

THE WAR.

At this stage it may be well to review the story of the war up to the present time, and then we shall be better able to form a proper estimate of what has been accomplished and the significance to be attached to the checks which our columns have met.

Briefly, then, the war opened with the invasion of Natal, Bechuanaland and later, of Cape Colony. Many people wondered why the Boers adopted this course, but the wisdom of it has been fully demonstrated. South Africa is a country of magnificent distances and the Boer republics can be reached from British territory by four lines of railway. One of these is from Capetown and extends up the western border of the republics, two others along the Free State from the south starting from the coast at Port Elizabeth and New London respectively; the fourth is from Durban and has two branches, one extending into the Free State and the other into the Transvaal. The Boers have been able to secure control of these railways. Hence they seized the crossing of the Modder River, thereby taking possession of the line from Capetown, of Collesburg, which dominates the line from Port Elizabeth, and of Stormberg, and block the road from East London. They also moved down and occupied the north branch of the Tugela river thereby commanding the line from Durban. These are the strategic results of the Boer movements during the two months which elapsed between the breaking out of hostilities and the arrival of our forces at the front. Intimately associated with them was the investment of Mafeking, Kimberley and Ladysmith, and especially of the last two points, for this had a potent influence in determining the line of action followed by our forces. If there had not appeared the object of relieving Kimberley, Gen. Methuen would not have thought it well to attempt to force the Boer position at Modder River, and if Ladysmith had not been threatened Gen. Buller might have taken a different course. The movements of the Boers in the first two months of the campaign gave them a great strategic advantage by enabling them to compel our forces to attack them in their chosen positions. This attack has been begun and while that of Gen. Methuen was at the first attended with brilliant success, the others met failure at the outset and he also found himself compelled to halt in his advance.

The situation at present may be summed up by saying that our first attempt to force the carefully prepared positions of the enemy in three places has proved unsuccessful, and the want of success in each case seems to have been due to surprise. Gen. Gatacre marched his men into what he termed "an impossible position." Gen. Methuen was astonished to find the enemy in force in a place where he did not expect them, and Gen. Buller discovered that he, too, had failed to discover accurately the whereabouts of his opponents. Here the matter stands at present.

What this demonstrates is, not that we are not going to conquer in South Africa, but that an enemy, with two months to get ready in and an abundance of modern war material, can post his forces as to make it impossible for attacking columns to carry his positions by a frontal attack at the first attempt. It is not a pleasant lesson and it has been a costly one.

But this is not the only lesson of the war. One thing it has demonstrated is the superiority of our troops over the enemy as fighters. So far we have set the pace in every encounter, and where we have had half a chance have won. Another thing is that the quality of our troops has not deteriorated and that the regimental officers are worthy of the best traditions of the British army. Another thing is that the arrangements for the transport of soldiers and supplies to the front are all that can be desired. There is a disposition to criticize the generals for being taken by surprise. We have not received Methuen's explanation, but we have those of Gatacre and Buller. Gatacre's misfortune was due to the mistake of a guide, and Buller's his cannon because of the impetuosity of Col. Long. These things are inseparable from the fortunes of war, and we must put up with them with as good grace as possible. The situation would present us just cause for anxiety if it were not for the delay in relieving the invested towns, but happily there is as yet no sign that they are in immediate danger.

The important announcement is made that Lord Roberts of Kandahar has been appointed commander-in-chief of the forces in South Africa, with Lord Kitchener of Khartoum chief of staff. This cannot be said to be in consequence of Gen. Buller's reverse at Tugela, for we were told some days previously that Lord Roberts had been summoned from Ireland and it was thought, this appointment was intended. Further reinforcements are to be sent. As nearly as we can estimate, we think they will number about 25,000.

Satisfactory news comes from Mafeking, which though undated shows that the condition of the beleaguered garrison was in no sense precarious. The Modder River despatch contains the surprising statement that the Free State has dispersed and gone home, and that some of the Transvaalers have withdrawn. It is of course intelligible that after their experience at Belmont and Graspan they regard prolonged resistance to our arms as hopeless and consider Methuen's check at Magerfontein as only temporary.

Gen. French is pushing forward with

caution, which is wise, for Gen. Gatacre has exemplified the truth of the maxim, "the more haste the less speed." We believe he will drive the enemy out of Collesburg. Gatacre's force is resting, and if it is to remain inactive we would suppose that a portion of it might be sent to French's assistance. To do so it would be necessary to return to the coast at East London and then proceed down to Port Elizabeth and take the rail there.

