

THE MAGIC CARPET UP TO DATE

How Our Army was Whirled to the Front.

(Julian Ralph in London Mail, May 31.)

Princes Etoussain took and spread the carpet, and as soon as he had formed his wish, he and his officer whom he had brought with him were transported to the caravan...

Now that we appear to see the end of the war and its trials and tests, we can almost confidently say of one of its accessories that it has been wholly admirable...

I refer to the Cape government railway system, by means of which the British fought a war in which they were obliged, as it were, to land troops and supplies at Gibraltar, and rush them to the Pyrenees at first and then on to Paris.

A SPLENDID PERFORMANCE.

To move 200,000 troops as fast as they can be handled, and hurry after them their tents and arms, horses, ammunition, fodder, and food, would strain the resources of a standard gauge double-track trunk line in England; yet not a hitch occurred in the performance of this feat by the narrow gauge single-track railway which we practically commandeered in South Africa.

"Which we practically commandeered," as you shall see, and yet which continued to discharge all its normal functions as if there was no war to strain its resources.

The Cape government railways comprise a system of, roughly, over 2,000 miles, which consists of three main lines: one from Cape Town, one from Port Elizabeth, and one from East London.

The war crippled the railways at the point of junction with the railways of the Boer Republic, where the men kept further the paralysis further and further down into the colony until at one time the junctions at De Aar and Naauport were threatened, and the junction with the East London line with the other two main lines was actually destroyed.

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The railway is presided over by the railway department, which is called the commissioner of railways. Unfortunately for Great Britain, the disloyal Bond was in control of the government when the war broke out, and the world witnessed the amazing spectacle of a colonial government, or rather the crown, and willing to subject itself to a change of common feeling with those who had for nearly twenty years engaged in an underground conspiracy to drive the English out of South Africa.

To say the least, the commissioner of railways did not facilitate the assistance given by this railway to the imperial forces. But he was rendered helpless by the fact that the complexity of the working force of the system, from the executives down to the men, was wholly different—wholly loyal.

Have the English ever soberly thought of one fact in connection with the past Boer supremacy in South Africa—and have they duly congratulated themselves upon it? The fact I mean is this: that the wretched South African, unclean Boer has seen his country developed against his will and without his collaboration.

The consequence is that the Uitlanders run his post offices, his railways, and his telegraphs. He has not brain enough to distribute letters, act as guard on a cattle train, or carry a message from a telegraph station to a neighboring farm.

When South Africa passes into English hands the Boer will still cling to the wilderness and its dirt, and will never be in the way of those who turn the wheel of progress.

The task before the loyal working force of the Cape government railway was for every man to do his best, and for all to rise to the extraordinary occasion. They had to keep the civil traffic going as well as to support the enormous pressure of military business. It was predicted that civil passengers, especially in the short suburban runs in and out of Cape Town would have to be carried in goods

trucks, and that many trains would have to be discontinued, but the railway people are now able to boast with natural pride that they did not subject the regular passenger traffic to any inconvenience.

SOME SURPRISING FIGURES.

Between November, 1899, and the following February the railway carried for the military authorities 18,000 animals and 37,000 tons of stores on the western lines, and, on all lines, 70,000 men and 50,000 horses.

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During the earlier months of the war great anxiety resulted from the absolute necessity for pushing the rolling stock well to the front, where it was constantly menaced by the Boers, and had to be pushed back to the junctions where it was to be stored, and the rolling stock required to be so distributed that if, and when, junctions were destroyed, there should be such a proportion of engines and vehicles at each of the three lines as could continue to be utilized.

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SECRET BOOK-KEEPING.

To debit the imperial government with the usual traffic charges upon troops in passenger trains and upon food, forage and guns, would have only entailed an immense amount of book-keeping, but it would have put on record, for the guidance of disloyal persons, the movements, number and destinations of our soldiers and a complete betrayal of the weight and destination of the guns and supplies hurried to the front.

In future wars this method will be copied because it combines economy with a secrecy which is valuable beyond computation. I did not verify the figures, but have heard that the prices charged against the imperial government are equal to a penny per mile per mile, three pence per ton for a horse, and five farthings per ton per mile for supplies.

It was Colonel Girouard who had the wit thus to parallel the civil railway system with his own military system, appointing an officer of the Royal Engineers to watch and to treat with every man in an executive position on the railway staff.

A plan which was adopted by the military duplicates all the railway officials, from the managers to the station-masters, with military officials. The principle is thoroughly good, and in practice has worked very well.

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THE CIVILIAN MANAGERS.

