

# Messenger and Visitor.

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**The Missing Guns.** What the Boers have done with their heavy artillery is somewhat of a mystery. That they possessed a very large number of heavy guns in the earlier stages of the war is beyond question, and comparatively few of them have as yet been captured. This is the more astonishing considering the great distances which the Boers have retreated before the advancing British forces. The supposition that the Boers have buried not a few of their guns, in the hope that a day may come when they will be able to use them again, against British soldiers, seems not improbable. It is said that there is a disposition in England to insist that the Boer prisoners in Ceylon and St. Helena shall be held until the artillery which was so much in evidence at the siege of Ladysmith, at Colenso, and at Magersfontein, and has since so mysteriously disappeared, shall be brought to light.

**An Expensive Business.** A good many people will be inclined to agree with Police Magistrate Denison of Toronto in the opinion that the settling of questions of right by process of law in this country has become so expensive as to make some reform in the administration of justice desirable. The magistrate's remarks were brought out by a case in which a lawyer was charged by a client with the theft of a sum of money. The evidence presented showed that whatever money had been retained by defendant was for legal costs, which left the magistrate no alternative but to dismiss the case. In doing so, however, he is reported to have said: "It is a monstrous thing that people should be deprived of their money in this manner. Nowadays it is next to impossible to get anything out of a suit of court, after the lawyers have finished with it. Hundreds and thousands of cases have arisen within the past few years in which there has been little or nothing left for clients when the charges for lawyers' services have been paid. This thing will come to an end some day. The people will rise in their might and break down the system which permits such enormous charges." When asked how the profession was going to exist, the magistrate said: "I would do away with the profession altogether. All the business now transacted by lawyers could be done just as well by the state." There is indeed one good result from the tediousness and expensiveness of settling questions in the courts, that is, that many men are thus deterred from going to law, and induced rather to settle their difficulties out of court. On the other hand, unscrupulous men are able to play a successful game of bluff, speculating upon the willingness of honest and prudent men to settle a dispute on almost any terms rather than incur the vexatious delays and indefinite expenses contingent upon a law-suit.

**The British Parliament Dissolved.** Great Britain is now entering into a political campaign preliminary to the election of a new Parliament. By royal proclamation the present Parliament is dissolved on the 26th inst., and its successor is summoned to meet on November 1. The time for an appeal to the country has no doubt been shrewdly chosen by the Queen's advisors. There appears to be little doubt in any quarter that Lord Salisbury's Government will be sustained. There are two considerations which will go far to insure this result. One of these is that the country is strongly disposed to stand by the Government in respect to its policy in South African affairs. The defeat of the Government at this juncture would be interpreted abroad as a condemnation of the war and the annexation of the Orange State and the Transvaal, and the British people are not likely to do anything to weaken the hands of their Government in so dealing with the Boers and their sympathizers that the costly struggle now being brought to an end shall make for permanent peace. The other consideration

which makes the defeat of the present Government extremely improbable is the lack of strong leadership, coherence and organization in the Liberal party. Without a well defined policy and a generally acknowledged leader, the Liberals could hardly hope to win even were the conditions otherwise much more favorable for them than they are. The elections will be held on electoral lists two years old. This will exclude a considerable number who should have the right of voting, and it is said that, on the whole, this also will be favorable to the Tories.

**China:—Germany's Note.** A recent development of a note worthy character in connection with the situation in China is the circular note which Germany has addressed to the powers immediately interested. The publication of this note has been made co-incidental with the arrival in China of Count Von Waldersee, the German general who is to take command of the allied forces in that country. The note is to the effect that, as preliminary to entering upon negotiations with the Chinese Government, those persons who have been proved to be the real and original instigators of the outrages against international law which have occurred at Peking must be delivered up and punished, and it is asserted that the representatives of the powers at Peking are in a position to bring forward convincing evidence as to the identity of the persons who are responsible for the outrages. The German Government believes that it may count upon the unanimity of the powers in reference to this proposition, since indifference to the idea of just atonement would be equivalent to indifference to the repetition of the crime. The note has drawn forth very favorable comment from the London press, the Times going so far as to wish that the credit for making such a proposal belonged to Great Britain. The Morning Post however points out that if the real authors and instigators of the uprising should prove to be identical with the personnel of the Chinese Government, it can hardly be expected that they will deliver themselves up, and that if the Chinese Government could be designated as guilty it would be under the ban of the powers, a condition of things only terminable by the conquest of China or a revolution producing a new government.

