

A MILITARY DEADLOCK.

Meagre indeed is the news from "the front." But so much as has come latest conveys ample assurance that there is stern work ahead of the British army whichever way the advance is resumed toward the line of the republics. No reasonable person will care to entertain the theory that the extraordinary industry, energy and skill which are spreading by night and by day in front of Buller and Methuen a series of the most remarkable defensive works of which there is any record, will collapse at the first hard push from the advancing foe. There is not a circumstance in the whole campaign to justify such a view, however much so happy a contingency would be welcome to all who hope for a speedy termination to this terrible struggle.

In casting a retrospective glance upon the events of this war we find ourselves bound to grant to the Boer three prime qualities of the warrior which he has revealed in his conduct on the battlefield: these are, supreme self-confidence; desperate, obstinate courage; wonderful powers of recuperation. These, in general, have been the characteristics manifestly observable in the enemy; they are recognized by our own generals and honored by our own men. True, there have been ugly reports of military malpractice on the Boers' part, but it is quite evident that these atrocities were the work of individual combatants temporarily out-of-hand and acting entirely without the sanction of the responsible commanders. The latter have repeatedly proved that they understand and practice the usages of modern warfare, and they, therefore, deserve the justice of acquittal from those unpleasant charges.

Since the military authorities of Europe, the other day declared that the situation along the line of battle could not be described as anything but a complete deadlock, not a thing has occurred to alter the verdict. It seems, in presence of such facts as the public are in possession of, somewhat absurd to jump to the conclusion that General Joubert, because he has thrown up what may almost be called permanent works in front of Gen. Buller, has therefore placed himself between two fires; that is between Gen. White and Gen. Buller; and left his flanks open to attack. This, on the face of it, is sheer absurdity and little comfort is to be gathered from denunciations of that sort. Does it sound reasonable to declare that a general who has given proof of a sagacity we would gladly see matched by any of our own generals now in the field, would commit a blunder such as we have described which would earn for a junior cadet in the tactics class a sharp flogging over the knuckles from the instructor's cane? Is it reasonable to suppose that Gen. Joubert and his European staff would spend the time and enormous labor they have done upon those works around Colenso if there were not a well-defined purpose in it, if they were only imperfectly acquainted with the details of the British disposition of force?

The crushing lesson of Elandsbaagte has not been thrown away upon the Boers. That was the brightest achievement of the whole war, a well-planned and well-executed manoeuvre which for the time checked the Boer advance and doubtless proved the salvation of White's entire force. The Boers were taught there the extreme value of "the far-flung scouting line" and the danger to which detached or flying columns are ever exposed. With that severe discipline ringing in their memory it is scarcely probable that the Boer leaders will leave upper and eastern Natal, or any other portion of their flanks, or rear, unwatched.

Besides, are the mistakes of Nicholson's Nek, Stormberg, Magersfontein and Tugela going to be repeated blindly? Would not a flanking column, necessarily "light" as to guns, commissariat and other stores if anything like speed were expected from it in such a hard country and in such terrific heat—would not such a column be liable to encounter at some awkward corner the same sort of trouble that befel the other flying columns? The hope of the British people is that the generals will not take any more of those useless risks, and the military critics and the people, for once, are of the same opinion. Were the country being operated in suitable for swift cavalry work, if it offered any special advantages for the manoeuvres of light-horse batteries, and if it could be traversed by a column without the necessity of serious engineering difficulties at almost every mile, then the problem would be a very different one. But people who know that portion of Natal well, say that rapid military evolutions in it are simply impossible. It is an engineering affair from the start, and any advance to be made by a composite force like the British army must be accomplished by hard labor if the resistance of the enemy be really serious. The resistance of the enemy is most serious, and if one will divest the mind of all fanciful notions of flanking and flying columns and look the bare facts in the face, one will realize that Buller's army will have to dig as well as fight its way forward to Ladysmith.

Another thing to remember is that we simply have not the men to spare for those suggested flanking movements, until the reinforcements on the way from Britain are received. Then again, the unwisdom of splitting up the force needs no comment. In the opinion of students

of war Buller may come gloriously out of this thing if he sheer clear of the blunders that cost Lee at Gettysburg, General Melas at Marengo, General Mack at Ulm and the Prussian commanders at Auerstadt and Jena and Bazaine at Metz their armies and their fame.

