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The War. The news from South Africa during the week has been for the most part pleasant reading for the enemies of Great Britain only. It has been long indeed since the nation has had to pass through an experience so bitterly humiliating as the week has brought. Reverse has followed reverse to the British arms and in circumstances in which success was almost confidently expected. Following the severe repulse suffered by General Gatacre at Stormberg on Sunday, General Methuen met a serious check and heavy loss in an attack upon the Boers at Magersfontein, just north of the Modder river, on Monday; and on Friday General Buller, advancing to the relief of Ladysmith, suffered a still more serious check at Colenso. The present situation in South Africa is one to put British determination and endurance strongly to the proof. It is not easy for a nation to keep calm and brave under such exasperating experiences. But of course there will be no finching from the task to which the nation has set its hand. Reinforcements of men and equipments will be forwarded. The additional contingents which Canada and Australia have offered will probably be accepted, and the nation will steady itself in grim determination for a more strenuous effort. Meantime there must be the gravest anxiety as to General White's little army at Ladysmith, which has held out bravely for so many weeks, while the situation for General Methuen and the British cause in northern Cape Colony is also such as to justify alarm.

Stormberg. General Gatacre's repulse at Stormberg, of which a brief account was given in these columns last week, was a very unfortunate affair, and has naturally called forth sharp criticism of the British commander. Very possibly some of the criticism has been unjustly severe, for General Gatacre has enjoyed the reputation of being an able as well as an experienced officer. He is blamed for not having employed scouting cavalry to ascertain the position of the enemy before moving a body of infantry against him. But the fact seems to be that General Gatacre was not furnished with the necessary cavalry for this purpose. He was also at the serious disadvantage of operating in a country with which he was not well acquainted, and among people whose sympathies were with the Boers. His guides, whether intentionally, or, as General Gatacre believes, unintentionally, gave him incorrect information as to the distance and led him by a circuitous way, so that when he came unexpectedly upon the Boers occupying a strong position, his men, worn out with their long march, were taken at a double disadvantage, and under the circumstances disaster was inevitable. We quote from General Gatacre's own account of the affair: "The Boers commenced firing from the top of an unscalable hill and wounded a good many of our men while in the open plain. The Northumberlanders tried to turn out the enemy but failed. The Second Irish Fusiliers seized a kopje near and held on, supported by the mounted infantry and Cape police. The guns under Jeffreys could not have been better handled, but I regret to say that one gun was overturned in a deep nullah and another sank in the quicksand. Neither could be extricated in time to be available. Seeing the situation I sent a despatch rider to Molteno with the news and collected and withdrew our force from ridge to ridge for about nine miles. The Boer guns were remarkably well served. They carried accurately 5,000 yards." A report from Boer sources states that eight officers and 480 men of the Northumberlanders and Irish Fusiliers were taken prisoners. The total loss to General Gatacre's command was probably not less than six hundred officers and men, besides three guns and two ammunition wagons. The repulse suffered made it necessary for the British Commander to fall back to a strong position at Bushman's Hock.

Magersfontein. Just what General Methuen's position is and the situation with which he is confronted it is not easy to gather from the despatches. As we understand the matter, the British force, about 11,000 strong and well-equipped with artillery, occupies a favorable position just north of the Modder river, while the Boers in greater numbers are very strongly posted a few miles away to the north or northwest. On Monday, the 11th, after the Boers had been subjected to a vigorous artillery fire on the two preceding days, General Methuen sent Major General Wauchope to move on the Boer position with the troops of the Highland brigade. A march of four or five miles was made through rain and darkness, and at twenty minutes past three in the morning, General Wauchope's troops were surprised by a terrific fire delivered at the close range of 300 yards. The Brigade lost heavily and was compelled to fall back until supported by artillery. Then, at daylight, the British artillery, consisting of 31 guns, began a bombardment which lasted throughout the day, the howitzers as before using heavy lyddite shells. The Boers made no serious attempt to reply with their guns, but their rifle fire was so persistent, concentrated and well-directed that it was absolutely impossible for the British infantry to take the position by assault. In the course of the forenoon the Gordon Highlanders were sent to the front by General Methuen, and advanced with the utmost gallantry to attack the Boer centre, close to where lay their dead and wounded comrades of the Highland Brigade. The Boers were, however, so well entrenched that it was found physically impossible to carry the position and the Gordons were also compelled to retire. General Methuen then gave up the attack, and on Tuesday morning both sides occupied the positions held before the fight. As the Boer trenches were still strongly held, General Methuen withdrew his forces to their former position. The loss on the British side was heavy. A revised list gives the number of casualties at 963, including 70 officers. The list of killed is headed by Major-General Wauchope, one of the bravest and best beloved Scotch officers in the army and a special favorite with the Queen and the Prince of Wales. His death is a heavy loss, and the loss of so many men, both at Magersfontein and Stormberg, of the very flower of the army, constitutes a serious disaster. The loss on the part of the Boers is believed to have been still heavier. The British shells in some instances caused great destruction, though it is said the general effect of the lyddite howitzers was not so great as had been anticipated. It is stated that cannonading was resumed on Tuesday. Beyond that there is no definite information, and whether or not General Methuen is in a position to make another forward movement until reinforced is uncertain.

