather at their simple feasts in their straw-thatched cottages scattered on mountain and plain, will be retracing in memory the stirring events that have taken place ashore. They will tell again with pride how the van of Kuroki's army swooped down upon Pheung-yang, the strategic point of Korea, and at a stroke placed Japan's protegee, the once Hermit Nation, outside the arena of struggle; and how that army, having made its bold dash across the Yalu, and captured Chingcheng on the Manchurian side, fought its way steadily through a mountain land bristling with Russian guns, toward the heart of the enemy's defence. They will tell of the red march north of Oku's army to join hands with Kuroki's forces, a march punctuated by the memorable battles of Telisu and Tashichiao. They will tell of the terrible struggle of a week's duration with which August closed, when the combined armers drove the Russians out of Liaoyang,—day when men's blood flowed like water and the dead and wounded had to be counted in tens of thousands. They will tell, too, of the great fight six weeks later, on the Sha, in which Kuropatkin, for the first time venturing on the offensive, was hurled back with a loss of seventy thousand men; and of the latest important conflict, at Haikautai, near the Hun, where a fierce battle in a January snowstorm left some ten thousand killed and wounded on either side. Nor will they forget the daring deeds wrought by the Port Arthur army down the narrow blade of the Regent's Sword, the great attack made on the forts in August, simultaneously with the battle of Liaoyang, and which cost Japan 10,000 men; the heroic capture of "203 Metre Hill" November 30th, which placed the harbour at the mercy of the Japanese guns; and finally the surrender, by General Stoessel, on New Year's day, of the fort and of the thirty thousand Russian soldiers who had survived the siege. It is a grievous story after all, and there will be many sad hearts as well as proud hearts among those who tell it over. It means tens of thousands of desolated homes and many tens of thousands of sufferers in the crowded hospitals. But at least it has been a year of marvellous fighting on the part of the "little brown men," and every important place on the map of the country fought over has given a name to a victory for what we all believe is the right side. Today we put up a big Ebenezzer. As the result of the year's land operations, the enemy has been swept homeward two hundred miles, and the fall of Port Arthur has not only left Admiral Togo free to carry the war unto Africa, but has set the besieging army free to join hands with the armies in the north against the broken ranks of Kuropatkin centred at Mukden. The vernacular press maintains that the end of the war is yet far out of sight, and exhorts the nation to brace itself for a long continued struggle; but with the successes of the past year before us we begin to be hopeful that next Era Day, February 11th, 1906, will see peace restored. May we not also hope that ere then unhappy Russia, upon whom God's hand seems to be resting so heavily, and whose worst foes are those of her own house shall have come out into the morning of a better day.

Yokohama, Japan.

(Continued next week.)

## The Church in Peril of its Own Complexity.

BY REV. WILLIAM C. COVERT.

The church began in singular simplicity. It was a simplicity of form compelled by the singleness of her purpose. She moved to her great early work like the unbroken ranks of the ancient military phalanxes. She had the momentum born of a single dominant purpose and the enthusiasm that accompanies a direct and personal engagement with the foe. The multiplicity of Christian services had not yet arisen to break up her massed center or make fractions of her fighting unit.

Complex duties, laborious methods, elaborate machinery and a marvelously diversified service, characterize the Christian life of this day. No catalogue contains all of the classified activities of church work.

It is also a picture suggestive of serious thought in view of certain church results plainly apparent in modern church life. Can it be that in this diversified energies of the church her old-time solidity and massed fighting center are in peril? Will the complexity of the church be her undoing? Shall the church give birth to boards, agencies, societies and committees, and then finding that her offspring have absorbed much of the enthusiasm once accorded her, and even appropriate much of the supporting energies of much willing household? Is there apparent in the diversified life of the church to-day a threatening tendency to break up ecclesiastical solidity?

This is a possible peril that every man undertaken to enlist the men and money of the faithful, overburdened, variously engaged church public begins to feel, if he cannot see. Increased machinery demands increased power. There must be added new and stronger storage cells whenever you lengthen the wire whose quickening contact moves long lines of cars. But machinery in the church can never take the place of heart-throb, nor anything short of a genuine life-center sustain life. The church must therefore seek to retain within her, in one way or another, the old massed center of the apostolic church.

There was at least three great things that fired the heart of the early church and fused her men into a fighting unit.

She gathered about a keen, affectionate memory of the person of her Lord. He was yet before her a real, undeniable, winsome, historic personality. Intervening years had not dimmed the inspiring outline of his person. Everyone saw him. He was not obscured by the banners and baggage of auxiliaries. "Jesus, my Lord," was the rally cry, not loyally to pledge or vow or institution. The church to-day, amidst the clamor of her various cohorts, the orders of her executives, the hue and cry of agencies and committees, will keep herself solidly unified if above everything else in her life she sees with that old-time vividness the presence of her Lord.

An undoubting sense of the world's need of the gospel was another inciting and sustaining conviction at the heart of the early church. It believed in sin. It was the pain at the world's heart and the shadow on the world's life. It was not a conception of sin born of the theory that their ancestors were fiers and that mere animalism raged within undeveloped beings, but that the soul made for God was apart from God. Men made like God had become ungodlike. They must be brought back. This made gospel work rescue work. It made church life not a sentimental service but a work as urgent as sin and death were real. When the church holds soft, yielding and ambiguous views of sin, and resorts to casuistry and condoning words in its presence, she has lost the unifying power and the imperative call of apostolic evangelism.

Finally, these apostolic Christians, who felt sin to be real and wide in its sweep, were fused into a fiery unit under the conviction that the gospel of Christ was able to meet it and cure it. Nor were they wild-eyed Utopians. They knew. It had saved them. It had sweetened John, a coarse, impatient son of thunder. It had refined Peter, as base a piece of metal as the gospel ever stamped with worth. It changed Paul from a cruel, murdering dictator to a sweet, humble tent-making Christian and the world's religious leader.

Up out of all distractedness and over all obstacles the early church went to her great work unified under these three convictions. Apart from them there is no solidity in the ranks of the church in this day.—Interior.

### Conviction.

The older preachers used to dwell much on conviction of sin. They firmly believed that every sinner should feel a painful sense of sin before he could lay hold on Christ with all his heart. They may have erred in laying too much stress on the pain and anguish of conviction. But we may err also in overlooking altogether this important experience. A long period of wretchedness is not a necessary condition of salvation. One may enter into the Kingdom of God without passing through the darkness of which some speak. But did anyone ever truly appreciate his need of a Saviour without real sense of sin?

Conscience is a wonderful faculty. It is a warning voice in the human breast. It is a voice of authority, speaking as from the throne of God, saying, "Thou shalt not."