

**The New Taxation for Britons** The Budget speech of Sir Michael Hicks-Beach shows where the burden of the new taxation made necessary by the war in South Africa will fall. The working classes are let down very lightly, and the professional and trading classes are to carry, as usual, the bulk of the added load. The first item in the list is the increase of the income tax by fifty per cent. The raising of the income tax from sixteen cents to twenty-four cents is expected to produce in the coming fiscal year \$32,500,000, and in the following year \$42,000,000.

The second item is the extension of the 25c. stamp duty on contract notes to the produce exchange, which is estimated to produce \$750,000 a year. This is regarded as a matter of common justice to dealers in Stock Exchange securities; for it has always been regarded as unfair that they should have to pay the stamp duty while speculators in wheat options and cotton and pig iron warrants went free.

The poor man's beer, to which we directed attention last week, is to be taxed an extra 25c. a barrel. This is not a very large contribution from beer drinkers towards the war expenditure, and one critic of the Budget remarks that Sir Michael Hicks-Beach must entertain "shocking notions respecting the working-man's consumption." It seems there are 576 half-pints in a barrel, and it will therefore take a wondrous thirst to work out even a quarter's worth of war tax from the consumers. It is more than likely that this tax will, as we predicted last week, fall upon the shareholders in brewery companies. The working-man will never consent to the price of his pint of 'arf and 'arf being raised. But perhaps his stomach will suffer from further adulteration, or his head will be made the easier through a watering process. That will be his indirect contribution to the war. Spirits, cigars and tea will also assist to uphold the Empire. However, our kinsmen across the ocean have broad shoulders on which to carry what Mr. Williams calls "the burden of providing the sinews of war."

#### THE BANK OF BRITISH NORTH AMERICA.

In our last week's issue we briefly directed attention to the latest balance sheet of this institution. It was submitted to the shareholders at their 64th annual general meeting held at the London offices of the Bank on the 6th inst. We now publish said statement in full, and a report of the speech of the Chairman of the meeting, Mr. G. D. Whatman.

The speech in question forms pleasant reading, not only for the shareholders, but for Canadians all over the world. It tells of an exceedingly prosperous year's business, a matter of rejoicing among the holders of stock. It also contains an excellent expression of the admiration felt by Englishmen for "the splendid help given by Canada to the Mother Country in her hour of difficulty." We have become accustomed

to the praise lavished upon the "Royal Canadians" by their grateful countrymen. We always believed they would do their duty, and we were never doubtful of their conduct in the field. Yet the reiteration of the words used by Lord Roberts, when found embodied in the speech of a chairman at a bank meeting in the world's metropolis, seems to bring home to us with more force what our kinsmen across the Atlantic think of us. Conspicuous gallantry! To have one of the greatest of living generals, a veteran of many wars, thus describe the grand behaviour of our boys in South Africa is calculated to stir the most apathetic Canadian, and it is not surprising that shrewd bankers and practical business men living in the heart of England regard recent events as striking proof of the unity of the Empire.

The directors of the Bank of British North America signified their appreciation of the conduct of Canadians in a time of national danger, by kindly dropping a thousand pounds sterling into the "tambourine" of our Patriotic Fund. Mr. Whatman has helped us to realize how much our soldiers in South Africa deserve the love, honor and gratitude of their countrymen.

However, it is with the figures of the statement under review our duty lies, and they are so satisfactory that comment thereon is unnecessary. The following short table illustrates the marked growth of the business of the bank:

#### INCREASE DURING 1899.

Deposits and Current Accounts...	\$2,125,000
Notes in Circulation...	645,000
Bills Payable and other Liabilities...	3,500,000

An increased dividend and an increased reserve fund fulfilled the hope expressed at the September meeting. As an evidence of the success attending the extension of the bank's business, the profit placed at the disposal of the directors for distribution amounted to \$270,000 as against \$190,000 for the same period in 1898. The speech contains references to the activity of trade in many parts of the Dominion; the full employment of the bank's funds, the remunerative rates obtainable for same, the extraordinary industrial activity being displayed in the development of Cape Breton, and is altogether well worthy of perusal by others than those interested in this old financial institution.

That the work of the general manager is appreciated by the shareholders' representatives may be gathered from the Chairman's allusion to their latest meeting with Mr. Stikeman, of whom he said, "the more we see of him the more certain we feel that your business is most ably cared for, and that no one could have the interests of the bank more loyally at heart."

Shareholders and clients of this well-known institution, all over the Dominion, will heartily endorse the opinion expressed by the chairman at the recent meeting of the "British Bank," as to the sterling worth of its general manager.