

Messenger and Visitor.

THE CHRISTIAN MESSENGER,
VOLUME LXIII.

Vol. XVII.

ST. JOHN, N. B., WEDNESDAY, APRIL 24, 1901.

THE CHRISTIAN VISITOR
VOLUME LII.

No. 17.

Wireless Telegraphy at Buffalo. The promoters of the Pan-American Exposition which is to open in Buffalo next month are apparently leaving nothing undone, which enterprise and a lavish expenditure of money can effect, to make it one of the completest and most attractive in the history of such undertakings. The latest fruits of human discovery and invention as applied to the world's arts and industries will find exemplification. Among the most wonderful appliances which visitors to Buffalo will have an opportunity of inspecting for the first time will be the Marconi system of wireless telegraphy. This branch of that wonderful art by which the most distant nations have been brought into immediate communication with each other is still in its infancy, and experts in the art of telegraphy hardly care to pronounce upon its future. The more sanguine, however, anticipate that by its means men will ere long be able to exchange their thoughts across the oceans, without cable or other visible means of communication. Nikola Tesla is said to be now at work upon the problem of transatlantic wireless telegraphy. The practicability of the wireless system for communication between places hundreds of miles apart has already been demonstrated. Mr. Marconi has succeeded in establishing wireless communication between the Lizard on the coast of Cornwall, England, and St. Catherine's, 200 miles distant, and arranged to duplex the line so that he could send two messages each way at the same time.

A War of Revenge. As a struggle for independence the Boer war is certainly a huge failure, but, considered as a war of revenge, it is not so inconsiderable. If the Boer must sacrifice not only his nose but his head in his controversy with Mr. Bull, he will have the satisfaction (if a headless man can be supposed to feel satisfaction) of having left some rather ugly impressions on that stout old gentleman's physiognomy. The military forces and organization of the Boers have been so weakened and broken that their operations have come to assume the character of a mere guerilla warfare, hopeless of any favorable issue. But it is still necessary for Great Britain to keep in South Africa nearly as large a force, and at nearly as great an expense, as at any time during the war. Happily the conflict is being carried on at a much smaller expenditure of British blood than in the days when Modder River, Spion Kop and Colenso were the names which figured most prominently in the despatches, and when the Empire waited with bated breath to know what was to be the fate of Ladysmith, Kimberly and Mafeking. It is now chiefly the taxpayer who is being bled, and though that is a far less terrible thing than draining the country of its best life blood, it is still a very serious matter, and the stubborn Boers may well feel a bitter satisfaction in the fact that their guerilla warfare is costing the British nation the amount of \$5,000,000 a week.

Another King. There has been lately added a new name, if not a new order, to the aristocracy of the United States. We have long been accustomed to hearing of the coal barons, the railway magnates, the iron and steel kings, the cattle kings, not to mention the princes of the turf and the lords of the ring, but now in addition to all these we hear of a "peanut king" whose surname is Mills and who has emerged fresh and new, with something of the smell of the mold upon him, from the ranks of the democracy, reminding us of Milton's animals emerging from the earth at the creative word, and "pawing to set free their hinder parts." But if King Peanut comes from the democracy, his evolution is only in line with that of all other kings. The "Peanut King" has had an interesting career and affords a fine example of that Yankee cleverness which understands how to seize and make the most of opportunities. He began life as a peanut vender on a train. When only twelve years old he had contracts with several railroads running out of

Chicago for the exclusive right to sell peanuts on the trains. This lad of twelve had grown men in his employ. Mills, the peanut vender, is now the employer of more than six hundred men. He contemplates putting fifteen thousand machines on the market, and when all are out it will require thirty thousand pounds of peanuts to supply them for one day. Anticipating this, Mr. Mills has expended between \$300,000 and \$400,000 in laying in the supply he thought would be needed. Although Mr. Mills denies that he had any intention of cornering the market, the fact remains that he has bought up the entire visible supply and no more can be purchased, except in small quantities, until the next crop is harvested.

De Wet. There have been persistent reports of late that the mind of the famous Boer leader, De Wet, has been so seriously affected by the experiences through which he has passed that his condition is one bordering so closely on insanity that he is now scarcely accountable for his acts. His magnificent resistance to the inevitable is neither war nor wisdom. A South Africa correspondent says, and apparently with much truth, that history will be as unsparing in its condemnation of De Wet as a patriot, as it will be enthusiastic in his praise as a commander. "His vanity—for the continuance of the struggle is nothing else but an inordinate vanity—has cost hundreds of lives without one single compensating advantage. His country is desolate, and, let it be remembered, De Wet has personally been responsible for most of the desolation. His nerves are shattered. He is irritable, unreasonable and cruel, even to his own faithful followers. But his greatest feeling of bitterness is directed against the Dutch of Cape Colony. Describing their attitude, one of the Boer prisoners to whom I was talking, spat on the floor with a grimace and told a tale of loathing and contempt, and he assured me that the sentiment was participated in to the full by his late commander. Towards the Transvaaler, too, there is evidently a feeling of distrust. De Wet has more than once sent secretly for recruits from among the Transvaalers, asking them to come and fight like men, and not skulk, as do most of their companions. From the date of the capture of Dewetsdorp the Boer leader seems to have lost all control over himself. According to his own men, he has literally flogged them into obedience. His discipline has been sterner than that of any German martinet. He has allowed no one to think but himself. 'Go and take a rifle and fight,' he said one day to Steyn, who wished to have a voice in the plan of campaign, 'but don't talk to me now.'