Lee, after turning Hooker's position on the Rappahannock, marching into northern territory and menacing the capital, encountered the federal army on ground most favorable for defence, attacked it and was defeated. Had he moved off to the right and himself assumed the defensive he would probably have tempted attack from the northern army, taken it "in the agonies of deployment" and perhaps inflicted decisive defeat. The campaign in Natal is rapidly becoming a great contest of wits, and it may be commented, as Abbe Gardar once whispered to a friend during a conversational duel with the equally voluble Abbe Constantin, who "had the floor" and was talking so fast Gardar could get no chance to slip in a word: "S'il crache il est perdu" (if he spit he is lost).

VICTORIA-CHILLIWACK RY.

Yesterday morning the Colonist spread before its readers another of those peculiar articles on the Victoria and Chilliwack railway project. We say peculiar, because we find it hard to understand what the Colonist is driving at.

No impartial person, after examining the facts connected with this project, could, if he had the slightest regard for his reputation for veracity, venture such statements as those to which the Colonist has boldly committed itself. The Colonist says the capital stock of the company is two million dollars, but it fails to state that that amount is the authorized capital stock, not the actual subscribed stock. A man may incorporate a business under the Companies Act for \$100,000, although \$50,000 is ample for his present needs. He issues stock for the \$100,000, which is his present capital; the remaining \$50,000 is reserved and should money be needed in his business he allots this surplus stock as required. He cannot go beyond the amount fixed in his articles of incorporation, and if desirous of further power must seek fresh incorporation.

A recollection of how stocks were manipulated in Klondike exploration companies must have been uppermost in the Colonist's mind when it delivered itself of the editorial under comment. There are no dollar shares for ten cents here; no large blocks of stock to figure heads. One dollar's worth of stock is to be issued for one dollar, and the question is whether the city of Victoria is justified in investing her money or not. That is the real issue, which the Colonist begs.

The jumbling of subsidies, bond issues, share subscriptions, Sidney railway indebtedness, and authorized capital stock of the company, and calling it the capital of the company, is such rank nonsense that we are forced to the conclusion that the Colonist is wilfully trying to kill the project. The capital of any company is the amount represented by the stock paid up, which is its excess of assets over liabilities, and in this instance the capital of this road is arrived at by deducting from the cost of the road the liabilities against the road then existing, any bonuses given to the shareholders. Would the Colonist consider a man who had \$50,000 in his business of his own money, and who owed his banker \$20,000 and \$20,000 to other creditors, to be justified in asserting that his capital was \$90,000? That is exactly the financial proposition the Colonist is trying to prove.

As for the amount due to the city by the Sidney road for interest paid under its guarantee, it would be folly to imagine that a company taking over this road would assume its indebtedness, other than the registered bonds. The citizens must face this fact, that what they have paid is a clean loss, and the city's energy must be in the direction of placing this railway in such a position as to prevent a recurrence of payments for interest. Let the city get a judgment against this road for its debt to the city and proceed to realize. You are then face to face with a prior charge of \$300,000. Does anybody think that the city would get enough to pay legal expenses out of the sale?

The Colonist seems to have constituted itself the engineer of the road, and has selected the most practical route. Yet it seems to us that there are other routes practical and more desirable to bring the road into the centre of the city, and avoid those wonderful "drops" the Colonist loves to linger over. Because, argues the Colonist, a railway is 57 feet higher at its starting point, it must therefore come in on a trestle 57 feet high at the terminus. According to this argument the C. P. R. line at Vancouver should be on a trestle 5,026 feet high, as that altitude is reached at Stephen in the Rockies. Such is the ridiculous position the Colonist has got itself into by trying to deal with financial and engineering problems. As a matter of fact there is less than 7 feet of difference between Hillside avenue and the city market. A grade of one per cent. is an easy one, but this will prove to be less than a sixth of one per cent.

