

BRITISH SHELL BOERS.

British Destroy a Boer House at Magersfontein.

Boer Sharpshooters Had Been Picking Off Our Soldiers—Enemy's Trenches Moved Nearer—Boers Shell the Camp—A Correspondent Gets Into Mafeking—Bluejackets Hunt the Boers With Shells.

A despatch from Modder River, says:—A reconnaissance by the British Monday morning drew out a heavier artillery fire than has been experienced since the Boers occupied Magersfontein.

The British had determined to destroy a house on the bank of the river that the Boers were using as a shelter from which their sharpshooters picked off incautious British soldiers.

At dawn the 12-pounders and the 4.7-inch lyddite gun, with three waggons, escorted by the 12th Lancers, moved out to attack the Boer lines in front of the kopjes. The waggons were fastened behind the river bank.

As soon as the British were seen by the Boers they opened fire upon them.

There was a party of Boers stationed 20 yards from the well, near Ganger's cottage. A detachment of Lancers attacked them, but they scattered unharmed.

The Boers worked another gun from the railway track to the north.

Altogether they had four guns, besides two quick-firers. These guns were mostly mounted beyond the crest of the kopje. The heaviest fire was directed against the Lancers.

The object of the reconnaissance was successfully carried out, the house on the bank being blown up, creating a great dust.

The Boers fired a few shots afterwards, but the British made no reply. Four of the horses of the Lancers were hit by a shell. None of the men were hurt.

The enemy have brought their trenches a thousand yards nearer to the British lines since the repulse of the English at Magersfontein.

The reconnaissance established the fact that they have not advanced many of their guns. Their vanishing gun is nearest the British lines.

BLUEJACKETS AND BOERS.

Our bluejackets have been stirring up the Boers the last few days with their big gun and some 12-pounders. They send them a reveille at half-past four o'clock in the morning with a couple of shots from the big gun, they interrupt their dinner with a few shots from the 12-pounders, and occasionally they give them a few lyddite shells in the afternoon. At the close of the day they send good-night and burst shrapnel into their trenches.

That all this greatly disturbs the enemy is evident from the way in which they are seen rushing about. They do not reply, however, which is a disappointment, as a shot from their guns would reveal their position and give the bluejackets a chance to smash them.

The enemy are not showing themselves much. A few have been seen moving about at the base of the kopjes where our last battle was fought. Some of them were entrenching, others seemingly being engaged in drill. As a rule, however, they stick close to their laager.

We dropped a lyddite shell into their laager on Tuesday. As it struck a kopje, with the usual result of churning up clouds of red earth, we could see men scurrying off in all directions like a disturbed colony of ants.

Our patrols go out daily, with the object of inducing the Boers to show themselves, but they fail to draw them.

General Cronje has not fulfilled his threat to shift us if we did not shift ourselves within forty-eight hours. Everyone here wishes he would try.

SORTIE FROM KIMBERLEY.

A despatch from Kimberley, Wednesday, says:—At half-past two this morning, mounted detachments, under Col. Peakman, with three Maxims and three seven-pounders, under Major May, reconnoitred.

Leaving the entrenchments, the British advanced to Toll Pan. The Boer pickets fired, and our Maxims replied, the Boers disappearing over the ridge.

Our guns then began to shell Toll Pan at a range of 2,500 yards.

A Boer gun dropped four shells near our men, but did no damage. As the Boers were strongly entrenched we withdrew. Their guns are well posted.

A WAR OFFICE DESPATCH.

The War Office has received the following despatch from Cape Town, dated Tuesday:

"There is no change in the situation. Methuen reports that the enemy's force has increased and is engaged in entrenching three and a half miles from his outlying pickets.

"Methuen reconnoitred with two squadrons of mounted infantry for two miles along the line, and drew the fire of four guns and two Vickers machine guns. Four horses were hit.

"The Queen's Christmas message was received with enthusiasm."

GETS INTO MAFEKING.

A letter to the Pall Mall Gazette from Mafeking says:

"The hero of the hour is an American journalist of the name of Pesson, who successfully accomplished a daring ride from Cape Town up country

through the Boer lines, and brings the first news from the outside which we have had."

A despatch to the Times from Mafeking, says that Lady Sarah Wilson, aunt of the Duke of Marlborough, who was captured by the Boers while acting as correspondent of the London Daily Mail has arrived there, having been exchanged for Viljoen, a notorious horse thief and convict.

HOSTILE CAPE DUTCH.