A LESSON IN TRADE.

The exports of cheese and butter from Canada this year will amount in value to about \$20,000,000, an increase of \$4,500,000 over last year. The increase is principally on butter. Our cheese trade has been larger for some years. In 1894 it had reached 1,712,715 boxes. In 1897 the number of boxes was 2,102,985. There was a falling off in 1898, but in 1899 an increase in to be noted over the previous year, the export of 1899 being 1,896,496 boxes. The export of butter has shown a remarkable growth. In 1885 the number of packages exported was only 69,654. In the following year it was 157,321; it was 225,268 in 1897, 278,922 in 1898, and 471,950 in 1899. This is a gratifying and very instructive showing. It is not due to any tariff changes or preferential scheme or anything else except the application of ordinary sound business sense to the dairy business. In Prof. Robertson's department of agriculture has an official who has known how to push the dairy interest to the front. He has been in this country long enough to understand his business thoroughly, and the dairymen are every year enjoying more and more of the benefits of his practical experience. Mr. Robertson has studied the British market and has shown our dairymen how to meet its requirements, and the results are seen in the fact that our dairy products are rapidly advancing towards the first place in our exports.

The lesson of this is that a good trade can be developed in a line of products only by studying the market, and also that it is ill to say that there is no market for any commodity until the attempt to meet the demands of possible customers has been made in an intelligent and business-like way. We only mention the matter and draw attention to the fact that the Orient offers a field for Canadian products that may prove just as valuable as the British market has for cheese and butter. Those who remember when the effort was first made to reach the latter many wise people prophesied disastrous failure.

WHEN THE HOUSE MEETS.

What will happen when the house meets is beginning to possess a lively interest to the public generally. Members of the government say that they will be sustained by a very small majority. On the other hand, some well-informed members of the opposition say that the majority against the ministry will be seven. Others who are inclined to be more conservative in their claims say that Mr. Semlin will be defeated by three. We have not formed any definite conclusion between the conflicting opinions, but believe that on the first party vote the government will be in such a minority that its inability to carry on business will be demonstrated. When once this has been shown, the government following will rapidly go to pieces, so that the Lieutenant-Governor will have no difficulty in finding some one who can form a strong ministry out of the present house, which after an adjournment long enough to enable the by-elections to be held can resume business and carry on during the next three years.

THE EIGHT-HOUR LAW.

It is the intention of the B.A.C. Corporation to take steps at once to test the constitutionality of the eight-hour law. The company says that the Le Roi cannot be profitably mined by men working for the short day, and it proposes to try conclusions with the government. As a matter of fact this company has been persistently violating the law, but the government has paid no attention to it. Now it has resolved to take such steps as will compel the government to take it into court. A report from Rossland says that when this is done a general strike of miners may be expected to follow. The Mine Owners' Association is determined to fight and if the Miners' Union is equally firm, a long and expensive conflict is at hand, and one which will do the mining interests of the province a great deal of injury while it lasts.

THE COMING SESSION.

Reports received during the year fully support the claim recently made in United States papers that the whole of Southeastern Alaska is likely to be the scene of mining operations. That extensive deposits of low-grade ore are available at various points is beyond any doubt, and that low-grade ore is highly profitable, if it is found in sufficient quantity, has been demonstrated by the great success of the Treadwell mine. Speaking in a general way, a gold-bearing stratum may be said to occur all along the line of the mountain elevations on the islands and mainland of Southeastern Alaska. Nearly three years ago the Colonist drew attention to this, and the benefits of the government of Alaska will have its own wholesale houses, which will buy their goods direct from manufacturers, and they will transport them by the quickest and cheapest routes. We do not claim that the Vancouver Island route is likely to be any cheaper for freight than any other, because these things always adjust themselves to an equality; but it will be all odds the quickest route, and can in this respect never have any competitor. For passenger express and mail carriage, no other route can hope to rival it. It is hardly worth while to address an argument to those who think that it would be of no advantage to this city to have all the tide of travel to and from the North, except such as goes via the Canadian Pacific, and even much of that, pass this way. We are sure of this, that if the people of Victoria hold such a view they are the only people on the Pacific Coast who would not feel the benefit of such a great effort ought to be made to secure it. This is the chief question now before the people of this city. In 1900 it will be decided one way or the other.

THE PORT ANGELES EASTERN.

