

Acts. She wonders why a power with but a limited commerce should be striving to build up a navy greater than her own. The year closes on Britain not alarmed, perhaps, but perplexed yet resolute, her great naval yards resounding with the din of immense preparation, and every county, town and hamlet swarming with crowds eager to become rifle volunteers.

The past year also has witnessed the final and all but complete suppression of that great insurrection which spread itself over the length and breadth of our immense Indian empire, and attested once more the heroism of the British soldier. In the all-wise providence of God, this country of many tribes and tongues, again acknowledges our sway; the Nana Sahib, that fiend in human form, being almost the only enemy of mark still at large. Oh! that the God of nations would put it into the hearts of our rulers to govern them wisely and well—to feel the deep responsibility that rests upon them, and do everything in their power, consistent with religious liberty—to throw open to this benighted and degraded people, the blessings of civil liberty, accompanied by the light of Gospel truth.

In speaking of the East, the future historian of the past year will dedicate a page to China and the deplorable reverse which befell the combined forces of Britain and France at the mouth of her principal river. So great was the loss we may well call it a defeat, but a defeat brought about by the most cruel treachery. Five hundred brave Englishmen lose their lives at the very time that they are about to cement an enduring friendship with their deceitful enemy. But let no murmur of complaint be ever whispered against the brave men who shared in this disastrous fray. Never was greater resolution shown, or more chivalrous daring displayed than by the officers and men who took part in this encounter, and above all, by the brave Admiral Hope. The future can alone disclose what kind of fruit this unhappy collision will produce. There can be little doubt that speedy retribution will follow, and the treacherous and ill-advised attack be severely punished. And what then? Let us hope, that this vast yet compact empire will be henceforth as free to the foreigner as English soil; that gradually, though it may be slowly, the darkened

mind of the Chinaman will yield to the light of our common civilization, and that the blessings of Christian truth may, through the efforts of Christian missionaries, be felt and appreciated in an empire embracing one third, it is said, of the human race.

Turkey, "the garden of the world," seems to have been little benefited by the war of 1854, undertaken by Britain and France in her behalf. The feeble promise of a large measure of toleration to the Christian faith has been partially kept to the ear, but violated in the spirit, while the cruel massacre at Djedda is only a too distressing proof that the old spirit of unyielding fanaticism lives in all its native barbarity in the heart of every true believer in the false prophet. This unhappy kingdom seems to exist only by sufferance, and would long ago have disappeared from the map of Europe, but for the jealousies of surrounding Christian states. The days of Mohammedanism, in Europe at least, are evidently numbered. Indications of its approaching fall present themselves almost every day, and the widely ramified conspiracy, intended to destroy the present Sultan, proves that its power and prestige are gone for ever. In all probability, before the present generation has passed away, the Cross will supplant the Crescent, and enlightened civilization take the reins which have been held with a gradually weakening grasp by fanaticism and semi-barbarity for the last four hundred years.

The past year has witnessed Schamyl, the Circassian patriot, the bold and wily warrior of the Caucasus, a prisoner at last in the hands of his powerful and ambitious enemy, after a contest protracted for many years, distinguished by a devotion and daring which have excited the sympathy and admiration of all Christendom. His long and glorious defence of his native fastnesses has cost Russia, it is said, 400,000 men, and several hundred millions of roubles; but captured the aged seer and warrior has been, and his proud heart compelled to submit to the fate of Caractacus, William Tell, Hofer, and our own Wallace.

Japan, at the beginning of the year, excited high hopes; but at its close, a partial cloud seems to be gathering over them. Let us trust that it will soon be dissipated, and that this intelligent and interesting people, so