The civilians to whom the utmost credit is due for the flawless work done by the Cape government railways are C. B. Elliott, general manager, and T. R. Price, chief traffic manager.

He was at first registrar to two judges, and then being called to the bar, he returned to the civil service. He became assistant commissioner of crown lands and public works, and when it was decided to appoint a general manager of the Cape railway, he was selected. This was in 1898.

Mr. Price, the chief traffic manager, joined the railway service in England in 1883, and received an unusual training, being educated for that profession as men are trained for any of the older professions.

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THE TRANSVAAL WAR.

Dr. A. B. Walker's Opinion of the Boers as Diplomats.

The Hon. Bourke Cockran Will Never Set the Universe on Fire.

In one of his lectures recently on the Transvaal War, Dr. A. B. Walker, the Negro barrister-at-law, speaking of the Boers, amongst other things, said: "They disregard all the usages and customs of modern diplomacy."

And, then, there are the peace delegates. They went to the United States to get that nation to use its influence to bring about peace, while at the same time President Kruger was sending his emissaries to the Boers to urge them to lay down their arms until he whipped England and it should take to the day of judgment to accomplish it.

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CHINA MUST BE SUBDUED.

That Task Now Imposed on the Civilized World.

Concerted Action to Inflict Proper Military Punishment or a Scramble for Territory?—Powers Facing that Problem—Russia Under Suspicion.

(Special Cable to N. Y. Sun.)

LONDON, June 18.—Whether the more serious reports from the Far East are true or false, there remains no room for doubt that the task of subjugating China has now been imposed on the civilized world and must be assumed instantly and systematically.

The true nature of the situation was fully realized by Lord Salisbury two days ago when he summoned to the Foreign Office the chief American diplomat on the British policy. The ominous truth is likewise perfectly understood by the Paris, Berlin and St. Petersburg governments, which will be the principal actors in the great drama about to be enacted.

The question of the moment is, and the peace of the world is involved in its answer, Can the tentative agreement for sending a joint expeditionary force to Peking be extended to the operation of the great punitive army which must now subdue China? The issue, unfortunately, is not as simple as it seems at first glance. It would be an easy problem if each power had men available in similar numbers and position as have the United States in the Philippines, but England would have to send men from India and South Africa, and France and Germany from home, if each country contributed an equal contingent.

The point to be settled before any genuine harmony of the powers is possible is simply this: Will Russia consent to forego any individual and disproportionate advantages, no matter how large a part she may take in the subjugation of China? Furthermore, will she undertake the task in hearty co-operation with all the other powers available as a strictly, and not a halfhearted, ally?

There are several causes for the unfavorable opinion of policy which, as intimated above, have been expressed in Europe. One is found in several despatches sent before the wires were cut, and another is found in the fact that the United States had asked for instructions without receiving replies.

There is little disposition in Europe to analyze the real causes of the Boxer uprising. Other than the missionary question would become prominent. It is so generally assumed that political intrigue is at the bottom of the trouble, that a basis of permanent anti-foreign prejudice is ignored.

When Li Hung Chang was last in Europe he frequently talked of the missionary question, which, he said, must sooner or later cause serious trouble. He pointed out that there were plenty to carry on the work if it were not carried on, which he did not by any means admit.

Along this line it is curious that rumors were in circulation in diplomatic quarters a few days ago that the Russian government had made inquiries as to the possibility of Europe and America permitting the Chinese government to place certain restrictions on the immigration of missionaries.

It is a curious demonstration of how small the world has grown, and of how interwoven are all its affairs, that today's rumors that President Kruger is at last ready to surrender should have an important bearing, and peaceful one, on the great issue which the chambers of Europe must decide within the next few hours.

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THE OTHER ONE.

Here are some tender verses by Professor Hae, a Russian poet, which suggest that he has real inspiration in his art.

Sweet little maid with wistful eyes That laugh all day through the tangled hair, Gazing with baby looks so wise Over the arm of the oak chair.

Hold me close as you softly stand, Watching the dying embers shine; That shall I feel another hand That needed once in this hand of mine; Poor little hand, so cold and chill, From the light of stars and sun, Clasp the white hand that once held, That hides the face of the sleeping one.

Laugh, little maid, while laugh you may, Sorrow comes to us all, I know, Better perhaps for you to stand Under the robe of drifting snow. Sing while you may your baby songs, Sing till your baby days are done, But oh, the ache of the heart that longs Night and day for the other one.

A POOR BOOK.

The New Canadian Geography to be Prescribed by the Board of Education, for New Brunswick.

I have read with considerable interest the review in your May issue by A. R. Ram of the New Canadian Geography, published by The W. J. Gage Co., Toronto.

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