Assuming that the city subscribes for \$500,000 stock and \$250,000 is disposed of at par to outsiders, this, deducted from the authorized capital, would leave \$1,250,000 not allotted. Is the Colonist hugging the notion that this amount is to be used for "stuffing the hungry maw"

of those who oppose any project that will benefit Victoria, unless they are "in on it"? If so we can assure the Colonist that those people are going to get "badly left." If they want any stock in the road they will get a dollar's worth for a dollar.

Major Pallin, a British veterinary officer, fears the frightful horse plague peculiar to the Transvaal—the horse sickness, the tsetse fly, the tick tick. The first is worst, generally appears in February, rages throughout the warm months and sweeps off thousands of horses. He says the British army in the Transvaal may be seriously hindered if the campaign is not over by February, by having its cavalry mounts decimated.

Lord Methuen's chief of signalling, a highly important post, is the Hon. E. D. Loch, only son of Lord Loch. He is master of heliography, and it is due to his clever work that communication has been opened with Kimberley. He pressed Lord Methuen to buy a wireless telegraph apparatus, negotiations were nearly completed when an agent of the Transvaal came along offered double the price and got the machine.

St. Paul Pioneer Press contributes this to the end-of-the-century controversy: "Ladies of a certain age will decline to follow the ninety-nine-year-in-a-century method of computation. To be one year old on the day of your birth would be beginning this earthly pilgrimage with an intolerable handicap."

News from Mafeking would be greatly welcomed. That it is not captured is proved by the silence. No fear of the Boers repressing a roar of glee over such a prize.

Re-Defined Boundaries

Department of Mines Reorganizes the Mining Divisions of the Province.

The Heights of Land Substituted for Lines of Longitude and Latitude.

By a notice in last night's Gazette almost all of the mining recorders and gold commissioners throughout the province were relieved of their positions, their tenure of office to expire on the first day of January of the New Year. This measure which at first glance would seem a drastic one, is rendered necessary by the fact that all of the mining divisions in the province have been redefined. The same Gazette which contains a notice of their removal from office in the mining divisions, contains their appointment to the same positions in the divisions as at present defined. The fact that these officers were appointed by order-in-council rendered necessary the step just mentioned.

The re-division of mining boundaries has awakened a great deal of interest among mining men, as it is a radical departure from the method hitherto pursued in determining the limits of each of the divisions. Formerly the districts were divided upon an arbitrary line of latitude or longitude. This looked well on a map, but when it had to be worked out in practice it was often an almost impossible task to define these boundaries. For instance, speaking yesterday of the new arrangement, Mr. Valieu, formerly commissioner in Omineca, said that he actually could not tell definitely where the limits of his division lay. He knew where the centre was and in a general way he knew of its extent, but it was quite impossible for him to tell exactly where his jurisdiction ended. Where the task for the commissioner was such a difficult one, it can easily be understood how confusing it must have been to the miner or prospector who had neither time nor inclination to bother with the technicalities of the matter.

The department, proceeded upon a totally different plan. Instead of considering degrees and meridians, they followed the heights of land by which nature herself has divided the province into certain districts. By this system the country is naturally divided into those sections which are drained by certain streams and their tributaries, and even the most ignorant prospector can determine by the general configuration of the country the division in which his claim or prospect lies. To draw the boundary of some of these divisions upon the map would result in a very misleading line, but in practice it simplifies matters very much, more especially for the class most interested in mining and prospecting, and this is the great object which Hon. Fred Hume, with the assistance of the provincial mineralogist, Mr. Robertson, has had in view.

Alterations have been made in the naming of the divisions in only two instances. The division of which Bella Coola is the natural centre was hitherto known as Victoria division, from the fact that it was administered by the officials of the Victoria mining division. There was no other reason for the duplication of the name of Victoria in the classification, and it resulted in endless trouble and confusion. It has therefore been named Bella Coola division. The name of Cariboo has been substituted for that of Richfield, but beyond these the old designations stand.

DR. A. W. CHASE'S 25c. CATARRH CURE
Is sent direct to the diseased parts by the improved method. Heals the ulcers, clears the air passages, stops droppings in the throat and permanently cures Catarrh and Hay Fever. Beware of cheap imitations. All dealers of Dr. A. W. Chase Medicine Co., Toronto and Buffalo

Forage Plant Cultivation

Address Delivered by Prof. D. A. Brodie, of Puyallup, at Institute Meetings.

