

Martial Law.

The most conclusive bit of testimony to the continued seriousness of the situation in South Africa is to be found in the proclamation by Sir Alfred Milner of martial law for certain districts of Cape Colony. However, as a rough and ready way of dealing with those who are fomenting discontent and breeding treason among British subjects, it is suitable, if severe. It will certainly serve to curb the activity of the Boer raiders who are reported to be stirring up the Dutch to rebel against the flag they are living under. Martial law proceeds directly from the military power, and has no immediate constitutional or legislative sanction. In the proclaimed districts, all the inhabitants, and all their actions, will be brought within its dominion. It is founded on paramount necessity, and is only proclaimed in times of war, insurrection, rebellion or other great emergency.

A military judge dealing out punishment on the spot will be apt to silence the most noisy promoter of sedition.

The Cost of Conscientious Objections.

We have, again and again, in these columns published valuable statistics for the purpose of showing the vital importance of vaccination. The remarkable immunity of vaccinated people from small-pox ought to arouse every municipality to the necessity of general vaccination of the people by the health authorities. The folly of yielding to the "conscientious objectors" has lately been illustrated in Hull, England, where an outbreak of small-pox has almost disorganized the civic finances. The death-roll has been heavy, and for many months trade has been driven away from the pest-ridden port and town. The effort to stamp out the loathsome disease is said to have cost \$140,000 up to the end of 1899, and the Health Committee calculate that the entire cost of their fight with the epidemic will reach \$205,000. This is in addition to \$600,000 estimated to have been spent by the people of Hull in vaccination and re-vaccination while the reign of terror was at its height.

Rejected Risks.

Those who, after submitting themselves to life office medical examiners, have been rejected as undesirable risks, may extract comfort from knowing that even clever doctors sometimes make mistakes. The "Daily Telegraph" (Eng.), in the course of some comments on medical examination for the irregular troops recently raised for service in South Africa, says:—

"The well-known Fifeshire athlete, Blues, after being medically declared unfit for service in South Africa with the Fife Light Infantry, on the ground of 'unsoundness of wind,' promptly turned out and won the Kirkcaldy Harriers' ten miles cross-country championship. Another renowned Fifeshire athlete, named Marcus, who was rejected for service with the same

regiment owing to 'weakness of the chest' won the Eastern District cross-country championship last year."

Cheer up, ye rejected ones, and try again. The symptoms noticed by the cautious medical examiner on your first visit may have been merely the result of dining not wisely, but too well.

The Postscript of the Possel Case. Many of our readers may be able to recall the Possel case, full particulars of which were given in THE CHRONICLE. Possel was an impecunious foreigner who married an English girl. He took her to Italy, insuring her en route for \$31,000 with the Urbaine Insurance Company of Paris, paying the premium out of his wife's small dowry. During the brief honeymoon in Italy, Possel returned from a drive and reported that Mrs. Possel had fallen over a precipice. He was arrested on suspicion, but, obtaining his release on bail, proceeded to Paris. There, miserable at being suspected, or remorseful for his crime, he committed suicide.

Mrs. Possel's relatives claimed the amount of the policy, and the company has ever since been collecting evidence to enable them to contest the claim. The result has just been made known in the announcement that the case has been settled out of court. The mother of Mrs. Possel receives \$1,600, and the relatives of her impecunious husband, the suspected murderer, \$800.

Mr. Sulzer of New York.

On Thursday of last week Mr. Sulzer, of New York, displayed his ignorance of the condition of things in South Africa by introducing the following resolution in the House of Representatives at Washington.

"Resolved, That the republic of the United States sympathizes with the brave Boers in their struggle for freedom and independence, and hereby declares that the people of the South African republic and the Orange Free State are and of right ought to be free and independent, and the congress of the United States hereby protests and remonstrates against the barbarous war now being waged by Great Britain against the patriots of South Africa; and the President is hereby authorized to take such steps as may be expedient, in his judgment, to secure and bring about an honorable peace between the contending parties."

This rash representative of New York does not suggest what steps he would have the President take in the direction of securing peace. Neither does he seem to understand that the "barbarous war now being waged by Great Britain" is the result of Mr. Kruger ordering the Queen to withdraw her troops from her own colony, and giving her forty-eight hours to consider his sovereign mandate. The Lord Mayor of London described the Boer ultimatum as "confounded cheek." We do not like to apply this expression to the resolution of Mr. Sulzer of New York. We would rather describe it as deplorable ignorance.