A special correspondent of the London Daily Chronicle, telegraphing from Sterkstroom, Cape Colony, Thursday, says:

"Strong measures are necessary to check the hostile feeling among the Dutch colonists, whose seditious is shown in the removal of railway bolts, the obstruction of bridges and culverts, and attacks upon solitary horsemen. Disaffection is bound to increase unless immediate reinforcements are forthcoming. The loyal Dutch and British settlers are becoming alarmingly impatient."

PROCLAIMED A WARNING.

A despatch from London, says:—The Privy Council held a meeting on Wednesday at Windsor castle, at which Queen Victoria proclaimed a warning to all British subjects not to assist the Free State, or to sell or transport merchandise thereto, under penalty of the law.

TIMES ATTACKS WAR OFFICE.

The London Times editorially attacks the maladministration of the War Office, calling attention to "correspondence disclosing glaring defects," and declaring that the British army is being managed for the benefit of the War Office, and not for the nation.

The advent of horse sickness throws increased attention upon the question of the transports and the want of waggons, which may tie the British forces to the railways. The Daily Chronicle says:—

"Plenty of waggons could be obtained from the United States, but the Government, with very indiscreet patriotism, have refused to avail themselves of the opportunity. It would have been better if the authorities had followed Lord Kitchener's example at Atbara bridge."

HAVE THE EXACT RANGE.

The War Office has received the following despatch from Cape Town, dated December 25:—

"There is no change in the situation at Modder river. Gen. Methuen is well entrenched and the Boers have not disturbed him."

A Modder river despatch says: "The British artillery fired four shots from 4.7-inch guns Tuesday morning. There was no response from the Boers. Since the British artillery has proved more powerful, the Boers are trying to conceal the location of their guns, and are waiting for the British to get within rifle range. All permits to pass pickets have been cancelled. A market has been established at the fourth line of pickets, where butter, milk, and vegetables are allowed to be sold by licensed farmers."

LORD STANLEY OFFERS.

A despatch from London, says:—Lord Stanley, member of Parliament for West Houghton division of Lancashire, has been ordered to join Lord Roberts' staff forthwith. Lord Stanley, Edward George Villiers, is the eldest son of the sixteenth Earl of Derby, and is 34 years of age.

Mr. Lionel Walter Rothschild, Unionist member of Parliament for the Aylesbury division of Buckinghamshire, eldest son of the first Baron Rothschild, and the latter's heir, has also volunteered for service in South Africa. He was born in 1868, and is unmarried.

THE BOERS RETREATED.

The War Office has received the following from Gen. Forestier-Walker at Cape Town:—

"Gen. Gatacre reports that a force of 150 police have occupied Dordrecht, the Boers retreating, with no loss."

The occupation of Dordrecht by Major Dalgety's force of Mounted Police, who are co-operating with Gen. Gatacre, is treated by some of the newspapers as being of considerable importance, but nothing is known beyond the bald official announcement of the fact.

DELAGOA BAY.

Lord Somerset writes to the London Times, urging the seizure of Lorenzo Marques and its retention, if necessary, until the end of the war, in order to prevent the landing of war material for the Boers.

The Times, in a special article, discussing the international law aspects of Boer importations through Delagoa Bay, says:—

"Were we to adopt, either with or without the consent of Portugal, the drastic measures which are so airily suggested in some quarters, we might find ourselves suddenly confronted with international complications far more serious and injurious to the successful prosecution of the South African war than the evils of which it was sought to secure an abatement."

BOERS HAVE A 96-POUNDER.

A despatch from Modder River says:

—The Boers have mounted a 96-pounder to counterbalance the British naval guns throwing lyddite shells. All of its shells have thus far fallen short.

8,000 BOERS IN RESERVE.

The London Daily News Cape Town correspondent says he learns from well-informed Afrikaner Bond sources that there is a reserve of 8,000 European officers and men at Pretoria, all of whom are skilled in modern tactics, particularly the landing of artillery.

MARCONI'S SYSTEM IN WAR.

A despatch from Cape Town says:—Experiments at Orange river with the wireless telegraph system have been most successful. Perfect communication was maintained with De Aar, 70 miles distant.

ENEMY IS AGGRESSIVE.

The London Daily Chronicle's correspondent with General Methuen telegraphing under date December 27, says:—

"The enemy are becoming decidedly aggressive. They shelled the British outposts for three hours to-day with three well-masked guns, at a range of 6,000 yards."

"Several of the shells fell dangerously near one of the British redoubts."

CRONJE FINDS A MARE'S NEST.

