

BULLER CAPTURES KEY TO SLOPES.

Desperation of the Boers to Recover Possession of Vaalkrantz.

THE CENSOR KEEPING BACK NEWS.

Must Clear Dornkop, Hold One Half the Enemy, Crush the Other.

London is Anxious.
A London cable: While the suspense regarding General Buller's movements and the operations affecting the fate of Ladysmith continues unrelieved even by the vaguest despatch, there comes from other quarters interesting news in the announcement that Field Marshal Lord Roberts, the commander-in-chief of the British forces in South Africa, and his chief of staff, Major-General Lord Kitchener, have left for the front. As this information was held for several hours by the censor it seems to indicate that an important movement is on foot.

GATACRE ATTACKED.
A despatch from Sterkstroom dated this morning announces that the Boers are attacking General Gatacre from two directions. Firing was proceeding between the outposts and a delayed Sterkstroom despatch dated Monday, Feb. 6th, announces that a body of troops left the camp on Feb. 5th, and that important developments were expected. It is quite probable that this explains Lord Roberts' departure, and that the Commander-in-Chief wishes either to be present at or supervise the long-intended movement by General Gatacre.

TO JOIN FORCES
with Gen. Kelly-Kenny and thence strongly reinforce Gen. French, completing the latter's work at Colesberg and establishing without fear of serious opposition an advanced position for the main movement. This, of course, is greatly supported, but it can be confidently said that the departure of Lord Roberts and Lord Kitchener for the front does not indicate that the main advance has begun. The commanders will probably be back in Cape Town within a short time. It is pointed out that the term going to the front must not be interpreted into the idea that a great movement upon Pretoria by way of Bloemfontein has seriously commenced. It will be a month or perhaps much longer before this can be brought about.

To be "Agnis the Government."
London cable: Mr. John Redmond, Chairman of the United Irish party, was loudly cheered by all sections of the Irish members when he rose in the House of Commons to-day to move an amendment to the address in reply to the speech from the throne, representing that the time had arrived to bring the war to a conclusion on the basis of recognizing the independence of the Transvaal and the Orange Free State. He said the Irish party abhorred this war, and intended, so far as possible, to maintain the independence of the Republic, defended with such heroism. Mr. Redmond admitted that when the Empire was involved in complications a feeling of hope and satisfaction stirred the majority of Irish at home and abroad. But the



MARQUIS OF DUFFERIN AND AVA, Father of Lord Ava, Fatally Wounded at Ladysmith.

sympathies of the Irish would still have been pro-Boer, even if Britain had not been concerned, and another power had attempted to "act the bully and oppressor in South Africa." England to-day, added Mr. Redmond, "stood not in splendid, but in disgraceful isolation. Turkey alone lending her countenance."
While admitting that official expression of hostility had not been heard in the United States "chiefly because America, being engaged in the Philippine war, had not felt herself in a position to rebuke England as she would otherwise have done," Mr. Redmond declared that the overwhelming opinion of leading American statesmen was hostile to Great Britain in this war, and said, "the unanimous disapproval of the world demonstrated that the war was unjust, and it ought, therefore, to be stopped." As to whether the prospects of home rule were adversely affected by the attitude of the Irish, Mr. Redmond thought Ireland had nothing to lose and everything to gain by raising her voice on

the side of justice and liberty. Mr. Patrick Joseph Power, member for the east division of Waterford county, seconded Mr. Redmond's amendment. Mr. Redmond's amendment was rejected by a vote of 368 to 66. The House then adjourned.

On Monday the British made a successful frontal demonstration while a real attack on the right was made by the Durham Light Infantry, who stormed two hills, and then bivouacked. The casualties were not heavy. The fighting continues as this despatch is sent.

