

GOTHAM LETTER

New York, Sept. 23.—Now, that the conference is a thing of the past and the plenipotentiaries of Japan and Russia have left for their respective countries, the question is puzzling many philosophical observers, why it was not ever since Mr. Witte, the Russian plenipotentiary, landed in New York, a complete reversion of public sentiment took place. The former open conference for the Japanese gave way to a decided pro-Russian sentiment, that caused that change? Before the arrival of Mr. Witte every reference to the war and to the remarkable successes of the Japanese on land and sea evoked the most pronounced enthusiasm and demonstrations in favor of the Japanese. All that seemed to be forgotten as soon as Mr. Witte appeared upon the scene. This complete reversion of sentiment presents an interesting psychological problem. It must be admitted that Russia as a nation had done nothing to bring about that change. The military operations in Asia were practically at a standstill and there was nothing in the reports from the front of war that could have influenced the public mind in this country one way or the other. The only explanation that offers itself is that the change was merely due to the personality of the Russian plenipotentiary.

Comparatively little was known of Mr. Witte before he arrived here and even less of Mr. Komura. Both were accepted as great men in their respective countries, selected for that important mission because of their eminent fitness. In that respect there was no advantage on either side. But, it is a strange fact that Mr. Witte made more friends for himself and for Russia in one day than Baron Komura during his entire stay in this country. The Americans are a peculiar nation. Social brilliancy, approachableness, joviality and conviviality are characteristics which the Americans admire and a lack of which they resent. That is the feeling exists in this country is even by the exaggerated form in which it is found in certain sections of the country which they resent. That is the feeling exists in this country is even by the exaggerated form in

which it is found in certain sections of the country which are still in a rather primitive state of civilization. To refuse to drink with a man is considered an insult in the West and South and on the Bowery. Did Mr. Witte know that? Baron Komura, although a Harvard graduate and thoroughly familiar with the English language, made few if any friends. He kept himself aloof from contact with the people and sacrificed his popularity to what he considered the dignity of his mission.

In many respects the Americans are like children. They are easily swayed, easily aroused, inclined to become hysterical at the least provocation and worship success above everything. A man may be the most unscrupulous scoundrel and blackguard, if he is clever enough to steal a creditable

sum of money or to cheat somebody out of a fortune, the Americans forget his moral defects and worship him as a great man, a hero.

About the middle of November there will be held in this city one of the most important religious gatherings that ever met in this part of the country. The meeting will be known officially as the Inter-Church conference on federation, and will hold its first session in Carnegie hall on November 15. It will be the first conference in the religious history of the United States to which delegates have been named officially by the various Protestant denominations. Previous joint conferences on missions and other topics have been unofficial in character. The conference will, in no sense, mean an attempt to bring the various religious bodies of the country into organic union. All that the leaders hope is that the conference may create a permanent organization of the churches, which will bring them into better and

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closer relations than ever before existed. It is hoped that an organization may be formed that will voice the attitude of the United Protestant churches on all great questions of a religious, social, ethical and economic character.

The general committee in charge of the arrangements for the conference expects that there will be from 500 to 600 delegates, representing twenty-four religious denominations with an aggregate membership of over 18,000,000. At the conference will be heard the leading men in nearly every Protestant religious body in the country. Among them will be five bishops of the Episcopal church, six bishops of the Methodist church; three of the Methodist church south; two Moravian bishops and one each from the United Brethren, Reformed Episcopal and African Methodist churches.

It would be interesting to know what effect the interesting disclosures in the insurance investigation will have on the insurance business. The testimony discloses an almost incredible corruption in the management of certain insurance companies. It seems that the interests of the policy holders are absolutely without protection against the dishonesty and recklessness of the directors and officers. There seem to be no laws in existence to prevent such mismanagement and the policy holders can do nothing but pay and trust to luck. The disclosures by this investigation have opened the eyes of the public, however, and it is to be expected that an energetic demand for the passage of laws will be made that will enable the state or the federal government to exercise control over the management of insurance companies.

Recklessness is one of the most pronounced American characteristics. To some extent the human race everywhere is inclined to be reckless, but nowhere is this tendency so strongly developed as in this country. Perhaps 99 per cent of the accidents which happen every year are, to a certain extent, attributable to recklessness. The American will take chances, frequently desperate chances. It is true, we are surrounded by dangers on every side and at all times and it is also true the familiarity with dangers breeds contempt and leads to recklessness.

Thousands are killed every year by being crushed in elevators, torn by machinery or run over by vehicles, but every day in the year some fools will take the most desperate chances with elevators, machinery or vehicles. Just think of the appalling list of fatalities caused every year by our idiotic method of celebrating the Fourth of July; think of the hundreds of fools drowned every year because they insisted in going into deep water without being able to swim; think of the scores killed every year by guns that were supposed to be not loaded. It would not be so bad if the recklessness of individuals would endanger their lives alone. But that is not always the case. In many cases such persons are reckless with the lives of other persons, as is the case of the switchman of the Elevated road, who left his post during the rush hour and, through his carelessness caused a terrible accident. It seems that an example should be made of persons whose recklessness causes loss of life or injury to others. It may not altogether stop others from taking chances, but may have at least some beneficial effect.

Typhoid fever is still prevailing in this city, particularly in Brooklyn, but the backbone of the epidemic seems to be broken and the health authorities are confident of their ability to control the spread of the disease. An investigation has shown that the water supply of Brooklyn is contaminated to a dangerous degree and the health department advises to the citizens to boil the water before they use it for drinking purposes.

Between 70,000 and 80,000 children in New York are restricted to part-time instruction because there is not room enough for them in the overcrowded school houses. The board of education hopes to be able to reduce this number next month, but even if all the school buildings now in course of construction should be completed by next month, there would still remain about 50,000 children for whom there is no room in the schools. Unfortunately the lack of school accommodations is most deficient in those parts of the city where there is the greatest need for education.

CHILDREN OBY FOR FLETCHER'S CASTORIA.

Notice for Bids.

Notice is hereby given that the district school board of school district No. 24, in Marion county, Oregon, will receive bids at the office of the undersigned, in Salem, Oregon, up to 1 o'clock p. m., of Saturday, September 30, 1905, for furnishing to said district one lot of school furniture as follows:

- 250 single desks, with seats.
- 40 eight-foot tablet-arm settees.
- 150 tablet-arm chairs.

Bids will be received for all or any part of the lot. Each bidder must submit samples of furniture bid on, and each bid must be accompanied by a certified check for 10 per cent of the amount of bid. All furniture must be delivered to the board at the high school building, in Salem, Oregon, on or before December 1, 1905, free from charges of all kinds, and will be paid for upon acceptance by the board. All bids will be opened at the time and place above mentioned. The board reserves the right to reject any and all bids.

Dated at Salem, Oregon, September 18, 1905.

A. O. CONDIT,
Chairman of District School Board,
School District No. 24, Marion County, Oregon.
Attest: J. C. Goodale, Jr., Clerk.
9-18-1905.

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