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The Hudson River Disaster. A disaster of a terrible character and involving very serious loss of life, occurred early on Sunday morning, Oct. 24th, on the New York Central road, when the engine and several cars of the State Express, one of the heaviest and fastest trains which runs on the road, plunged into the Hudson river. The train was running at a high rate of speed, and if the engineer received any warning whatever of the impending disaster, it was too late to leave any time for action. About a score of persons were killed, eight of whom were Chinamen. Some ten others were injured. The cause of the accident was the undermining of the track by the water of the river, or in some other way. The idea has been advanced that dynamite had been used to destroy the road-bed, with the diabolical purpose of wrecking the train; but such a supposition seems incredible. There had not, however, been any apprehension of danger at this point. The piece of track where the accident occurred had been considered as safe as any part of the line. Such an accident on what is acknowledged to be one of the best constructed and best equipped railroads in the world, is a remarkable occurrence, and one calculated to disturb somewhat the sense of security in railway travelling.

New Kind of Cotton. A new variety of cotton grown this summer near the city of Atlanta gives promise of being immensely productive and valuable. The editor of the Christian Index, who has visited the plantation where the new cotton was being cultivated, writes of it as follows:

"We were greatly interested in what we saw. Stalks of cotton, in many cases ten feet high, were loaded with clusters of bolls, on short, stumpy limbs, clear to the top. We counted the bolls on an average stalk and found them to be sixty-eight in number. The proprietor told us he had counted as many as a hundred and eighteen. The leaves are much larger than on the ordinary cotton, and as the bolls ripen, beginning at the bottom, the leaves fall off, leaving the cotton in convenient position for picking. We are not enough of an expert to judge of the fibre of this cotton, but it seemed to be soft and silky. Mr. Jackson says the seed was given him by a gentleman who brought it from the Congo, in Africa. Whether this plant will preserve its peculiarities of growth and fruitage for any long time in this country is a question, but one who sees it as it appears in the field now, must believe that a new era in the raising of cotton has set in. The present price of seed is only \$300 a bushel, or in small quantities, a cent a seed. We bought a few to send to some kinfolks who are cotton planters, for experiment."

Spain's Reply. There has been received at Washington during the past week a diplomatic note from the Spanish government in reply to a note sent from Washington a few weeks ago bearing upon Cuban affairs. The latter note offered the mediation of the United States government between Spain and her insurgent colonists, and requested the Spanish government to set a date at which hostilities in Cuba would be terminated. The

note is said to have been marked by that bluntness of language which has become characteristic of the United States Foreign office. Under the circumstances Spain's reply was naturally awaited with considerable interest. The Spanish note, so far as can be judged by what has been published of the synopsis of it cabled to Washington, is dignified, conciliatory and diplomatic in tone. While Spain declines the offer of mediation as proffered by the United States, she intimates her pleasure to accept the good offices of the latter for the purpose of inducing the Cuban insurgents to accept the Spanish reforms. An outline of the proposed reforms is given which may be briefly described as autonomy for the colony on substantially the same lines as those granted by Great Britain to Canada. The Spanish note further states that a date for the termination of hostilities cannot be precisely set, but that it will occur at an early day if the new policy, military and civil, of the Spanish government shall succeed. And in regard to that matter, it is intimated that much depends upon the co-operation of the United States, since, as Spain holds, the material aid constantly flowing from the United States to the Cuban insurgents has been the main cause of the continuance of the insurrection. The note accordingly appeals to President McKinley's Government to prohibit all filibustering expeditions.