The Columbian is the only paper supporting the local government that ventures to make any suggestion as to the policy likely to be followed when the legislature meets. Our contemporary has a very great doubt, apparently, as to the ability of the present ministry's ability to control the territory. This is not defeated on a vote of want of confidence early in the session, it will introduce as its first measure a redistribution bill. Such a measure will, it thinks, command a larger vote than any which can be introduced. Redistribution is a hobby with the Columbian, but if there is any indication elsewhere in British Columbia that this ought to be the paramount question of the hour, the newspapers of the province do not disclose it. In fact, except the New Westminster paper the only advocates of any change in this regard are to be found in the press of the Boundary district, and these think that portion of the province entitled to a new member, a claim that perhaps no one will dispute. When the Columbian talks about redistribution the chief idea in his mind is the reduction of the representation of the Island, so that the control of the province may be concentrated in Vancouver and Victoria. The present government party when in opposition opposed the increase in the representation of Cariboo and Cassiar, as well as advocating the reduction of the Island representation by taking one member away from Esquimalt. No doubt a plan to take one member away from Esquimalt, Cassiar and Cariboo and distribute them where they would do the most good would be quite meet the views of the Columbian.

THE REVELSTOCK MAIL.

We take issue with our contemporary as to the importance of redistribution. It is not a pressing question. There are others far more urgent. From time to time alterations in the boundaries and numerical representation of constituencies will be made, but temporary inequalities are inevitable in a growing community. Indeed there is no community in the world where they have been avoided. The coming session may easily be devoted to more vital questions. The whole industrial position of the province calls for consideration at the hands of the house. What we hope to see is the present one-man government forced to resign, a new ministry formed, and an adjournment taken for say thirty days, to give the new ministers time to appeal to their constituents and to prepare their measures.

Under these circumstances the people of Victoria seem to have resting upon them a two-fold duty. It is to do what can be reasonably asked of them towards securing the necessary ferry connection, and to use their influence towards procuring the granting of a subsidy from parliament at its next session.

THE COMING SESSION.

If this is done, the construction of a railway to the north end of the Island will be begun in the very near future. The passage of a law for the granting of this subsidy merely because of the local business which will be developed thereby. Such a line would do more than anything else that can be suggested to secure the supremacy of our city in the commerce of our own northern gold fields. It would make Victoria the headquarters of that trade. We know that some people are unable to see that it will be of any advantage to the city to have the rail between the United States and Alaska pass this way, but such persons take a very crumpled view of the case. The same people never look any further away than Seattle when they think of the United States. They forget that Seattle is not a place where traffic originates, but is only a way station where goods are transferred from the rail to steamers, through the medium of wholesalers. It will not be long before Alaska will have its own wholesale houses, which will buy their goods direct from manufacturers, and they will transport them by the quickest and cheapest routes. We do not claim that the Vancouver Island route is likely to be any cheaper for freight than any other, because these things always adjust themselves to an equality; but it will be all odds the quickest route, and can in this respect never have any competitor.

THE PORT ANGELES EASTERN.

We learn that the Port Angeles-Eastern Railway Company have their affairs in such a shape that the construction of the line next season is now beyond doubt. In other words, the little city across the Strait will by this time next year be in the enjoyment of transportation by a great railway connection. This news is of very great interest to the people of Victoria, for it means that, if wise counsels prevail, we will be able before Christmas, 1900, to embark on a railway ferry here for any point in the United States or Canada, and will have only a short boat's run across the water to reach a Pullman car. We believe that the people of this city will do what is necessary to secure such a connection.

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THE REVELSTOCK MAIL.

The Revelstoke Mail says the Colonist is the only Conservative paper in British Columbia that favors federal lines in local politics. We beg to remind the Mail that the Colonist's editorials are printed on page 4 of each issue.

ing both ways all the time with a certainty of a rapid and continuous increase in both lines of traffic, is it not highly probable that the requisite capital could be easily obtained, especially as there is every reason to believe that a fair subsidy can be obtained from the federal parliament for such a line? We think that an affirmative answer will be given to this question.

SIR CHARLES TUPPER.

The verdict of everyone after hearing Sir Charles Tupper last night was that he is a remarkable man. It is hard to realize that the fresh and vigorous-looking gentleman who held the interest and aroused the enthusiasm for the large audience for so long a time last night, is approaching his seventy-ninth year. He has the energy of a man twenty years younger, and a manner of expressing himself that is politic though forcible. His hold upon the confidence of his party and the country grows stronger every day.

Navigation in B. C. Waters.

So it appears that the original Wilson plan was to keep that gentleman's nomination secret. That also was the plan proposed at New Westminster in regard to the platform. It was to be a veiled platform, but some newspaper fellow gave the thing away. The idea seemed to be that so marvellous a document ought not to be given to the world all at once. A secret leader and a secret platform would have been a delicious combination.

