

Today's Probabilities.

Strong south west winds cloudy and a little milder again.

WANTED—A case of headache that KUMFORT Powder will not cure in from ten to twenty minutes.

THE MORNING GUARDIAN

THURSDAY DEC. 24, 1903.

RUSSIA AND JAPAN.

Regrettably at this season of peace and good will Russia and Japan are openly preparing for war and there is too much reason to fear that in the near future there may be an appalling conflict in the far east. Negotiations which for a time wore a hopeful outlook have apparently now reached a stage where neither party will concede more. Japan is willing to yield almost everything to Russia in Manchuria provided Russia will concede definitely to Japan a "special position" in Korea. Thus the Hermit Kingdom as it is called has become the final bone of contention. War is now expected in the near future, and although it may yet be averted, both parties are energetically preparing for the emergency. Friend and foe alike agree that if the struggle is inevitable Japan's chances of success, slim enough at the best, would be imperilled by delay in beginning the fray.

Involuntarily almost every reader will speculate in advance on the outcome of the struggle, and yet the experience of recent wars will show that the best human judgment in such matters is often sadly at fault. Eight or nine years ago Japan went to war with China, and despite the disproportion of ten to one in population Japan was everywhere victorious on sea and land and soon reduced her enemy to submission. No doubt her victory over China now gives aided hopes for like results in a war with Russia, but the conditions are vastly different. A few years ago, counting on the failing powers of the Sick Man, Greece recklessly went to war with Turkey, was speedily overrun and conquered and was only saved from utter subjection by the intervention of the great powers. And there are also Britain's experiences in South Africa. After the delivery of the Boer ultimatum the London Times declared that a single army corps with the assistance of the militia of Cape Colony and Natal would be sufficient to bring the enemy to submission. But the single army corps grew to 200,000 men, and the cost to almost a billion of dollars before the end was attained.

It is obvious that Japan can never conquer Russia, and also that Japan imperils her position as a great eastern nation in the event of defeat. Britain is bound by

treaty to help Japan in war should the latter, after first engaging with Russia, be attacked by any other great power. These conditions will probably confine the struggle to the two powers first engaged. Neither Japan nor Russia has the financial credit to sustain a prolonged struggle under defeat. It is therefore to be hoped that if war must come it may be short. A naval battle will probably be an early incident of the struggle, and should it be a decisive victory for Russia, there will be little use in Japan prolonging the conflict. A decisive naval victory for Japan would, on the contrary transfer the conflict to the mainland of Manchuria and Korea, where it might be prolonged for months.



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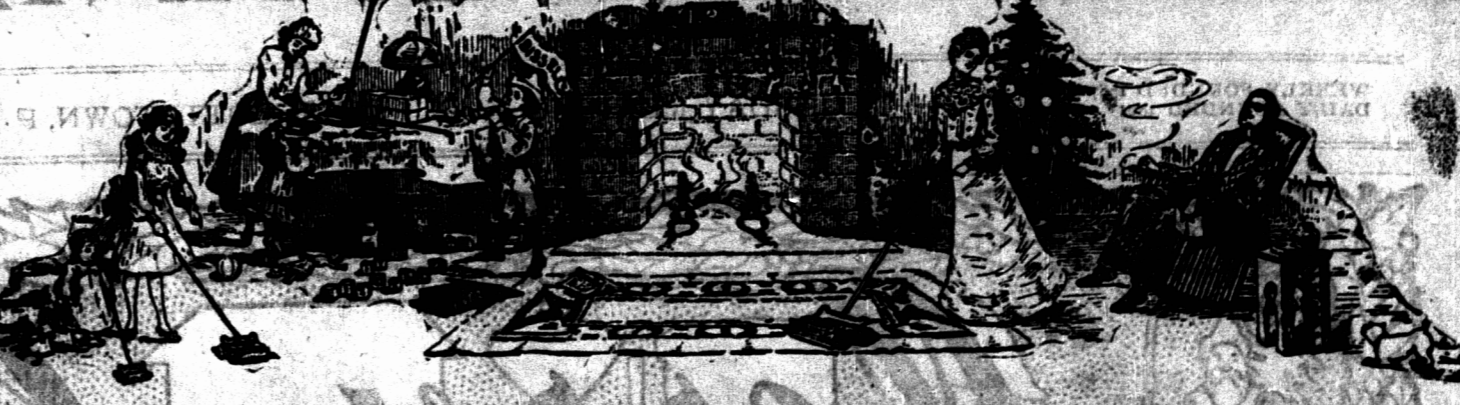
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It is what we call a sensible present. Then too, it is not expensive and is a lasting and pleasant reminder of the donor.

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