A despatch from Modder River, Dec. 27, says:—The Boers wasted a large quantity of ammunition last night. They apparently thought that a cavalry reconnaissance that was made yesterday morning was the forerunner of an attack in force, and, imagining at about 7 o'clock that the British were about to advance, the Boers in the forward trenches began firing in the direction of the outposts. Their fusillade was harmless.

The weather was boisterous and rainy and the night was dark, and in consequence it was some time before the Boers learned that no attack was meditated. Then the fire ceased.

A reconnaissance by cavalry and artillery in force, under Colonel Babington, was made this morning due west of Modder river station, where there are uplands, where it was thought the Boers were likely to throw up defences. It was found that the enemy held the country for a considerable distance to the westward of the railway. This will make an attempt to turn their right flank almost impossible, owing to the great distance to be covered in a rough country where there is no water.

METHUEN TO THE WAR OFFICE.

The War Office has received a despatch this morning from Cape Town, dated Wednesday, December 27:—

Methuen reports as follows:—"At 9:30 yesterday evening the Boers on the south side of Magersfontein opened a heavy fire for some time. This morning the Naval Brigade fired at the enemy at the west part of Magersfontein. The cavalry brigade is reconnoitring in a north-easterly direction."

"Lieut. Masters has made an extended reconnaissance westward and northward of Enslin and reports all well. The farmers were glad to see our men. They were suffering from want of food."

"I have established a market here, where I can purchase fresh milk, and vegetables, selling to the farmers tea and other articles which they cannot otherwise purchase. Heavy rain fell last night."

Gatacre and French report no change in the situation. Baden-Powell reports all well December 12.

BOER ARMY DISCIPLINE.

The London Daily Mail's correspondent at Pietermaritzburg, declares that the character of the campaign has changed owing to European officers joining the Boers.

The British, he says, are no longer fighting a guerrilla foe, but what is rapidly becoming a disciplined army. The Boers have converted the hills at Colenso into fortresses of immense strength. Their trenches are excellently constructed, and many of them are bombproof.

Their main positions are connected by underground passages. Tramways have been laid, enabling the guns to be shifted with astonishing rapidity.

All this indicates that discipline has conquered the Boers' dislike of manual labour.

Their ammunition has also improved in quality. Their shells now burst better.

KRUGER'S PRICE FOR PEACE!

A despatch from Durban, Natal, says:—Mr. Winston Churchill, on arriving here after his escape from the Boers, received a tremendous ovation. He says that from conversation with members of the Transvaal Executive at Pretoria, he learned that the Boers began the war with trepidation, but that President Kruger is now confident that Britain will soon sue for peace.

In the highest Transvaal circles, Mr. Churchill asserts, there is serious talk of a compromise, by which Great Britain would cede the territory now occupied by the armies of the two Republics, pay an indemnity of £20,000,000, and acknowledge the complete independence of the Transvaal.

A BRITISH DESERTER.

A despatch from Cape Town, says:—A man named Green, a former sergeant-major of the British Balloon Department, is among the Boer prisoners captured at Magersfontein. Green, who deserted from Aldershot in 1893, admitted he had been some time in the service of the Boers and had instructed them in trenching. He says there were 23,000 Boers at Magersfontein, 21,000 of whom were engaged the day of the battle. The Boer losses, he also asserts, were very heavy, the trenches being full of dead. Green further declares that if the attack had been pressed the Boers would have yielded, and says the Boer horses have to be taken to the Modder river, as water is so scarce at Magersfontein.

The Manchurian section of the Siberian railway is completed. German firms have secured the contracts to build steamers to run from Tallienwan to Vladivostok and Yokohama.

MARKETS OF THE WORLD.

Prices of Grain, Cattle, Cheese, &c. in the Leading Markets.

Toronto, Jan. 2.—Wheat—Outside markets were about steady. Locally there was no change in the situation. Trade is very dull. Red and white Ontario is quoted at 65 to 67c, according to nearness to the mill; goose wheat, 70 to 70 1-2c, middle freights; and 69 1-2c, north and west; and spring, east, 65c. Manitobas steady; No. 1 hard, g. it., 77c; and Toronto, and west, 76c; and track, Midland and Owen Sound, 73c.

Flour—Dull and easy. Exporters bid \$2.55 per bbl. for straight roller in buyers' bags, middle freights; and holders ask \$2.70.

Milled—Scarce. Bran is quoted at \$12 to \$12.50, and shorts at \$14 to \$14.50, west.