Navigation in B. C. Waters.

Notices to Shipping Men Issued by the Marine and Fisheries Department.

Queen City From West Coast—Anticipated Rush to Nome—Quadra in Port.

The department of marine and fisheries under date of November 28 has issued a circular notice to mariners regarding navigation in British Columbia waters. The two new lighthouses on Point Island and on Dryad Point, Campbell Island, respectively, are described, together with hydrographic notes affecting the same. Notice is given of an uncharted rock in Methachial bay and also of the removal and change in color of the Hodgson Reefs' buoy.

Navigation in B. C. Waters.

A lighthouse erected by the government on Pointed Island, Pittough sound, east entrance to Lanna passage, was put in operation on the 5th instant. Latitude north 52 degrees 3 minutes 48 seconds, longitude west 128 degrees 58 minutes and 40 seconds. The light is a fixed white light, elevated 42 feet above high water, and should be visible 12 miles over an arc 21 1/2 degrees between the bearings of S. 56 degrees E. (S. 31 degrees E. true) through south and west to N. 22 degrees W. (N. 3 degrees E. true). The illuminating apparatus is dioptric of the seventh order.

Navigation in B. C. Waters.

A lighthouse, erected by the government on the extremity of Dryad point, Turn point, Campbell Island, north entrance of Main passage, Seaforth channel, was put in operation on the 7th instant. Latitude north 52 degrees 11 minutes 14 seconds, longitude west 128 degrees 8 minutes and 24 seconds. The light is a fixed white light, elevated 30 feet above high water mark, and should be visible eleven miles over an arc 25 1/2 degrees between the bearings E. 63 degrees E. (S. 37 degrees E. true) through south, west and north to N. 22 degrees W. (N. 4 degrees E. true). The illuminating apparatus is dioptric of the seventh order. The light is a fixed white light, elevated 30 feet above high water mark, and should be visible eleven miles over an arc 25 1/2 degrees between the bearings E. 63 degrees E. (S. 37 degrees E. true) through south, west and north to N. 22 degrees W. (N. 4 degrees E. true). The illuminating apparatus is dioptric of the seventh order.

Navigation in B. C. Waters.

The captain of the D. G. S. Quadra reports, in connection with the lighthouse of the above lighthouse, that Dryad point extends nearly 300 feet east of No. 2,449, that the islet near the point is not visible in coming from the westward until the extremity of the point bears southward of S. by E. 1/2 E. There is a small rock, awash at extreme low water, 135 feet S. E. by S. from the islet, and another rock, which shows four feet at high water, 20 feet N. W. from the lighthouse. The two-fathom patch, shown on the chart N. E. of Song island, does not exist. A rock, not marked by kelp, with 1 1/2 fathoms water on it, which will be named Dutch rock, has been located by Capt. Walbran, of the D. G. S. Quadra, in Methachial bay, between Alfred Reefs and Knight island, latitude north 54 degrees 38 minutes 30 seconds, longitude west 130 degrees 29 minutes and 15 seconds. Mariners are advised to enter Methachial bay by the passage west of Alfred Reefs and Devastation island, which is well buoyed, in preference to using the eastern channel. Vessels entering, after passing Devastation island, should bring the middle of the three singular trees (with all lower branches cut away) on Shrub islet to bear N. E. by E., and keep their course until they bring Strath point in one with the middle of the largest tree on Knight island, bearing S. E. They should then alter their course to the fairway between the beacon north of Shrub island and the buoy on Kelp rock. The buoy maintained on Hodgson Reefs, Chatham sound, having broken adrift, has been replaced by a new buoy, which has been moored in 9 1/2 fathoms, northward and westward of the old position of the buoy, kelp having been seen outside the old location, latitude north 54 degrees 22 minutes 20 seconds, longitude west 130 degrees 42 minutes and 10 seconds. The extreme westerly edge of Hodgson Reefs is 3 1/2 cables eastward of the buoy, and between the buoy and the reefs is a narrow ledge with 5 1/2 fathoms. Outside the buoy the water deepens rapidly to 20 fathoms. From the buoy in its new position the south tangent of Ryan point bears due east (S. 63 degrees E. true), distant 2 miles 1 1/2

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After a pleasant and successful voyage to West Coast Ports. The steamer Queen City arrived from West Coast ports early yesterday afternoon, with a good passenger list and lightly laden with freight. The Queen City had a splendid trip, good weather being experienced both going and coming. The weather on the coast was beginning to assume a decidedly wintry appearance, Alberni being under a mantle of snow. The Queen City was spoken going into Clayoquot. The following passengers came down by the Queen City: C. Frank, H. Burnett, A. Ringick, G. C. Macarson, J. McKay, C. A. Karman, Geo. Brown, T. Stackholm, Capt. McKiel, G. A. Huff, F. T. Child, J. Baird, F. Murton, A. Vandon and A. E. Bly. The Queen City will sail again on the 20th inst.