Drove in the British Line.
Tuesday morning was spent in bombarding the Boer guns. The British naval 4.7-inch guns struck a Boer ammunition wagon at 11,800 yards, causing a great explosion. The hill taken yesterday by the British is still held. About 50 of the enemy who remained on the hill were driven out by the Durham Light Infantry, which were fighting with the Boers. An officer was wounded by a Kaffir. At 3.45 o'clock the Boers made a sudden rush, supported by their artillery and Maxim guns. They drove in the British firing line. The whole of General Lytton's brigade rushed, cheering, to the support of their comrades, with fixed bayonets, and drove the enemy back. The firing continues. There was no advance to-day.

British Loss About 250.
Gen. Buller commenced the advance for the relief of Ladysmith on Monday. The naval guns opened at seven in the morning, and a faint attack was made in front of our position. Three battalions advanced toward the Brakfontein, with six batteries. At 11 o'clock the Boers opened with artillery fire, and sent several shells among the British infantry, who retired an hour later. Meanwhile a vigorous attack was made on the extreme right, where the engineers expeditiously constructed a pontoon.

Several pieces of cannon hidden among the trees on Zwart's kop bombarded heavily. The British infantry advanced, and the Boers were entirely surprised. The operations were excellently planned. The bombardment of the Boer position was resumed yesterday morning. The Boers worked a disappearing cannon from the high Dornkop kloof range, on the right of the captured hill, but the British shells exploded its magazine, and the gun was put out of action until late in the day. Musket fire was intermittent until the afternoon, when the Boers made a determined effort to take the hill. Reinforcements rushed up cheering; the Boers were repulsed and the British advanced along the ridge. Our further advance is at the moment prevented, as the Boers enfilade us from their positions on Spion kop and Dornkop Kloof. Our casualties, although estimated at 250, are trifling, considering the great importance of the movement just completed.

At the Boyonet's Point.
London cable: The Standard's war correspondent thus describes Gen. Buller's latest advance:

"The movement began early Monday morning. The 10th and 11th Brigades, forming part of Gen. Warren's division, made a feint to attack the kopjes immediately in front. The assault was delivered at the outset under cover of the naval guns on Mount Alice and subsequently under that of the field batteries. The infantry advanced steadily towards the Boer entrenched position at Brakfontein, and kept the enemy busily employed. While this diversion was being made the remainder of the infantry were told off for attack. Those who had bivouacked Sunday night under Mount Alice moved along the foot of Swartz kop in the direction of our right. A pontoon had been thrown across the Tugela by the engineers under the enemy's fire. The first battalion across in the forenoon was the Durham Light Infantry of General Lytton's brigade. They advanced against Vaalkrantz, which lies on the most direct road to Ladysmith, and after two hours' splendid work got within charging distance of the Boers. The feat of the kopjes was carried at the point of the bayonet with the utmost gallantry. Almost simultaneously the first battalion of the Rifle Brigade cleared the second kopje. After moving across a long ridge they bivouacked on the spot. The feint attack at Potgieter's drift having served its purpose of preventing the concentration of the enemy at a critical point, the Eleventh Brigade fell back to the river. In the course of the operation both infantry and artillery had been subjected to a severe shell fire. At 4 p. m. Tuesday the enemy endeavored to recapture the position at Vaalkrantz. They were, however, beaten back, with loss. The work accomplished so far was magnificently done. The shell and Maxim fire poured by the Boers has been extremely severe, but our losses, comparatively speaking, have been small. The Durham Light Infantry took a few prisoners in the course of their charge.