Tugela River. The result of the battle at Tugela river on Friday last in connection with Lord Buller's attempted advance to the relief of Ladysmith is the most bitter disappointment of the war. The nation had braced itself to endure with equanimity the reverse suffered by Lord Methuen and General Gatacre in the confidence that Lord Buller's advance, which had been so long in preparation, would turn the tide of victory, and, by establishing British prestige, would discourage the growing disaffection among the Dutch colonists of Natal and Cape Colony and put new heart into all loyal British subjects in South Africa. But instead of a victorious march to Ladysmith, General Buller has met at the outset with a severe repulse and suffered heavy loss both of men and of artillery, losing eleven guns and nearly a thousand men in an unsuccessful attempt to cross the Tugela river near Colenso. There were two fordable places, about two miles apart, and, at one or both these places, General Buller expected to force a passage in the face of the enemy. General Hart was to attack the left drift, General Hilyard the right, with General Lyttleton in the centre to support either. General Hart, finding it impossible to force a passage, after attacking with great gallantry, was directed to withdraw, and General Hilyard's brigade was ordered to advance. At this point it would seem somebody blundered. The artillery force under Col. Long advanced to a position which was so commanded by the enemy's

rifle fire that it was wholly untenable. The horses being shot down, the guns could not be extricated from the position, and after a number of heroic but unsuccessful attempts to do so, ten guns had to be abandoned. One other gun was disabled. This loss of artillery so crippled General Buller that he was obliged to desist from further efforts to cross the river. The loss of men was also very heavy according to General Buller's report, the total reaching nearly a thousand,—the figures being as follows: Killed, 82; wounded, 667; missing, 384. Nothing since the days of the Indian Mutiny has caused such consternation in England as the war news of the past week. The sneers of enemies abroad and the rejoicings of the turbulent Irish element at home are most exasperating, but the most serious element in the situation lies in the effect of these continued reverses on the Dutch population of Cape Colony and Natal. A state of civil war in these colonies seems inevitable. Sir Alfred Milner, the Governor of Cape Colony, has asked that martial law be proclaimed. The reverses suffered will, however, only cause the war to be prosecuted with greater vigor. A fifth division now on its way will probably reach South Africa during the week. A sixth division is about to embark. These reinforcements will bring the British military force in South Africa to 75,000 or 80,000. General Roberts is to go out at once as Commander-in-Chief, with General Kitchener as his chief of staff. A seventh division is to be mobilized at once. It is expected that the second Canadian contingent, offered some weeks ago, will now be accepted. So far as can be gathered from the despatches the Canadian regiment is still at Belmont, as part of a force charged with the duty of guarding General Methuen's connection with his base of supplies. It is not known that they have yet been in action. Private Chappell, whose native home was Pt. de Bute, N. B., has died of tonsillitis. The Canadians are praised for their efficiency in the performance of duties assigned to them.

Germany Proposes to Double her Navy. The Government of Germany has come to the conclusion that its navy is insufficient for the nation's needs, and the Imperial Chancellor has announced in the Reichstag that estimates looking to the doubling of the present number of warships will be submitted. The understanding between Great Britain and the United States and Germany, whatever it may involve, is not regarded by the latter as any reason why she should not make preparation for contingencies. On the contrary, in the words of Count Von Buelow: "Just because the external position is now favorable, we must use it to secure ourselves for the future. I wish that our future may be peaceful. Whether it will be so no one can say." Alluding to the war-like changes and revolutions of the last few years, Count Von Buelow says: "I cannot yet believe a new partition of the earth is imminent. We wish to interfere with no foreign power, but neither do we wish to let our fleet be trodden upon by a foreign power, nor let ourselves be pushed aside either politically or economically. We cannot but be mixed up with the future, the prospects of which have been considerably modified during the last two years, because we have now interests in all parts of the world. The powerful vitality of the German people has involved us in the world's administration and drawn us into the world's policy. In the presence of a greater Britain and a new France we have claims to a greater Germany, not in the sense of conquest but in the sense of a peaceful extension of our trade and points of support. We cannot, will not, suffer that a people shall pass to the order of day over the heads of the German people. We have always, hitherto, come to an easy and willing understanding with France in isolated colonial conventions. In this respect also we have found friendly obligingness in the case of Russia, to which we have fully and wholly responded."