Valuable Information Given by an Expert for B. C. Farmers' Benefit.

During December, Professor D. A. Brodie of the Puyallup experimental station addressed a series of meetings of Farmers' Institutes throughout British Columbia on the subject of Forage Plant Cultivation, and as he gave some exceedingly interesting information which the farmers of the province will be glad to have for reference, the address is published in full below.

Since beginning the forage plant experiments in Puyallup, I have been asked a number of times of what practical value these experiments were to people on this side of the mountains, where everything grows so luxuriantly.

People who ask such questions, I am happy to say, are few, but nevertheless such questions are asked. The very fact that Eastern Washington has commands the highest price on our markets is sufficient to show that the question of forage plants is an important one with us. At the present time Puget Sound hay is quoted at \$11-\$12, while Eastern Washington hay is quoted at \$17. It is claimed that Puget Sound hay gives horses the heaves, which is true, but what is the reason for this difference? While from a technical standpoint it is not accurately known just what the real cause is, it is generally accepted, I think, that it is due to a difference in the process of curing.

On this side of the mountains where the atmosphere is humid even in the summer months, it takes a longer time and more work to make good hay than it does on the east side. In the Palouse country where the air is dry and where winds are common, hay can be cut in the morning, raked and stacked up in the afternoon and in three days is ready for the barn, bright and green, having had no sun to bleach it.

Here, however, hay can not be put up in that way; where it is very heavy it is necessary to scatter it with the tedder or by hand and unless the weather is bright all the time it has to lie a good while in the field. In fact, practically all the curing is done by the heat of the sun, such thing as cocking it green being impossible on account of there being no-drying winds.

Another thing that interferes very much with making good hay here is that most of the hay is caught in the June rains, and most of it, or at least a large part of it, gets wet and discolored before it can be housed. The same trouble exists in Eastern Washington. Early hay, such as orchard grass, nearly always gets a soaking while being cured.

Hay thus cured is rendered less palatable from bleaching and also from the dust that it accumulates. It is the opinion of some that the dust on the hay is the cause of the heaves. While this is perhaps in a sense true, it is evident that the kind of dust has something to do with it, for although the Eastern Washington hay is nearly always dusty, it seldom affects horses in the way Puget Sound hay does.

It seems to me, and I have heard others express the same opinion, that the disease is not caused so much from the dirt or silt that is gathered up in the hay, but rather that, in the slow process of curing on this side of the mountains, especially with hay that has been raised on wet and muddy soil, and which is affected with some other fungus or bacterium, the spores of which are more injurious to the lungs than common dust.

However, as before stated, the true cause of the trouble is as yet an open question, and can only be eliminated in one of two ways. First, to find out what kinds of soil are best for curing; if this cause is and apply a remedy; if a practical one can be found, or, second, to obviate the trouble by introducing new grasses and forage plants that will mature later in the season than those now in general use.

For instance, if instead of orchard grass, timothy or clover, which are really for cutting anywhere between June 15th and July 10th, during a time of the year when wet weather is expected, we can find some plants which not only possess the same fodder value as those mentioned, but in addition will mature later, say from July 15th to August 15th, when the weather is usually more settled. If our haying season could be changed to a month later, hay could then be cured with much less risk of loss and injury.

In order to do this later maturing plants must be found, and it is partly with this in view that the experiments I mention are being carried on. Another problem of no less importance than the one just mentioned is the establishment of pastures on some of our waste lands. Stretching south from Tacoma and Olympia to Tenino is an area of land forming a large part of Pierce and Thurston counties, which is practically useless on account of the gravelly nature of the soil. It is true that there are patches of good land scattered here and there, which supply a number of large dairies, but for the most part this land is far from being productive. Much of this land can be bought for from \$1.75 to \$3 an acre, and it is not uncommon to find a dairy of fifty or seventy-five cows which has a range of five hundred to two thousand acres. The main question is this region is pasture and the problem of finding forage plants which will thrive on these dry prairies is one that the experiment station is called upon to solve.