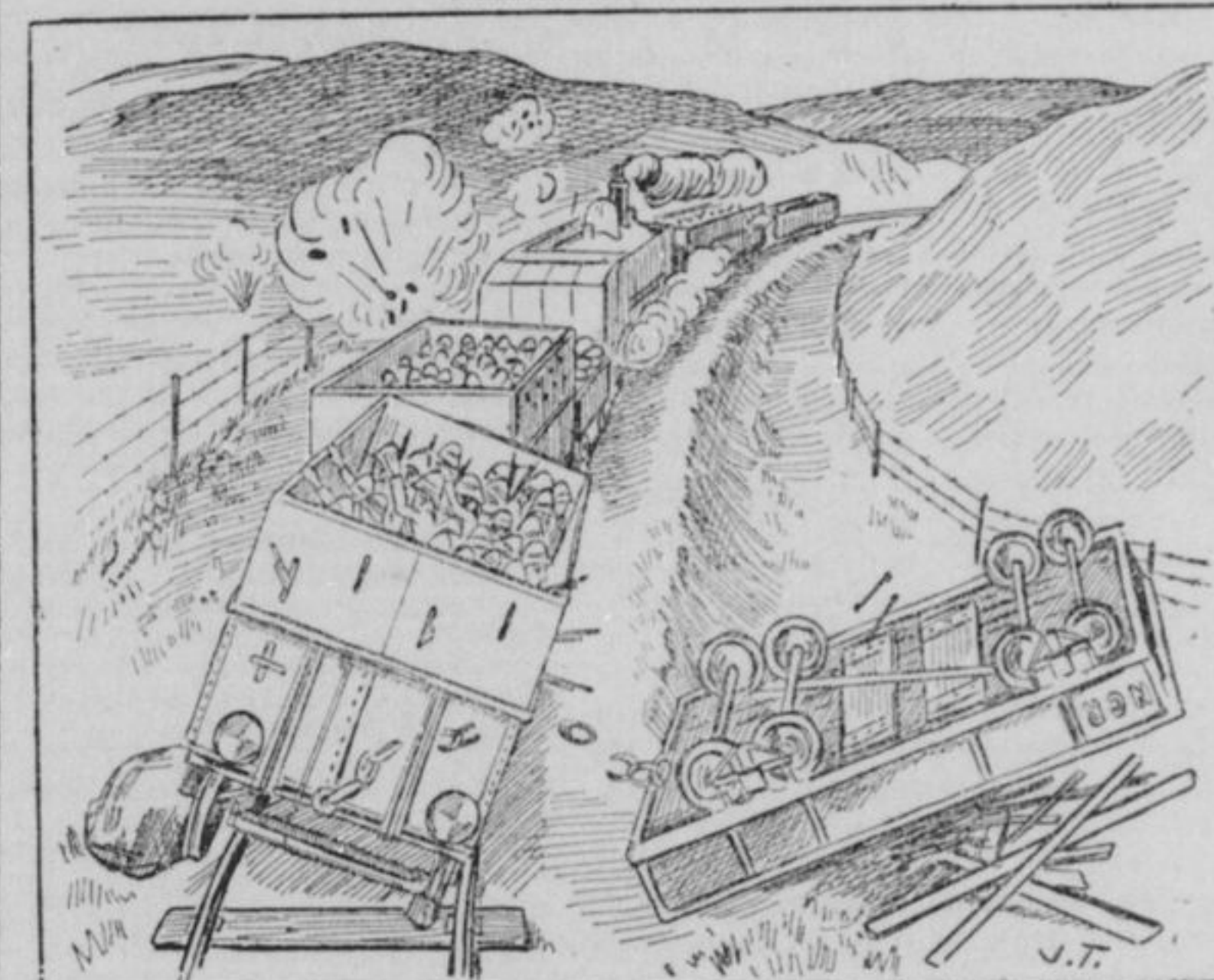
"The enemy, as usual, fought with the utmost stubbornness. The manoeuvring and the accuracy of the aim of the artillery during the fighting Monday were beyond praise."

Additional details from other sources represent the Boers as having been thoroughly hoodwinked by the feint, they not suspecting the movement by which the British right crossed the river further east. The hills seized form a continuation of the Brakfontein range. Vaalkrantz being the key of the lower ridges, Kranz kloof soaring above. The Boers on Tuesday worked a disappearing cannon from the eastward extremity, however, exploded its magazine, and the gun was put out of action until late in the day.

