

Messenger and Visitor

THE CHRISTIAN MESSENGER,
VOLUME LXV.

Vol. XIX.

ST. JOHN, N. B., WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 28, 1903.

THE CHRISTIAN VISITOR,
VOLUME LIV.

No. 43

Not Complimentary.

One effect, among others, of the more intimate relations which the United States to sustain affairs political and commercial in the far east, has been to induce in that country a more critical attitude toward Russia. There is less complacent regard for Russia's professions of friendship, and a much greater disposition to accept the British view of the illusive character of Russian promises. It would probably be impossible to find anything in a British journal more outspoken in respect to the dishonesty of Russian methods than is the following from the *New York Times*: "She advertises that she has not a shred of national honor, and that whoever hereafter accepts a Russian official assurance will be a fool for his pains. Mankind will accept the notification. And mankind will sympathize with any nation which undertakes to bring this hardened national perjurer to her senses and teach her that national faith is not to be broken with impunity. The sympathy of honest and plain-dealing men and honest and plain-dealing nations will be with Japan as against Russia, and with the sympathy will go the hope that Japan will give Russia a lesson that at least the present generation of Russian 'statesmen' and 'diplomats' will not forget."

The Alaskan Boundary Settlement.

As was generally anticipated would be the case, the official announcement of the decision in the Alaskan Boundary case, agrees very closely with the report given out a week ago by the Associated Press. The decision concedes in part the Canadian contention in respect to Portland Channel, but, apart from that, everything in dispute goes to the United States. Even the concession in respect to the channel is robbed of much of its value by the fact that two islands at the mouth of the channel, and commanding its entrance and the passage in Port Simpson are given to the United States. The Canadian commissioners, Mr. Aylesworth and Sir Louis Jetté express their profound dissatisfaction with the decision reached by the United States commissioners and Lord Alverstone, and have refused to sign the award. It is quite plain from the statements issued by the Canadian commissioners in reference to the matter—and which we print below—that they are fully persuaded that the decision reached by Lord Alverstone and the three United States commissioners was not founded wholly upon the merits of the case. As the American Commissioners had all pre-judged the case, and as public opinion in the United States was known to be strong against any abatement of the American claims, it was a foregone conclusion that on that side there would be no concession of any significance. If the Canadian commissioners stood by the Canadian contention, there could be no decision unless if Lord Alverstone favored the American contention. That is what has occurred. The question then to which a very lively interest attaches is—Did Lord Alverstone act simply as a judge in the case, or did he also act as a diplomat? In other words was he convinced that the United States had the right of the contention, or was his decision based, at least in part, on the consideration that to accede to the demands of the United States was the only way to a settlement, and that it was better, all things considered, to reach a decision even at the sacrifice of certain territory on the Alaskan boundary to which Great Britain had a just claim? This is a question upon which there will doubtless be much difference of opinion, but it seems evident, as we have said, that in the opinion of the Canadian commissioners, it was not merely the question of territorial rights that influenced the decision. Very naturally of course the right of access by water to the Yukon country assumes larger proportions in Canada than it does in England. And, in Canada too, it is not merely the question of value that weighs, but the question of right and of principle. There is the reflection too that previous cases of conflicting boundary claims between this country and the United States, have generally, if not always, been decided in favor of the United States. If the feeling shall become general in Canada that in this matter the rights and interests of this country have been sacrificed to the desire to placate an avaricious neighbor the result cannot tend to strengthen the bonds of imperial unity. We are very doubtful that it could be considered good policy, leaving the question of right and wrong out of account, for Great Britain to curry favor with the United States at the expense of Canada.

Statement of the Canadian Commissioners.