To some who have seen this section of country, this may seem like a visionary scheme. It is, however, I think, within the memory of most of us when the Rocky mountain plateau was included in what was called the Great American Desert. It was not until 1873, when the Union Pacific railroad was pushed across

the continent, that the value of this region as a pasture range became known. We also remember how capitalists and stockmen flocked into this country, and in a few years vast herds of cattle, sheep and horses were everywhere to be seen. The result of this was that the native pastures were killed out from overstocking. Lately the United States department of agriculture and the experimental stations of the various states concerned, have taken up the problem of re-establishing these ranges and in many sections with great success.

When we think of the small rainfall of the Rocky mountains as compared with the rainfall on the west side of the Cascades, it seems as though the problem here ought to be correspondingly easy. If such plants can be found a great deal of our waste land, hitherto considered barren, may be rendered profitable. The rapid development of the dairy industry in the West demands that something be done along this line. Besides, if hardy plants can be established on these waste places, it will be an impetus to the beef industry, a branch of agriculture to which too little attention is being given. In fact, the effect can hardly be over-estimated. The growth of these plants would furnish humus to the soil, a large part of the moisture which now so readily leaches away to the sea would be retained. Grain, fruit and many other enterprises would be established and thrifty farms and good homes would in a few years cover the now desolate waste.

I have merely stated two of the reasons why tests should be made with the various forage plants on this side of the mountains. One other is, however, worthy of mention. Each year seed firms send out catalogues to the farmers all over the country, and in making his collection of seeds, the purchaser ought to know before-hand which plants do well and which do not. Especially is this true in the case of the grasses and leguminous plants, which differ so much in their usefulness on different soils and under different climatic conditions. New seeds too are being continually thrown out on the market, the usefulness of which may be established in some other section, but may never have been tried here.

The grass garden affords an object lesson in which the different plants illustrate their respective qualities side by side. Here the visitor forms comparisons, learns the distinguishing characters of different plants, and draws his own conclusions as to the qualities of each. This year about fifty varieties of forage plants were sown, and although in six months' time reliable conclusions can hardly be made, yet I wish to mention some of the principal kinds that indicate future usefulness.

Vicia Villosa, hairy vetch or sand vetch, was tried on both hill and bottom land, and although it did not mature this year it made a good stand in both soils. This is recommended in some parts as a good hay plant, but unless it is sown with rye, oats, or some such plant to hold it up, it is practically useless for hay, as it lies flat on the ground and forms a tangled mat. It is, however, much relished by cattle. It has been suggested that it would make a good crop for green manure, and it undoubtedly would if it could be plowed under, but the same difficulty would present itself here as in the case of the hay, viz., that the tangled mat would be very apt to interfere with the plow.

Arrhenatherum avenaceum, tall meadow grass, made a fine growth on sandy loam, but its one great drawback, both here and in Eastern Washington, is that it is subject to smut.

Bromus inermis, Russian forage plant, cannot be recommended with the same zeal that it was in Eastern Washington. Sown in the spring it did well on both hill and bottom land and is still doing well on the hill, but the bottom is a standstill as though it had been frosted. Some seed of this was sent last May to Mr. Geo. J. Dougherty, of Lakeview, Washington. It was sown on one of the rockiest parts of the prairie and the best account was doing finely, notwithstanding the severe test during the dry season. It is well worth a more extended trial.

Several of the brome grasses are well adapted to the Puget Sound country. Bromus Hookerianus grows naturally along fences and waste places and on all kinds of soils. It is worthy of a trial as a hay and pasture grass.

Three native bunch grasses from Eastern Washington, namely, Poa Nevadensis, Agropyron divergens, and A. pseudorepens, were tried on sandy loam and all made a fair showing. They, however, seem to lose some of their bunching habit on this side of the mountains. All are worthy of a more extended trial.

Several other grasses have indicated by their growth this season to be worthy of further experimentation on different soils. The following are to be tried during the coming year on the gravelly prairie south of Tacoma. Bromus inermis, B. scaberrimus, hairy vetch, meadow fescue, Agropyron divergens, A. pseudorepens, Pot Nevadensis, and as many others as seed can be procured.