The British balloon was of the greatest assistance in locating the Boer position. Their constant efforts to destroy it did not succeed. The Boer position which General Buller attacked consists of a line of kopjes strongly entrenched extending from Spion Kop three miles to the eastward, curving sharply southward opposite Zwart's Kop, and overhanging Schiet's Drift, where a third pontoon was constructed.

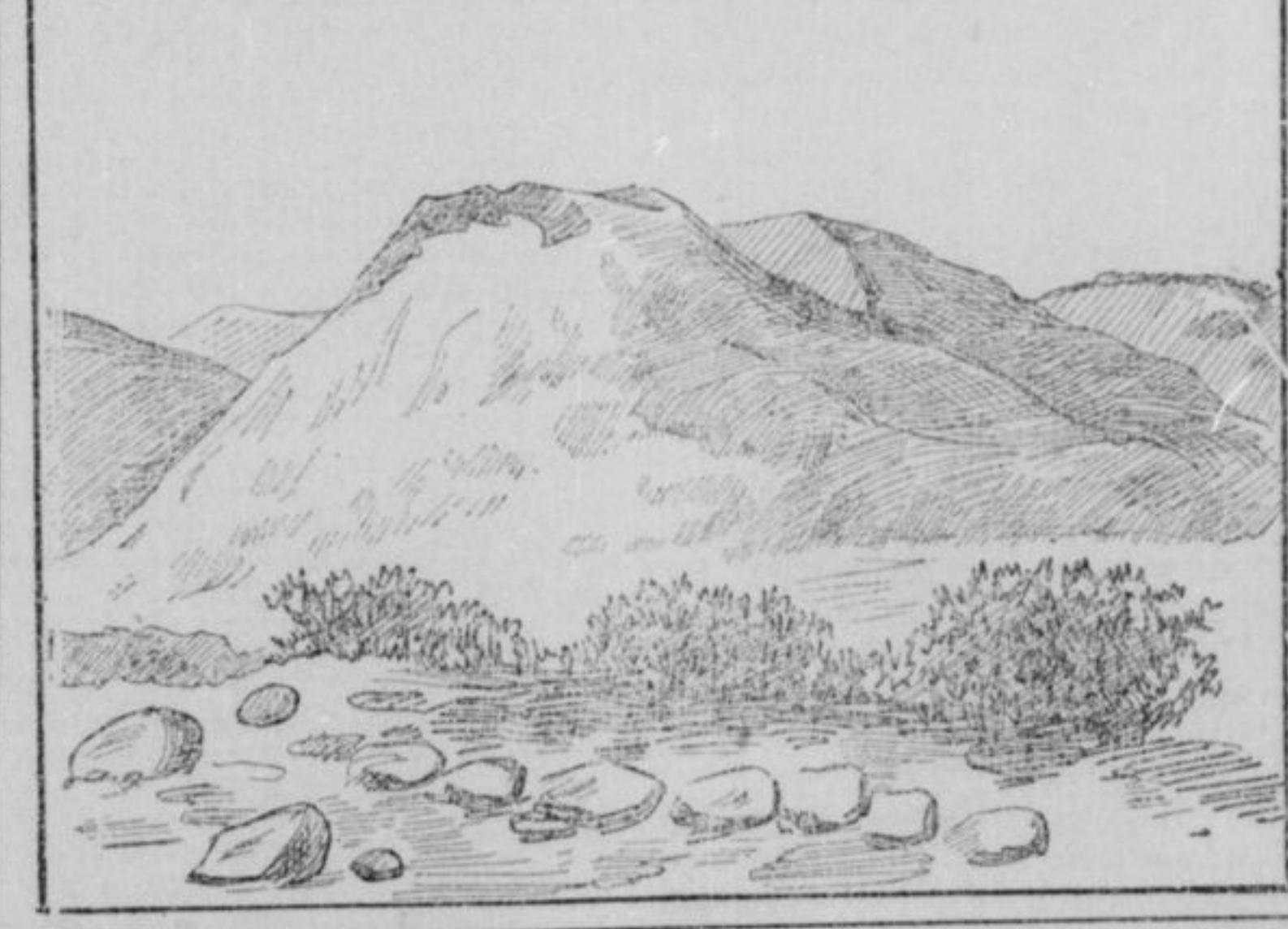
Shelled by 72 Guns.
A London cable: Bennet Burling, the Daily Telegraph's correspondent at Spearman's Camp, in a despatch dated Monday night, says: "Under the personal direction of General Buller, the attack of the Boer position was begun this morning by nearly the whole of our batteries—72 guns—shelling the ridges where the enemy have their trenches and redoubts on the Brakfontein and the low crest facing Potgieter's Drift. Several hills were smoking like volcanoes from the effects of the bombardment."