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THE TIME HAS ARRIVED, For you to buy your Xmas Presents. We have the very finest, all cleaned and ready for use. MINCEMEAT all ready for the pie, and PLUM PUDDING all ready for the table. Jap. Oranges . . . 50cts. box Fresh Island Eggs . . . 40cts. doz. " Eastern " . . . 20cts. doz. Port Wine . . . 50cts. bottle Sherry . . . 50cts. bottle MORGAN'S EASTERN OYSTERS. DIXIE H. ROSS & CO.

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Navigation in B. C. Waters.

A lighthouse, erected by the government on the extremity of Dryad point, Turn point, Campbell Island, north entrance of Main passage, Seaforth channel, was put in operation on the 7th instant. Latitude north 52 degrees 11 minutes 14 seconds, longitude west 128 degrees 8 minutes and 24 seconds. The light is a fixed white light, elevated 30 feet above high water mark, and should be visible eleven miles over an arc 25 1/2 degrees between the bearings E. 63 degrees E. (S. 37 degrees E. true) through south, west and north to N. 22 degrees W. (N. 4 degrees E. true). The illuminating apparatus is dioptric of the seventh order.

Navigation in B. C. Waters.

The captain of the D. G. S. Quadra reports, in connection with the lighthouse of the above lighthouse, that Dryad point extends nearly 300 feet east of No. 2,449, that the islet near the point is not visible in coming from the westward until the extremity of the point bears southward of S. by E. 1/2 E. There is a small rock, awash at extreme low water, 135 feet S. E. by S. from the islet, and another rock, which shows four feet at high water, 20 feet N. W. from the lighthouse. The two-fathom patch, shown on the chart N. E. of Song island, does not exist. A rock, not marked by kelp, with 1 1/2 fathoms water on it, which will be named Dutch rock, has been located by Capt. Walbran, of the D. G. S. Quadra, in Methachial bay, between Alfred Reefs and Knight island, latitude north 54 degrees 38 minutes 30 seconds, longitude west 130 degrees 29 minutes and 15 seconds. Mariners are advised to enter Methachial bay by the passage west of Alfred Reefs and Devastation island, which is well buoyed, in preference to using the eastern channel. Vessels entering, after passing Devastation island, should bring the middle of the three singular trees (with all lower branches cut away) on Shrub islet to bear N. E. by E., and keep their course until they bring Strath point in one with the middle of the largest tree on Knight island, bearing S. E. They should then alter their course to the fairway between the beacon north of Shrub island and the buoy on Kelp rock. The buoy maintained on Hodgson Reefs, Chatham sound, having broken adrift, has been replaced by a new buoy, which has been moored in 9 1/2 fathoms, northward and westward of the old position of the buoy, kelp having been seen outside the old location, latitude north 54 degrees 22 minutes 20 seconds, longitude west 130 degrees 42 minutes and 10 seconds. The extreme westerly edge of Hodgson Reefs is 3 1/2 cables eastward of the buoy, and between the buoy and the reefs is a narrow ledge with 5 1/2 fathoms. Outside the buoy the water deepens rapidly to 20 fathoms. From the buoy in its new position the south tangent of Ryan point bears due east (S. 63 degrees E. true), distant 2 miles 1 1/2

Navigation in B. C. Waters.

After a pleasant and successful voyage to West Coast Ports. The steamer Queen City arrived from West Coast ports early yesterday afternoon, with a good passenger list and lightly laden with freight. The Queen City had a splendid trip, good weather being experienced both going and coming. The weather on the coast was beginning to assume a decidedly wintry appearance, Alberni being under a mantle of snow. The Queen City was spoken going into Clayoquot. The following passengers came down by the Queen City: C. Frank, H. Burnett, A. Ringick, G. C. Macarson, J. McKay, C. A. Karman, Geo. Brown, T. Stackholm, Capt. McKiel, G. A. Huff, F. T. Child, J. Baird, F. Murton, A. Vandon and A. E. Bly. The Queen City will sail again on the 20th inst.

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