The following statement has been issued by the Canadian Commissioners, which may be regarded both as an explanation of the terms of the decision in the Alaskan Boundary case and a protest against the decision. The commissioners say: "The decision of the Alaskan Boundary tribunal has been given, and in view of its character the people of Canada, in our judgment, are entitled to such explanation from us as will enable them to comprehend fully the manner in which their interests have been dealt with. We take the points of the decision in the order presented in the treaty by which the tribunal was constituted. "First, Portland Canal. There are two channels parallel to each other with four islands lying between them. The Canadian contention was that the northern channel be adopted. The United States contended for the southern channel. If the Canadians succeeded it would give Canada the four islands which lie opposite the southern shore of Observatory Inlet and the harbor at Port Simpson. If the United States succeeded it would give them these four islands, named in order as they run from the sea inward, Kannaghunut, Sitklan, Wales and Pearce Islands. When the members of the tribunal met after the argument and considered this question the view of the three British commissioners was that the Canadian contention was absolutely unanswerable. "A memorandum was prepared and read to the commissioners, embodying our views and showing it to be beyond dispute that the Canadian contention in this branch of the case should prevail and that the boundary should run to the northward of the four islands named, thus giving them to Canada. Notwithstanding these facts the members of the tribunal other than ourselves have now signed the award giving the two islands of Kannaghunut and Sitklan to the United States. The islands are the outermost of the four. They command the entrance to Portland Channel, to Observatory Inlet and the ocean passage to Port Simpson. Their loss wholly destroys the strategic value to Canada of Wales and Pearce Islands. In our opinion no process of reasoning, whereby the line is thus decided upon by the tribunal, can be justified. It was never suggested by counsel in the course of argument that such a line was possible. Either the four islands belong to Canada or belong to the United States. In the award Lord Alverstone agrees with the United States Commissioners that the islands should be divided, giving the two which possess strategic value to the United States. "Second, the line northward from Portland Channel. Substantially the Canadian contention was that there were mountains parallel to the coast within the meaning of the treaty of 1825, and the tops of such mountains should be declared the boundary, mountains nearing the sea being taken. The United States contention was that there were no mountains parallel to the coast within the meaning of the treaty, and the boundary line, therefore, must be fixed under the provision of the original treaty relating to ten leagues or thirty-five miles, and so run the distance thirty-five miles from shore, including in the term 'shore,' all inlets, bays, etc. The tribunal finds the Canadian contention correct as to the existence of mountains within the terms of the treaty, but the fruits of the victory are taken from Canada by fixing as the mountain line, the row of mountains so far from the coast as to give the United States substantially nearly all the territory in dispute around Lynn Canal. The line will follow the watershed somewhat in accordance with the present provisional boundary. We are of the opinion that the mountain line traced by Mr. King, the Dominion astronomer, along the coast, should have been adopted, at least as far as the shores of Lynn Canal. "If the effect given the contention by Great Britain had, by acquiescence in adverse occupation, deprived herself of the right to claim the head of Lynn Canal, we should have regarded such a conclusion, perhaps open to reasonable justification, but no such position can, however, be taken. Regarding the lower inlets down the coast, Mr. King's line running along the coast to the Lynn Canal, and the line thence drawn around the head of Lynn Canal following the watershed, would have given Canada the heads of the lower inlets, with at least one fine harbor from which easy access to the interior of the Atlin and Yukon country could have been had. It would not, as far as we have been made aware, have taken any territory ever actually occupied by United States citizens. It would have given the United States the whole of Lynn Canal, including Skaguay, Dyea and Pyramid Harbor, and it would, we think, have been

reasonably satisfactory to Canada. Instead of taking the coast line from the mountains, the line of mountains has been chosen far back from the coast, clearing completely all bays, inlets and means of access to the sea, and giving the United States a complete land barrier between Canada and the sea from Portland Canal to Mount St. Elias. We have been unable to derive any understanding from our colleagues on the commission as to the principle upon which they have selected their line of mountains, and our observation of the discussions which have resulted on a settlement of this line have led us to the conclusion that, instead of resting upon any intelligent principle, the choice of this line has been a compromise between opposing and entirely irreconcilable views of the true meaning of the original treaty. The result of this compromise has we think, been a distinct sacrifice of the interests of Canada. When shown there were mountains parallel to the coast within the meaning of the treaty, the only logical course in our judgment, was to adopt as a boundary mountains in the immediate vicinity of the coast. Third, as to the general question of inlets, the tribunal finds against the contention of Canada. We are both strongly of the opinion that this conclusion is wrong, and we have put on record at length the reasons for our view in this respect. Finally if the six members of the tribunal had each given an individual judicial decision on each of the questions submitted, we should have conceived it our duty under the treaty of 1903, however much we might have differed from our colleagues, to have joined in signing the document which constituted a record of the answers. We do not consider the finding of the tribunal as to the islands to the entrance of Portland Channel or as to the mountain line, a judicial one, and we have therefore declined to be the parties to the award. Our position during the conferences of the tribunal was an unfortunate one. We have been in entire accord between ourselves, and have severally and jointly urged our views as strongly as we were able to, but we have been compelled to witness the sacrifice of the interests of Canada, and been powerless to prevent it, though satisfied that the course the majority determined to pursue in respect to the matters above specially referred to ignored the just rights of Canada.

(Signed)

L. A. JETTE,
A. B. AYLESWORTH.

Mr. John Morley on Free Trade.

The Right Hon. John Morley, M. P., the former Liberal Chief Secretary of Ireland, has for some time past been prevented from taking his customary active part in the discussion of public affairs owing to the great task upon which he has been engaged as the biographer of Gladstone. That work is however completed and Mr. Morley has been heard again upon the political platform. Recently in the historic Free Trade Hall at Manchester Mr. Morley, addressing an audience which filled the large edifice, aroused immense enthusiasm by an eloquent and spirited attack upon the new fiscal policy of Balfour and Chamberlain, against which he declared was arrayed the whole weight of authority both theoretical and practical. So crude, raw and undigested were the proposals launched that men of all parties, Liberals and Conservatives, were united in opposition to them. In refutation of the assertion that free trade had been a failure Mr. Morley pointed to the enormous growth of all branches of trade under that policy, and said that under free trade wages had risen 15 per cent, while the average price of food had fallen 30 per cent. He declared that free imports were the only key to national prosperity and to tamper with them was to endanger the national existence.

—We desire very heartily to congratulate Dr. Henry S. Burrage, the editor of the *Zion's Advocate*, on the completion of thirty years of excellent work as the editor of that journal. For the past thirteen years the writer has been a reader of the *Advocate*, and has hailed its weekly visits with constant interest. While the *Advocate* stands firmly for principles, its temper is always charitable and Christian. Its editorial page is interesting and valuable and its selections evince good taste and a discriminating judgment. The Maine Baptists have reason to be proud of their paper. We trust that Dr. Burrage may long be spared to fill the important position which he fills so well.