**The Strike of the Coal Miners.** In the history of coal mining there has probably been no parallel to the strike now in progress among the Anthracite coal miners of Pennsylvania. The number of miners in the region affected is about 140,000, representing a population of perhaps half a million. On Monday morning of last week, at the order of the National Executive Board of the United Mine Workers of America, 100,000 of these miners went on strike, and since then the number of strikers has been considerably increased. The contention of the miners is that they have not participated in the general prosperity of the country, and that the mine owners have refused to recognize their claims for increased wages or to submit the points in dispute to arbitration. The principal demands of the miners are,—the abolition of company stores and company doctors; a reduction in the price of powder from \$2.75 a keg—the price in 1874—to \$1.50; the payment of wages twice a month and in cash; the limitation of a ton to 2240 pounds, and an advance in wages ranging from ten per cent. for men receiving \$1.75 a day, to twenty per cent. to those receiving \$1.50. On the part of the operators it is denied that the miners have any real cause of complaint. It is contended that if they have not shared in the general prosperity of the country, the same is true of the mine operators, that the companies are always willing to consider the grievances of their own employees, but decline to recognize labor unions in the matter. Whatever may be the truth in respect to these contentions, it is evident that the strike is involving immense loss. The loss in wages to the miners is estimated at \$200,000 a day. If the strike lasts for a month, and the loss to the operators equals that of the miners, there will be a total

of \$5,000,000 sacrificed. The prospective cutting off of the supply of coal is already causing great embarrassment which will of course become much greater should the strike be prolonged. The effect of the strike upon the retail trade finds an illustration in St. John, where the price of coal has gone up from two to three dollars per ton since the strike was declared, and can be had only in comparatively small quantities at any price. When it is considered how keenly and directly the cutting off of the anthracite coal supply is felt by millions of people on this continent, there seems good ground for the opinion that the coal operators should be compelled to submit their differences with the miners to arbitration.

**Galveston to be Rebuilt.** Contrary to the general rule in such cases, the first accounts of the Galveston disaster placed the loss of life below rather than above the mark. What may be regarded as careful estimates make the number of the dead in the vicinity of 6,000. The work of removing debris and disposing of dead bodies has proceeded until the scene of the disaster has been relieved of its most terrible and revolting features, and conditions preparatory to rebuilding are being secured. In view of the exposed situation of Galveston, the frequent disasters which it has suffered in the past, and the fact that no one can tell how soon again it may be subject to another catastrophe such as that by which it has just been visited, one might expect that men would be generally disposed to seek a place where life and property would be exposed to less terrible risks. But it is said that there appears to be no hesitation on the part of the people about rebuilding. Men seem to cling instinctively to home, even when their houses are in ruins and many of their friends and relatives among the dead. Besides, many possess land, buildings and the facilities for business in Galveston which represent considerable value if the city is to be rebuilt, but which otherwise would be almost a total loss. The New York Tribune is of the opinion that what it calls "the defiance of elemental inhospitality" plays no small part in the matter. That is to say, Galveston will be rebuilt because its people will not submit and yield to storm and flood. In the combat with adverse fortune the most virile qualities are developed.

**South Africa.** The recent official despatches of Lord Roberts indicate that operations against the remnant of the Boer forces are being vigorously pushed. The British have worked along the line of railway to the Portuguese border, scattering the enemy and making large captures of live stock, provisions, rolling stock, etc. Some prisoners have been taken and some guns. The Boers have also destroyed some of their heavy artillery, but it would seem that a good many of their large guns are as yet unaccounted for. Organized resistance on the part of the Boers, except in the way of guerilla warfare, appears to be pretty thoroughly broken. Many of those now in arms against the British are reported to be foreigners and mercenaries. Ex-President Steyn, of the Orange State, and General Botha are both reported to be ill, and have disappeared from the field of action. General DeWet, who was reported to have died, is believed to be still living, but his whereabouts is unknown. Mr. Kruger is in Portuguese territory and has accepted the offer of the Netherlands Government to send a warship to convey him to Europe. The British Government has given assurance that there will be no interference with his journey. How much of gold and other valuables the ex-President has in his possession is of course unknown, but there is not likely to be any action taken to prevent his carrying to Europe whatever wealth he may have with him. The British Government, it is understood, will be glad to be relieved of the necessity of dealing with Mr. Kruger as a prisoner. Five hundred Canadians of the first contingent in South Africa are to start for home shortly under the command of Major Pelletier, of Quebec. They will come directly. Those who remain in South Africa with Colonels Otter and Buchan until the close of war will return by way of England. Eighteen Canadian soldiers who have been in England some time as invalids sailed for home last Thursday on the S. S. Camboman.