THE ARMORED TRAIN DERAILED NEAR ESTCOURT.
(From the London Graphic.)



From a Sketch by an Artist With the Train and Forwarded by Winston Churchill While a Prisoner.

SPION KOP.



The outposts report that the Boers are making advanced trenches in the open plain in front of Magerfontein drift, presumably to prevent the British horse and field artillery from approaching within range of their positions.

AN IMPORTANT GAIN.
Buller Holds Vaalkrantz, Key to the Lower Ridges.
A London cable says: Presumably Gen. Buller is fighting again to-day in his third attempt to relieve Ladysmith, and news of the greatest import may arrive at any moment. Yet there is more doubt here than exultation, for even if the recollection of Gen. Buller's two disastrous failures after suspicious starts were not keen in the minds of the public, the lists of casualties published to-day would be a sufficient reminder of the tremendous difficulties of his task. The fact that the key to the lower ridges, while a praiseworthy and gallant achievement, by no means signifies that he and General White will inevitably join hands. Before Gen. Buller there are several days' hard fighting. The British forces are smarting under defeat and will undoubtedly be nerved to more desperate efforts than ever before, and if furious gallantry can carry General Buller over the kopjes that face him, Ladysmith will be relieved within a week. It is likely that Gen. Barton at Chieveley is strong enough to advance on the Tugela and render valuable assistance from the southeast, while the beleaguered garrison itself, according to the latest despatches, should be able to create a potential diversion when General Buller shall have overcome the initial difficulties in the kopjes immediately north of the Tugela.

GREAT ACTIVITY.
Turning from the transcendental interest in Ladysmith, the whole war area presents a scene of important activity. The Boer attack on Gen. Gatacre's forces, reported on Feb. 7th, failed out. The artillery of the burghers, after shelling

the camp, retired upon the arrival of British reinforcements. The affair scarcely warrants being called a skirmish. British casualties were one man killed and four men wounded. The latest advices from Sterkstroom announce that Gen. Gatacre's cavalry is in pursuit of the Boers. While nothing has resulted from this affair, it indicates that the burghers fully appreciate the importance of the concentration of the forces of Generals Gatacre, Kelly-Kenny and French, and they do not hesitate to take the aggressive against established positions in an attempt to thwart it, though it is believed that a sufficiently large body of troops will soon be massed at Colesberg to ensure the unopposed advance of the invading army when it is ready to start.

ALL PRELIMINARY.
That it is not prepared for this move at present, and that all this activity is merely preliminary, is what is known as Field Marshal Lord Roberts' main movement is evidenced by a despatch from Cape Town, under date of Feb. 7th, announcing that the director of transport was advising for ox wagons and drivers. Without those it would be hopeless to think of carrying on the invasion, and it must be a month or more before they are ready. Another preliminary is that Gen. Roberts has only just sanctioned the formation of the new Colonial Yeomanry, consisting of a troop of one hundred men for each district of the colony, to protect the loyal farmers. This force will be officered from among the local yeomen. Opinion is divided as to whether Roberts and Kitchener have gone to the Modder River or Sterkstroom. Sir John Gordon Sprigg, the former Premier of Cape Colony, has called to Mr. Joseph Chamberlain, the Colonial Secretary, in behalf of the Imperialists of Cape Colony, congratulating him on the Government's overwhelming majority in the House of Commons, and declaring the Government's policy, if steadfastly pursued, would secure South Africa under British supremacy.

