

confirmed. It has been supposed that this splendid soldier's bravery was equaled by his humanity. The despatch is to the effect that last week "three agents of the Peace Committee" were taken as prisoners to General De Wet's laager near Lindley, that one of the agents, a British subject, was flogged and then shot, and that the other two burghers were flogged. Flogging, as a mode of punishment, is opposed to any code of civilized warfare; and the comment in England on such an act will doubtless be bitterly accentuated if it is shown that one of the victims—the one who was shot after being flogged—was a subject of the Queen. General De Wet, however, might reply that he was justified in shooting any Englishman who should tamper with his troops. The Peace Committee to which reference is made is believed to be that organized by some of the Boer burghers living near Kroonstad, in the late Orange Free State, who recently adopted resolutions urging their brethren to conclude peace, and declaring that General De Wet and President Steyn were the only real obstacles to such a conclusion. Despite the fact that the Kroonstad appeal criticises the recent Africander Congress at Worcester as "misleading and giving false impressions," it is interesting to note that the Dutch farmers of the Worcester and Hermon districts of Cape Colony have held meetings at which resolutions were adopted expressing approval of this appeal. The prevention of rebellion by the Boers in Cape Colony has resulted quite as likely from the influence of Dutch burghers as from the display of armed activity by the British at Cape Town and elsewhere. Another reason for the absence of a rebellion may perhaps lie in the fact that the lines of British communication from the sea to Pretoria have not been permanently broken by the recent Boer raids. At the same time those raids form a very unusual event in the history of war. More than a month has now elapsed since the Boers crossed the Orange River and entered Cape Colony. So far as the outside world knows, the London War Office is still in deplorable ignorance with regard to the numbers of the invaders. Beyond the fact that they are moving southward over sparsely inhabited tracts, it has apparently failed to locate them for more than a day at any

point; this, however, is not surprising, since no armed bodies have ever changed bases with greater rapidity than that which has characterized Boer movements. In the Transvaal last week Boer operations were remarkable because of a dozen engagements east of Pretoria, but especially from the fact that the Boers actually attacked two railway stations close to that capital. In all of the engagements the Boers seem to have suffered final defeat, though at severe cost to the British.



China and the American Government

Last week the United States Government received its first setback in the conduct of diplomatic negotiations concerning China. The week previous, Secretary Hay had proposed that negotiations be conducted at some place other than Peking and outside China, preferably at Washington. The reason given was that the transfer might facilitate the conclusion of negotiations as a whole by separating those still requiring considering and deliberation from those already determined. The proposition was opposed by the other Powers, (1) because of the expense involved in two sets of commissioners; (2) because such a course would diminish local pressure on the Chinese; (3) because, for a conference outside of the Chinese Empire, certain Chinese statesmen must be invited whose presence in China is necessary at present, while if they remained in China there would be delay in exchanging communications between them and the new commissioners at a new place; (4) because such a knowledge of recent Chinese affairs as is possessed only by the accredited representatives of the Powers at Peking would be indispensable. Although he believed himself to be acting for the best interests of all concerned, Mr. Hay has now deemed it advisable to withdraw his proposition. At the same time, wishing above all else to avoid delay in the progress of the negotiations, he has not only urged Mr. Conger, our Minister to China, to urge forward the early conclusion of the negotiations, but has also requested the Powers to avoid all unnecessary delay. A circumstance which will expedite matters is the signing, after an irritating postponement,

by the Chinese representatives, acting under direct instructions from the Imperial courts, of the note defining the conditions of a permanent peace treaty. Mr. Conger's signature to this note was made under a public reservation exempting the United States, in case of difficulties with the Imperial Government, from any obligation to make war or to occupy any part of China.



China and the American Missionaries

Perhaps the most gratifying information received from China for a twelvemonth was the welcome cablegram "Forward," received last week by the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions. This word, being interpreted, means that all missionaries destined for work in the Central China Presbyterian Mission may start at once. The Central China Presbyterian Mission includes missions at Nanking, Suchau, Shanghai, Hangchau, and Ningpo. Over a quarter of the two hundred Presbyterian missions in the Empire are in this particular field. Sir Claude MacDonald, the British Minister to China during the siege at Peking, has brought to the notice of the London Foreign Office the conduct of certain men who specially distinguished themselves during the attacks on the Legation quarter. Among these names were those of the Rev. F. D. Gamewell, of the American Methodist Mission, and Mr. Herbert Squiers, Secretary of the United States Legation at Peking. Sir Claude states (a fact which has not been generally known before) that Mr. Gamewell carried out the entire defenses of the British Legation, defenses which excited the admiration of the officers of the various nationalities who have since inspected them. As a tribute to their excellence, not a woman or child of all the nationalities gathered in the Legation suffered, despite five weeks' constant rifle fire. Sir Claude adds that a particular and profound debt of gratitude is owed to Mr. Gamewell by all the besieged. After the death of Captain Strouts, Mr. Squiers acted as Sir Claude's chief of staff. The Minister says that he cannot speak too highly of the ability and zeal of Mr. Squiers, his earlier services in the United States Army having been of great aid to him in defending the Lega-

tion where all the foreigners were temporarily housed. Mr. Squiers designed and carried out the barricades on the Tartar wall, and, under Sir Claude's orders, drew the plan for the entry of the foreign troops, a plan conveyed to the attacking British General Gaselee by a messenger let down from the wall. This action of Sir Claude MacDonald and of the British Foreign Office is graceful, generous, and will make for international comity everywhere.



The Foreign Financial Markets

The recent failure of a great mining and promoting corporation in London, followed by the failures of fifteen brokers there, and, in Berlin, the suspension of two mortgage banks, are events in startling contrast to American prosperity. In reality, however, they clear the world trade market of weak undertakings. That is the reason why conservative investors in any country welcome the test of a hesitating market; with cheap concerns out of the way, the really solid enterprises stand out in their proper place. In England, however, there has been a special reason for present financial depression, and, unfortunately for the London market, the reason will probably exist for some time to come. The heavy losses represented by the bill of six hundred million dollars already incurred on account of the Boer war, as well as the continued interruption of the annual eighty-million-dollar supply of gold from the Rand mines, have now had their natural result. The Bank of England has experienced a severe and an almost unprecedented tension, resulting especially from the particularly unfavorable tidings received during the past month from South Africa. The Bank has been obliged to advance its rate of discount from four to five per cent.—an action the more remarkable from the fact that an advance in rates has not occurred in January for nearly two decades. The gold reserve of the Bank of England is many million dollars below what it was a twelvemonth since. The outlook for a hardening money market in London has been only slightly altered by the later comparatively favorable statement of the Bank of England—its proportion of