Corn—Dull. No. 2, American yellow, quoted at 41c, track, Toronto, and mixed at 40 1-2c. Canadian corn dull at 39 1-2 to 40c track, Toronto.

Peas—Quiet. Car lots are held at 57c, north and west, and at 58c, east. Export enquiry dull.

Barley—Demand quiet. Car lots of No. 2, middle freights, sold at 38c; and No. 1 was quoted at 40c.

Rye—Demand light. Car lots, 49c west, and 50c east.

Oats—Easy and quiet. White oats, 25c, north and west; 25 1-2c, middle freights; and 26c, east.

Buckwheat—Easy. Car lots, east, 49c asked, and west, 48c asked.

Oatmeal—Rolled oats, in bags, track, Toronto, \$3.25, and in wood, \$3.35 per bbl.

Chicago, Jan. 2.—The firmness of Liverpool and the decrease in the world's visible came as a support to the wheat market to-day, May closing 1-4 to 3-8c over yesterday; corn closed 1-4c, and oats, 1-8c, lower; provisions, 10 to 17 1-2c higher. Breadstuffs' decrease in the visible of 753,000 bushels was a steadying influence late in the day.

Toledo, Jan. 2.—Wheat—No. 2 cash, 69 1-2c bid; December, 69 1-2c; May, 73 1-2c. Corn—No. 2 mixed, 31 1-2c. Oats—No. 2 mixed, 24 1-2c. Rye—No. 2 cash, 56c. Cloverseed—Prime, cash, old, \$1.80; December, \$5.60; March, \$5.70 asked.

Minneapolis, Jan. 2.—Wheat—In store, No. 1 Northern, December, 64 3-4c; May, 66 1-2 to 66 5-8c; July, 65c; on track, No. 1 hard, 67c; No. 1 Northern, 65 1-2c; No. 2 Northern, 62 3-4c.

Buffalo, Jan. 2.—Spring wheat—Nothing doing. Winter wheat—Held above buyers' views; No. 2 red, 71 1-2c; No. 1 white, 70 1-2c. Corn—Firm; No. 2 yellow, 35 1-2c, bid; No. 4 yellow, 35c; No. 3 corn, 34 3-4 to 35c; No. 4 corn, 34 1-4 to 34 1-2c. Oats—Firm; No. 2 white, 28c; No. 3 white, 28 1-2c; No. 4 white, 28c; No. 2 mixed, 26 3-4 to 27c; No. 4 mixed, 26 1-2c. Rye—No demand; No. 2 in store, 58c. Flour—Firm; good demand.

Chicago, Jan. 2.—Flaxseed closed: North-Western and South-Western, cash, \$1.49 1-2; December, \$1.48 bid; May, \$1.48 3-4; Duluth, to arrive, \$1.39 cash, \$1.41 1-2 bid; December, \$1.41 1-2; May, \$1.48.

Detroit, Jan. 2.—Wheat closed:—No. 11 white, cash, 70 3-4c; No. 2 red, cash, and December, 70 3-4c; May, 73 7-8c.

GIRL PAYS DEATH PENALTY.

Hilda Blake Hanged for the Murder of Her Mistress.

A despatch from Brandon, Man., says:—Emily Hilda Blake was hanged on Wednesday morning. The drop fell at 8:40 a.m. She was perfectly calm as she walked up the scaffold steps.

She wrote a letter to Chief Kirkcaldy on Christmas day, in which she said:—"I have complied with your request and written a confession. I did it yesterday, and I do wish you had it, for I have to guard it so closely. If anything prevents you coming up here to-morrow I shall destroy it."

The crime for which Emily Hilda Blake was hanged was the deliberate and cold-blooded murder of her mistress, Mrs. Robert Lane, of Brandon, on July 5th last. Mrs. Lane was found lying with a bullet hole in her breast, and the Blake girl gave the alarm, saying a tramp had murdered her mistress. The whole country side was scoured, and several tramps arrested, but the crime could not be fastened upon them.

A revolver was found hidden near the house, and detectives discovered that it had been purchased in Winnipeg by a woman. Hilda Blake was charged with being this woman, whereupon she confessed the crime, saying she did it because she loved Mrs. Lane's children, and was jealous of the mother's love. The trial was very brief, as she refused all offers of counsel, and pleaded guilty. During confinement in gaol she repeatedly expressed her wish to die for the crime. Petitions for a commutation of the sentence were circulated at the last moment on the grounds that a new trial should be held, but the authorities ruled there were no extenuating circumstances.

HER CHARM.

