

Messenger and Visitor.

THE CHRISTIAN MESSENGER,
VOLUME LXI.

THE CHRISTIAN VISITOR,
VOLUME L.

Vol. XV.

ST JOHN, N. B., WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 22, 1899.

No. 47.

Elandslaagte. The war correspondent of the London Standard has sent that journal a graphic account of the conclusion of the fight at Elandslaagte where, after a long artillery and musketry engagement, the Boers were finally routed before the irresistible bayonet charge of the English and Scotch regiments. He speaks of the deadly fire of the Boer riflemen and of the aptitude displayed by the British, taught by previous disasters, for taking advantage of available cover. "Presently the hill on which the enemy were posted was almost encircled by a ring of fire. The Devonshires, Gordon Highlanders and Manchesters, as they drew closer to the Boers, were manifestly impatient to charge them at the point of the bayonet—the last argument of the British infantryman—but the moment had not yet come. The air seemed thick with bullets, while above our heads the shriek of the shells and the thundercap of the bursting shrapnel made a din that was appalling to those who had no previous experience of modern projectiles. So keen were the rank and file of the Devonshires that more than one man exposed himself to the deadly aim of the Boers merely in order to satisfy himself as to the progress of the fight. I heard one soldier invite his comrade to put up his head and see how the Boers were getting on. 'I will, as soon as there is room for it,' was the reply, a very natural one, considering that the air seemed to consist of flying lead. The Gordon Highlanders were especially anxious to teach the enemy a lesson. Their regiment was represented at Majuba Hill, and the Boers had afterwards referred to them in derision as 'Kaffirs clothed in kilts.' The men were keen on wiping out the insult, and to this end bore themselves with the most reckless courage. . . . Toward six o'clock there was a lull in the deadly rattle of rifles and machine guns, and our artillery ceased to throw in their hail of shell for fear of impeding our advance. But the pause was only momentary. An instant later the bugles sounded the charge, every man sprang to his feet, and, abandoning all thoughts of cover, rushed forward with fixed bayonets. It was a magnificent and soul-stirring spectacle as our gallant fellows dashed straight at the enemy, driving him irresistibly from point to point. The Boers stood their ground to the last with the courage of despair, but they were no match for our men in personal combat, and were driven back in hopeless confusion. Fifty or sixty of them, mounting their horses, made off at full speed over the hills towards the east. Another fifteen minutes of deadly work and the last shot had been fired. With a loud cheer and a shout from the Gordon Highlanders of "What price Majuba?" our men dashed down the opposite incline right into the heart of the Boer position with bayonets fixed. But the white flag stuck into the muzzle of a mauser was already flying in the laager, and the officers checked their men in mid-career. The hollow in which the enemy fought was thickly strewn with dead and wounded. Two guns, which had been worked effectively by German gunners, were captured, and the whole of the enemy's camp stores and equipment fell into our hands."

Mafeking. One of the points of great interest in connection with the war in South Africa is the beleaguered little town of Kimberly, where Colonel Baden-Powell is in command of a force of 600 men, who are chiefly, if not wholly, Cape Colony volunteers. Mafeking is some 870 miles from Capetown, in a northerly direction. It is situated in the midst of a flat, though elevated, tract of country, and very near the western boundary of the Transvaal. Nearly

4,000 feet above the sea-level, it is conspicuously healthy even during the rainy season, and has the advantage of an excellent water supply from the River Molopo, which flows from east to west at a distance of from a quarter to half a mile from the town. Colonel Baden-Powell is one of the brilliant young officers of the British army—a born leader and fighter, and a man of great courage and resource. Though besieged by a greatly superior force of Boers under Gen. Cronje, a leader of acknowledged ability, and subjected to a protracted and vigorous bombardment, the little garrison at Mafeking has not only been able to hold out against the enemy but at times to take the offensive and inflict considerable loss upon the besiegers. The latest intelligence from Colonel Baden-Powell at time of writing reports that the Boer bombardment had proved up to that time quite ineffectual. The town was cheerful and determined to resist attack to the uttermost. The Boers however were entrenched on every side in great numbers, and were gradually pushing closer and closer. The place is said to be well provisioned, and it is certain that all that 600 brave men can do under a brave and resourceful commander to hold the place until relief shall come will be done. But the greatly superior number of the Boers, and their evident determination to take the place if possible, will cause great interest to be felt in the fate of Mafeking and all news from the beleaguered town to be awaited with anxiety.