More About the Doukhobors. The question of the desirability of the Galicians and Doukhobors as immigrants was discussed at some length in the Dominion House of Commons one day last week. The Government's immigration policy was criticised adversely by Mr. Wilson of Lennox, Mr. Clark Wallace and others, and was warmly defended by Mr. W. F. McCreary, lately immigration Commissioner in Winnipeg, as well as by other members on the Government side of the house. Mr. McCreary spoke particularly in praise of the Doukhobors, and said that he had never met a class of immigrants who had impressed him more favorably. There appears to be no doubt that the Doukhobors possess many excellent characteristics. They are cleanly in their habits, moderately industrious, honest and peaceful, emphasizing in their religious professions and in their lives the principle of brotherly love. A certain manifesto or appeal, recently issued on behalf of the Doukhobors in Canada, indicates their unwillingness to conform in certain important particulars to the laws and institutions of this country, especially in respect to the tenure of land and the marriage relation. Mr. McCreary attributes this manifesto to a certain agitator, and holds that it does not truly represent the general attitude of the Doukhobor colonists. This may be the fact. It is not unlikely that the tendency of their

marriage customs to induce what would be generally regarded as immoral relations between the sexes has been exaggerated, but even so, the refusal on the part of any body of colonists to recognize and conform to the marriage laws of the country must be regarded as a serious matter. The insistence of the Doukhobors—if they really do so insist—upon the maintenance of the communal system, is, from some points of view at least, less serious. Still it is hard to see how the government of Canada could recognize a claim on behalf of a body of people to the maintenance of a system which would tend strongly to prevent their assimilation, in respect to language, customs and municipal regulations, with the general population of the country.

The Budget Speech. It could not have been with a light and cheerful heart that Sir Michael Hicks-Beach addressed himself to the task of delivering his budget speech before the British House of Commons on Thursday last. But if not cheerfully, the task was at least bravely faced by the Chancellor who evidently was in no mood to conceal from Parliament and the nation the gravity of the financial situation. Some eighteen months ago, when the Chancellor obtained from Parliament a supplementary estimate for the army of £10,000,000 and authority to raise £8,000,000 on treasury notes, it was expected that sufficient provision was being made to cover the expense of the South African war. But on Thursday last he found it necessary to point out that during the past year the war had cost £65,000,000, or \$325,000,000. The war has already cost twice as much as the Crimean war, and no one dares name a date when this tremendous expenditure, now amounting, it is said, to about £1,000,000 a week, will end. Besides there has been an expenditure of \$15,000,000 for military operations in China, which also still goes on. The total expenditure for the year was \$917,960,000, while the revenue was \$651,925,000, leaving a deficit of \$266,035,000. On April 1st the national debt stood at £687,500,000, an increase of £55,000,000 on account of the war. For the present year, Sir Michael Hicks Beach estimates the necessary expenditure at £187,600,000. The revenue on the basis of last year, he estimates at £132,225,000, leaving a deficit of about £55,000,000 to be provided for. To meet this in part, it is proposed to raise the income tax from a shilling in the pound to fourteen pence; place a graduated tax on sugar and molasses which would add about a half-penny a pound to the retail price of the higher grades of sugar, while the lower grades would pay a smaller duty, and also impose an export duty of a shilling a ton on coal. From these three sources an additional revenue of about £11,000,000 is expected, which would give in all a revenue of £143,225,000. Then by omitting the sinking fund for the year, the expenditure would be reduced to £182,962,000, leaving £39,707,000 which must be provided for by an addition to the debt, which with interest on the debentures would amount to not less than £41,000,000. In order therefore to finance the exchequer, the Chancellor asks power to borrow £60,000,000 by means of consols. The expectation had been that the Transvaal must bear a considerable portion of the expense of the war, but whatever may be eventually, it is evident that for the present nothing can be obtained from that quarter, the war having brought the Transvaal country to the brink of ruin. This little war that, in the opinion of experienced statesmen and generals, was to have been concluded in a few weeks, has already lasted a year and a half, has cost the sacrifice of many thousands of valuable lives, and more than £150,000,000, and still keeps an army of more than 200,000 men employed in South Africa. In concluding his speech Sir Michael Hicks-Beach said: "I have tried to put before the House a true account of our finances for the present and immediate future. In our time no Chancellor of the Exchequer has had so difficult a task, and none has had a more indulgent audience. I aim at no transient popularity. I ask for no cheers, and I expect none. I come to tell the nation the truth and the whole truth. It is necessary for the salvation of the nation that I should do so. You have had your feast. You have all, Liberals and Tories, been mad for rioting and expenditure. Now comes the reckoning, and you can laugh or not as you please."