When I look at Mrs. Dapley I can't help wondering whether it can be possible that her husband married her for love.

Oh, no, he didn't. Well, she didn't have money, did she.

No, but he could always keep step with her without assuming an unnatural gait.

THE NEWS IN A NUTSHELL.

THE VERY LATEST FROM ALL THE WORLD OVER.

Interesting Items About Our Own Country, Great Britain, the United States, and All Parts of the Globe, Condensed and Assorted for Easy Reading.

CANADA.

Negotiations are in progress with an established tobacco factory with a view to its removal to Chatham.

The Hudson Bay Company has shipped a carload of Canadian horses to the New Zealand Government.

The Hoepfner Refining Company, of Hamilton, will increase its works and double its capital stock, now \$600,000.

Owen Sound is to be the headquarters of another steamship line, which will compete for the Sault Ste. Marie and north shore business.

A labour convention at Vancouver has decided to petition the Provincial Government to adopt the law of compulsory arbitration in cases of industrial disputes.

The Minneapolis and Ontario Bridge Company, with a capital of \$3,000,000, will build the international bridge over Rainy river for the Port Arthur, Ontario and Western Railway, now building between Port Arthur and Winnipeg.

The directors of the Bank of Montreal have subscribed 2,000 guineas, equal to \$10,000, on behalf of the bank, and among themselves personally 1,500 guineas, or \$7,500, making \$17,500 altogether, towards the patriotic fund being raised in Great Britain for the sailors' and soldiers' families and other sufferers from the war.

The Mattawan Iron Co., will agree for a bonus of \$25,000 from the town of Fort William, to erect within its limits two furnaces capable of smelting 60 tons of copper ore per day, also for a bonus of \$50,000 the company will erect a charcoal iron blast furnace with a capacity of 50 tons of pig iron per 24 hours, both industries to be exempted from taxation for a period of ten years.

GREAT BRITAIN.

The body of the Duke of Westminster has been cremated.

Baron Ludlow, a judge of the Court of Appeal, is dead at London.

Lord Bennet, who succeeds to the title of Earl of Tankerville, is an evangelist.

Dr. Benjamin F. C. Costelloe, one of the best known of English educationists, is dead at London.

Eight persons were killed and many injured in railway wrecks in England last week, caused by fog.

Preparations are in progress in England and America for the celebration in 1901 of the millennial anniversary of the death of King Alfred the Great.

UNITED STATES.

Buffalo, N.Y., is to have a union station to cost \$1,500,000.

Commercial failures in the United States last week numbered 220, against 258 a year ago.

Twenty bodies have been recovered from the Bazzell mine disaster near Brownsville, Pa.

Four men were killed in a wreck on the Northern Pacific Railway near Missoula, Montana.

F. B. Livingston, a blind war veteran of Baltimore, is held there for the murder of his wife.

John M. Brown, aged 106, and for 28 years an inmate of the Mercy Hospital, Chicago, is dead.

It is said the Molinoux trial in New York will be the most expensive homicide case ever tried in the country.

Prof. James Munyon will establish at Philadelphia an industrial school for orphaned girls at a cost of \$2,000,000.

Hot sulphur geysers have appeared near San Jacinto, Cal., since the destruction of that village by earthquakes.

Four men were killed and several injured in a wreck on the Northern Pacific Railroad, six miles east of Bear Mouth, Mont.

Ivan Demisewich, a Russian, killed himself in San Francisco, fearing he would be murdered "for his failure to attempt the life of the Czar."

Over \$25,000 is to be paid out in New York, Boston, and Philadelphia by the Government early in the new year as interest and dividend payments.

John Gillies, a Chicago detective, was run over and probably fatally injured by a train at Chicago on Tuesday. He said two men threw him under the train.

Aaron Wolfsohn has returned to the Chicago agent of a New York life insurance company \$10,000 paid out by the company to his heirs under the belief that he had died at Los Angeles, Cal.

GENERAL.

The wife of Aguinaldo, the Filipino leader, is dead.

Miners and lace workers in France are demanding higher wages and shorter hours.

The bubonic plague prevails at the capital of the French penal colony of New Caledonia.

Terrific storms have caused great damage to shipping, and loss of life, on the Black Sea.

Herr Fritz Plauk, the noted singer, was fatally injured by a fall in a theatre at Karlsruhe.

The Empress of China wants some one to kill the reformer, Kan-Yu-Wei. She has offered a reward.

Two American clowns were killed by the fall of a trapeze in Paris Saturday. They were twin brothers.