The Anglo-Indian War. The campaign in India against the hill tribes of the northwestern frontier is being carried on with vigor. The rebellious mountaineers will no doubt be brought to submission, but the undertaking is involving some desperate fighting and comparatively large loss of life on the part of the Anglo-Indian regiments, both British and native. The revolting tribesmen have the advantage of fighting in natural strongholds, from which it is a matter of great difficulty to dislodge them. They are also found to be well furnished with rifles of modern pattern, and to be abundantly supplied with ammunition. Under such circumstances the bravery and discipline of the attacking troops are put to severe trial, and the behaviour of the native Sikh regiments as well as that of the British soldiers, has been most praiseworthy. The brave conduct of the Scotch Highlanders upholds their distinguished prestige and attests that they are worthy sons of noble sires. It is a matter of surprise that the tribesmen are so well supplied with rifles and still greater is the surprise at their abundant store of ammunition. The rifles, it is believed, they have had opportunity to steal. But where they got the immense store of cartridges is a deep mystery, since the regulations sternly prohibit their possession by soldiers off duty, and there is no record of any magazine having been pillaged. The most plausible theory is that there has been a surreptitious sale of cartridges by merchants, perhaps Continental, perhaps English, who somehow managed to elude the vigilance of the Indian authorities. There is another idea that they may be the product of the Ameer's arm factory at Cabul. It is evident that General Sir William Lockhart's campaign will consume more time, with far bloodier results than anybody has looked for.

Death of Henry George. As we go to press the great municipal contest in New York, which is being watched with profound interest by the people on both sides of the Atlantic, approaches its conclusion. The death, early last Friday morning, of Mr. Henry George, one of the candidates for the mayoralty, forms a sad

and startling incident of the campaign. Mr. George had been working with immense energy, and the continuous strain to which he had been subject was one to try severely the most robust constitution, and Mr. George was not physically strong. After speaking several times on Thursday evening, he retired to rest at his hotel. Early the next morning his wife awakened to find him in a dying condition, and in a short time he had passed away. Apoplexy was pronounced to be the cause of death. Mr. George was a man who had risen by virtue of innate ability, industry and force of character, from a humble position to a reputation which was much more than national. His book entitled *Progress and Poverty*, and his advocacy of the single tax theory brought him into great prominence, and won for him a host of zealous disciples. But on the other hand his peculiar views on economic subjects have elicited much able adverse criticism and strenuous or contemptuous opposition. It cannot be said that Mr. George had succeeded in obtaining to any very large degree the endorsement of the world's more eminent thinkers on economic subjects. But he had obtained a large popular following, and personally he had won recognition as a sincere and earnest man, who at least believed in the theories he promulgated and whose grand object was not personal fame, but the betterment of society. Mr. George was 58 years of age. He leaves a son, Henry George, jr., who has been accepted by the leaders of the party which was supporting Mr. George, instead of the father, as the candidate for the mayoralty. The general belief is that Mr. George's removal has materially strengthened the chances of Tammany's candidate, Van Wyck, and those chances were already far too good to please those who desire to see a strong and wholesome municipal government established in greater New York.

Death of the Duchess of Teck. The death of the Duchess of Teck, cousin of Queen Victoria, mother of the Duchess of York, and therefore grandmother of the youngest heir-presumptive to the British throne, occurred on the morning of October 27th. The Duke of Teck, husband of the Duchess, served in the Austrian army, was a captain during the Austro-Italian campaign of 1859 and obtained mention for gallant conduct. The death of the Duchess, who had nearly completed her 65th year, was unexpected, and its announcement caused a considerable sensation. Death resulted from hernia, for which an operation was successfully performed, but the patient had not strength to rally.

—Dr. Nansen, the Arctic explorer, considers that there is not much of the polar problem now left unsolved. That there is a deep sea at the extreme north is, he says, established, and there is not an unmovable cover of ice at that part of the earth, as it was formerly supposed. Instead there is only a thin layer of ice, while the depth of the sea is about 2000 fathoms. "In my opinion," says Nansen, "there will be no great difficulty in reaching the pole. There are various ways of doing it. One way is to go through the ice as the Fram did. I think it can easily be done too by the use of sledges and dogs. That is, I believe, the method to be tried by the next explorer."

—The readers of the MESSENGER AND VISITOR will feel indebted to Rev. W. B. Hutchinson, of Topeka, for his Kansas letter in this issue. What is said about the cause of prohibition in Kansas will be read with special interest.