NATIVES IN THE FIGHT.
A despatch to the London Times from Spearman's Camp says that when the Durhams reached the top of Vaalkrantz over fifty of the enemy were still defending the position. They were still fighting with the British, and more than half of these were armed natives.

Active Force Will be 194,000 Men.
A London cable: In the House of Commons to-day, Mr. George Wyndham, Parliamentary Secretary of the War Office, answering a question, said that 2,285 officers and men of the British army were missing, but it was uncertain how many of them were at Pretoria. As to their protection in case the British besieged Pretoria, Mr. Wyndham said the Government left that to the discretion of Lord Roberts. Answering another question, Mr. Wyndham said that in addition to the 180,000 troops in South Africa recently mentioned in his speech, the Government had decided to send 17 more battalions and 5,000 yeomanry, making a total for the militia of over 20,000 men and for the yeomanry 8,000. The grand total in South Africa, he added, would then be 194,000 effectives, exclusive of sick and wounded.

British Losses to Date.
London cable: The casualties reported from the Upper Tugela bring the total British losses to 10,244 killed, wounded and captured.

News From Ladysmith.
A Ladysmith cable says: By native runner to Estcourt, Feb. 7—A night attack by the Boers on the town has been deemed possible the last three nights, especially on Wednesday or Thursday, because of the intense darkness. The British artillery fired several star shells. But nothing happened. The Boer artillery surrounding us, which has been quite active by spells, was strangely quiet to-day. I fancy that the new crescent gun has supplied the gap which has been firing on us from Telegraph Hill. The shells from the new gun travel with a cleaner sound than those from the old one, and do not wobble during transit. A slight artillery fire was heard this morning. Large bodies of Boers have been noticed lately behind Blaauwank, Bulwana and Telegraph hills. It is impossible for anybody here to explain what their intentions are. Boers have also been seen returning to the vicinity of Colesberg, after having visited their base of supplies at Elands Langte. The Boer guns at Blaauwank have been often firing at the British cavalry horse when out grazing. Yesterday a party of Boers cut out about forty horses, losing two men in the operation.

The grass is excellent now, and, owing to the British taking advantage of it, "sniping" has increased. The Boers captured two grass-cutters on Thursday. The Blaauwank hill gun Chieveley was shelling the Helpmakaar hill post yesterday, when a British private of the 60th Battery was completely buried in the torn-up earth. He managed to extricate himself in a few seconds, and found he was not even scratched. The weather is warmer and brighter than it has been recently, but it is still cold for a South African summer. The spirits of the troops and civilians are good, in spite of the fact that everybody is consummately bored by the monotony of life here. There is universal complaint of the lack of news of both the war and general happenings. The local situation is threadbare. Even the scraps of news published last night in the orders had an exceedingly cheering effect, and worked wonders.

London Times' Editorial View.
The problem before Gen. Buller is unquestionably, most difficult, and we cannot be surprised or disheartened should he be unable to solve it with success. His task is not merely to force his way through the Boer lines and reach Ladysmith, though that operation is formidable enough for a commander opposed by forces not much inferior to his own, and which have had ample time to entrench themselves in a mountainous country, but it will be easy compared with the feat which Gen. Buller must perform if large strategical results are to follow his efforts. He has not merely to penetrate the lines held by eighty-two thousand Boers, but to inflict a crushing defeat upon them afterwards. Unless he can drive them into the Drakensberg Mountains, or break them up in such a fashion that they will cease for all practical purposes to be a force in being, the relief of

Ladysmith can hardly be accomplished with safety. The relief of the town in the real sense must mean the re-establishment of free and safe communication between it and the sea, which is our true base. This cannot be effected except by the destruction or rout of the Boer commandos in Natal. Gen. Buller, with the magnificent troops at his disposal, may accomplish this feat, but when the many adverse conditions with which he has to contend are fully realized, we cannot avoid



CAPT. R. F. CARNEGIE, Second Battalion Gordon Highlanders, Wounded at Ladysmith.

without considerable anxiety the issue of this, his third effort, to break through the Boer defenses, and of the operations which must follow if it is to lead to a genuine strategic success.