Of those that did not do well the following may be mentioned: Crimson clover, Alfalfa, Bromus freyriaristatus, etc. Many seeds did not grow at all, but will be tried again in both fall and spring. One thing is noticeable in introducing seeds from other sections; seeds that have been raised here, germinate more readily, grow faster and are in almost every case superior to the introduced seeds. The second year of a test is then a better time to judge. In other words, a seed must become acclimated before its adaptability can be determined. A good many seeds have been sent here for trial from the United States department of agriculture, most of them having never been tried in America.

short seasons demand for this purpose a variety of corn which makes a heavy growth and matures early, since it seems to be the prevailing idea, and experimental tests bear it out, that corn makes the best ensilage when fully matured.

Sugar beets, as a food for dairy cows, are coming into prominence and experiments go to show that Western Washington is an ideal place for them.

Scourge of the Orient

Six Deaths Have Occurred at Honolulu—All in Chinese Quarters.

Coast Quarantine Officers Detaining All Vessels From That Port.

The news received by the Aorangi that bubonic plague has reached Honolulu has created considerable alarm along the coast, and all the quarantine and health officers from San Diego to Williams Head have been instructed to keep a close watch over the incoming steamers from there and the other affected ports in the Orient. All will take strenuous precautions to prevent the introduction of the bubonic plague on this coast.

As the Aorangi did not bring mail from the islands the details received of the progress of the plague were brief. Mail received via San Francisco, by the steamer Centennial, which left the same day, however, not only confirms the news received by the Australian liner, but increases the death roll. On the 19th of the sailing of the steamers there were six deaths. The plague was confined to the Chinese portion of the city, and this part of the port was under strict quarantine, and no ingress or egress was allowed. The residents of Honolulu are organizing to fight the plague. They have subscribed \$25,000 to a fund being raised for this work. In consequence of the plague, the shipping business of the island port has suffered considerably.

All inter-island trade is at a standstill. The Centennial arrived here on December 15th from Manila, but was not allowed to dock until the following day. Nine of her crew were permitted to land. No new cases had, however, broken out from December 12th to the 19th. As stated yesterday, it was given out that the quarantine was to be raised then.

That the San Francisco health officials are taking all precautions to prevent a possible admission of the disease to that city is shown by the fact that the steamer Centennial, and the steamer Newport and Tartar, which also arrived from Manila via Honolulu, have been ordered into quarantine to be fumigated and disinfected. All will be detained at Angel Island station for some time. The steamer Gardner from San Francisco to-day from the Orient, via Honolulu, will also be sent to quarantine and held until all danger is past.

News received from reliable sources in the east state that the disease is prevalent in China and that many unusual events are being put forward there. It was in north China that its ravages were most severe. At Newchang over two thousand died. From that port the disease was carried to Kobe, Japan, where it is now prevalent and many there are dying from the effects of the scourge. Singapore is also affected, and all persons from there are being quarantined. According to the statement of one of the most learned Japanese doctors, one who discovered the plague germ, the disease was carried to China to Japan by rats in the hold of a steamer. Rats, he says, are the greatest carriers of the disease. It is said that the quarantine officers at Manila are taking precautions to prevent its introduction there. On the recently arrived Orient liners no Japanese passengers have been carried, due to the fact, it is said, that the companies do not care to run the risks of detention entailed, should one of the little brown men be suspected of having the plague.

Bombay are to the effect that the plague is rampant there, and now comes a brief cable from London announcing the fact that there had been an outbreak in New Caledonia, the far away French colony in the southern seas. Ten Kanakas succumbed, and four whites were attacked, and when the last news was received the disease was on the spread.

Seldom before has the dread "Scourge of the Orient" been known to travel so now. Last summer there was an outbreak in Oporto, Portugal, and many crowds of Portuguese died. From thence it was carried by steamers to Madagascar, and it has made its appearance in South America. But last week it was in quarantine at the big eastern city, the captain and cook died from the disease.

Although the health officials of the coast are taking all precautions against the introduction of the plague, it is said that it would have little chance of gaining a foothold on the coast, particularly as the north as this port owing to the prevailing cold weather.

DON'T RUN CHANCES by taking or stop a chill. Pain-Kill is sweetened will do you more good. Avoid substitutes. There's but one Pain-Kill. Perry Davis' 50c. and 60c.

CASTORIA

For Infants and Children.