An International Understanding. The Samoan settlement, alluded to by Lord Salisbury in his Guildhall speech, by which Great Britain retires from the Samoan Islands in favor of Germany, is regarded as of considerable importance, not so much for what the transaction itself involves as for its connection with a general understanding between the two powers. In view of the recent development of certain German industries in Samoa, the possession of the group is of considerable more importance to Germany than it is to Great Britain, and British interests in that part of the Pacific are better served by her recognized protectorate over the Tonga group, where there is an excellent harbor. But the understanding between Britain and Germany, it is said, takes account of affairs in Eastern Asia as well as in the Southern Pacific. An eminent British diplomatist is quoted by the London correspondent of the New York Evening Post as saying that, while the suggestion as to an alliance between Great Britain, the United States, Germany and Japan, for the purpose of maintaining an open door policy in China is not to be accepted in the sense of there being anything in the shape of a formal alliance, "yet we have in the Samoa deal the first published evidence of an even more potent bond between England, America and Germany, namely, a friendly understanding, which must, by the sheer and quietly working weight of moral influence, give international sanction to the policy of the 'open door' and equal opportunities for all, which will yet preserve the Chinese Empire from further disintegration, and prevent there, and wherever else the world has still to be pegged out for commercial expansion, the spread of that selfish exclusiveness which, in defiance of treaty rights, has closed Madagascar and parts of northern and western Africa, and threatens to close northern and southern China to the trade of the world." As for the Samoan agreement having any relation to South African affairs, the same eminent diplomatist is authority for the statement that an agreement as to matters in that quarter was reached long before, "and as for Delagoa Bay, that bargain with Portugal and Germany was struck last summer. . . . For all practical purposes Delagoa Bay is England's and will remain so."

The War. During the past week British troops and armaments have been arriving at Capetown and Durban, and while General Buller has remained silent as to his movements and intentions, he has doubtless been preparing with all practical despatch to send relief to the beleaguered British forces at Mafeking, Kimberly and Ladysmith. For the latter it has been another week of grim holding on against vastly superior numbers. Ladysmith, with Boer forces on every side and subject to continual bombardment by heavy guns, seems as if held in the very jaws of death. On Wednesday it was reported that the bombardment was being kept up day and night, but at last accounts General White was bravely holding out and an attempted assault of the Boers upon the place had been repulsed in such a manner as to convince them of the wisdom of confining themselves to attacks at long range. Up to Saturday 23,500 troops of the reinforcements had arrived in South Africa, and of these about 7,300 had reached Darban. An advance from that point by way of Pietermaritzburg and Estourt for the relief of Ladysmith is looked for shortly. Nothing is known definitely as to the point at which the troops which have been recently landed at Capetown are concentrated. The statement in a late despatch that General Methuen has arrived with his staff at the Orange River, to take command of the first division, would seem to indicate an intended advance to the relief of Kimberly. From Natal there comes news of a somewhat serious disaster which occurred on Wednesday, when an armored train sent out from Estcourt (not far from Colenso) for the purpose of reconnaissance was ambushed by a force of Boers. The engine, with tender, was able to return to Estcourt, but about ninety officers and men, constituting the larger part of the force with which the train was manned, are missing. It is reported that three were killed and nine wounded; some others may have escaped, but it is believed that the greater number were taken prisoner by the Boers. Among the missing is Lieut. Winston Churchill, a son of the late Lord Randolph Churchill, who is in South Africa as a war correspondent for a London newspaper and whose gallant conduct in aiding in the rescue of a part of the train is highly praised. A report has been current that General Joubert, Commander-in-Chief of the Boer forces, was dead, having been killed in one of the engagements in the vicinity of Ladysmith, but confirmation of the report is lacking and it is now generally believed to be untrue. General Joubert is not only a very able general but is generally regarded as the best representative of the more intelligent and moderate element among the Boers. In politics he has been a rival to Krüger, and if his ideas had prevailed in the Transvaal the trouble would have been settled without war.

From news received since the above was written it appears that considerable forces are now concentrated at DeAar Junction and at Hopetown in northern Cape Colony, and that General Methuen is to move at once to the relief of Kimberly, which is about 80 miles north of Hopetown. The expedition is said to be furnished with all the material necessary for repairing the railway track, which in places had been broken up by the Boers, and there can be little doubt that the forces under General Methuen will prove sufficient for the prompt relief of Kimberly. More detailed information is also at hand in reference to the general attack and attempted assault of the Boers upon Ladysmith on November 9. The attack was of a very determined character, but the British bravely held their ground and the enemy was repulsed with a loss estimated at 800 men. There is also news of a fight on the 15th between a division of General White's army and the Boers, in the neighborhood of Colenso, which resulted disastrously to the Boers. It is reported that the Boers have destroyed the railway bridge over the Tugela river at Colenso. If this is true it would seem to indicate that the Boers do not mean to make any stand in southern Natal, and on the other hand the destruction of the bridge renders the advance of the British forces to the relief of Ladysmith the more tedious and difficult.

ST. ST.
om the
at you
ds.
\$5 00,
which
ohn.

on our
lightly
OODS
N. S.

cial
ressive business
ppd than ever
and women to
stenographers,
been recently re-
new cloak room
or Catalogue for
HISTON,
Halifax, N. S.