To Attack the Flank.
London cable: There is still nothing to indicate the whereabouts of Gen. Lord Roberts. As regards the latter, however, a military correspondent whom the Daily Mail describes as being in touch with official circles, and possessing information deserving close attention, writes to that paper saying: "With a force which does not number far short of 30,000, Gen. Lord Roberts has commenced to march on the Tugela, and may in a few days see the fate of the Boer invasion, enabling us to meet the enemy in his country."

Meanwhile General Gatacre, having a strong force to reconnoitre the country westward, which has for a long time been dominated by the Boers, has been himself attacked in the neighborhood of Sterkstroom, but the details are unknown.

Nothing has been heard from Gen. Kelly-Kenny for a day or two, but as he was last reported to be advancing to join Gen. Gatacre, it is hoped here that he will be able to take the latter's assailants on the flank or in the rear.

At Colesberg and vicinity is very likely to be the scene of some fighting. A brief description of the position will be useful. Colesberg itself is an open town, four miles west of Colesburg Junction. The main road from Naudyport to Bloemfontein is a range of hills to the westward commands the town and is held by the British. Rensburg, Gen. French's headquarters, is south of Colesberg. Acherterang's eight miles to the northeast of Colesburg Junction, the railway between the two places running through a gap about midway in a range of hills stretching north and south. From Acherterang to Norval's post station is ten miles, and about a mile further on the road to Bethel's farm, the Orange River by a bridge still in the hands of the Boers. The ferry known as Norval's post is about two and a quarter miles higher up the river on a bend to the southwest. Between Acherterang and Norval's post station is a bridge called the Vanzyl bridge, which was destroyed early in the war. Away to the northward there runs a road following the course of the Vanderwaals River to the Orange River at Bethel's drift. The Colesberg road bridge across the Orange River was also destroyed soon after the outbreak of hostilities. Some miles down the river from the railway bridge is a drift, called Allemen's drift, where the road to Bethel's farm crosses the south crosses. It is to secure these different crossings that Gen. French has during the past six weeks been manoeuvring, while the Boer force in front of him has been considerably reinforced. Quite recently, and the Free State general commanding, Grobler, is said to have been killed by Col. Villebois Mareuil from Natal. A Pretoria despatch, dated Monday, says that the British were then seven miles from Acherterang, the direction not indicated. The country in which the expected fighting may take place is hilly, with scattered kopjes offering good means of defence, but it seems more probable that the Boers will eventually retire across the river to the defenses on which they have now for some time been at work and there dispute the passage of the river by the British.

Boers Lost Very Heavily.
A London cable: Since General Buller's attack began Ladysmith has been prevented from following the details of the movement owing to a haze.

The Morning Post's correspondent despatched a runner on Tuesday, reporting that Boers were massed south of Muger's Hill, from which direction many ambulances were travelling to the main hospital by Table Hill.

It was added that there was another large Boer camp east of Spion kop, and that most of the Boers' heavy baggage was sent towards the mountains Monday. Describing the position at Ladysmith, the correspondent says: "A large force of Boers remains here. The bombardment now is very slight, though the gun on Bulwana hill is occasionally active, as well as a nine-pounder on the Colenso plateau, which had been silent since Jan. 6th, until yesterday. It is believed that the Crescent gun on Telegraph Hill, the Howitzers on Surprise Hill, and the gun on Middle Hill have been withdrawn south." A decree has been issued announcing that the bubonic plague has disappeared from Oporto, and that the quarantine of that port has been relaxed.