

change of personnel. Senor Berriel resigned and Senor Betancourt was appointed to fill the vacancy. The commission arrived at Jacksonville, Fla., on the 22d, and resumed its journey to Washington on the 23d, reaching that city on the 24th. At Jacksonville, one member, Gen. Portuondo, gave to the press the following outline of Cuba's position:

Ninety-nine per cent. of the Cuban people desire absolute independence. It is their wish that military occupation by the United States come to an end at once. It may be said that a small element of Spaniards from a purely commercial motive favor annexation, but the wish for independence is felt by many Cubans and Spaniards alike. Those Spaniards who favor annexation are not impelled by any love for the United States. They hate Americans, but they seem to wish some sort of guarantee as to their property and business interests. Peace with the Americans without the independence of Cuba is impossible—I mean moral peace. I do not mean to say that in the event independence is not granted war or revolution would follow, but there would be no sympathy, no friendliness between the peoples.

At Washington Gen. Portuondo repeated the foregoing statement, in substance, to the reporters; but beyond that the commission refused to say anything until they should have had their interview with the president, which is set for the 25th.

Gov. Gen. Wood preceded the Cuban commission. He sailed directly for New York on the 20th and reached there on the 23d. In a newspaper interview at New York upon his arrival he denied that the Cuban convention had voted, as heretofore reported (page 10), to reject the Platt amendment. Gen. Wood said:

The constitutional convention has never voted on or rejected the Platt amendment. This I can state positively, notwithstanding the reports to the contrary which have been sent to the United States from Havana. Things have been cabled here which had not the slightest foundation in fact, which described strained relations between the representatives of the United States and those of the Cuban people. Everything has been harmonious since I went to Cuba and the convention now in session is a thoroughly representative one. Before the Platt amendment was passed by congress the Cubans knew the desires of this government on the is-

ues which the amendment contains, because they were submitted to them through the executive.

Gen. Wood arrived in Washington on the 24th, and went immediately into a close conference with Secretary Root and Senator Platt, of Platt amendment fame, which lasted four hours.

British affairs in connection with the war in South Africa rank with us next in importance to our own colonial problems, and in England they rank first. The dark outlook noted last week was not improved by the submission in parliament on the 18th, by Sir Michael E. Hicks-Beach, chancellor of the exchequer, of the British financial statement or budget. He is reported to have made "a most depressing speech, which sobered both sides of the commons." Here is one of its striking passages:

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 may laugh or not as you please.

The budget disclosed the stunning fact that the South African war has cost Great Britain \$775,000,000—twice the cost of the Crimean war. The total estimated expenditure for the present year was put at \$661,275,000, which would leave a deficit of about \$275,000,000. To meet this deficit the chancellor proposed an increase of the income tax from a shilling to 14 pence in the pound, it being assumed that the extra two pence would yield \$19,000,000. And inasmuch as, to use his language, a "public necessity has arisen for some duty of which the laboring classes should bear a fair share," the chancellor proposed to tax sugar, hoping to realize therefrom \$25,500,000. Another proposed tax, one that has not been known in England for 45 years, was one shilling a ton (25 cents) on exports of coal, estimated to yield \$10,500,000. From the aggregate of this new taxation, therefore, an additional revenue of \$55,000,000 was expected. With the aid of this additional income, supplemented by reductions in expenditures, the chancellor reduced his estimated deficit from \$275,000,000 to \$204,-

785,000; and in order to provide for that and certain other financial needs he asked power to borrow \$300,000,000. After the budget had been briefly discussed, Mr. Balfour, first lord of the treasury, moved a division of the house on the proposed sugar duties, and they were imposed by a vote of 183 to 125. The proposed export duty on coal was then adopted by a vote of 171 to 127. At a subsequent session the loan of \$300,000,000 was authorized.

There are various reports of sporadic fighting in South Africa, but none of any important moment.

NEWS NOTES.

—The bishop of Oxford, Right Rev. William Stubbs, D. D., died on the 22d at the age of 76.

—Coal deposits have been discovered in Iceland which appear to be the largest in the world.

—William J. Bryan lectured on the 24th before the Catholic Woman's National league, at Handel hall, Chicago, on "Civilization."

—A British military force in West Africa is reported on the 24th from London as having completed a successful campaign against the slave-trading emirs in northern Nigeria.

—The Texas bill to allow towns and cities to exempt personal property and improvements from taxation passed the lower house, but was not reached in the senate before adjournment.

—An active movement has been set on foot by Harvard graduates in opposition to the proposed action of the university in conferring upon President McKinley the honorary degree of LL. D.

—Prof. Frederick Starr, the anthropologist of the University of Chicago, has just returned from Mexico, where he has been for the past four months completing his studies of the Pueblo Indian.

—The "Greater New York Democracy" was formed on the 18th to oppose the election of any candidates at the municipal election next autumn who may be nominated by Tammany Hall.

—Kropotkin, the Russian exile, famous geographer and distinguished communist-anarchist, lectured on the 21st at Central Music hall, Chicago, on the philosophy and ideals of communist-anarchism.

—Dr. Walter C. Browning, of Philadelphia, has rendered to the Chris L. Magee estate a bill for \$190,000 for