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Fighting Near Modder River

Pretoria Dispatch Says Hostilities Were Resumed on Wednesday Morning.

Gatacre Reinforced and He Is Expected to Take the Offensive Shortly.

The Boers Are Mounting More Heavy Guns Around White's Position.

(Associated Press.)

London, Dec. 8.—While there is nothing in the latest messages from the British camp at Modder River which indicated an immediate advance, it appears that Pretoria has news that fighting was resumed on Wednesday. It is not shown, however, whether Gen. Methuen has advanced on the new position taken up by the Boers, or merely engaged in a reconnaissance in force.

Reported Relief of Mafeking.

Reports were again current at Orange River on Tuesday, Dec. 5th, that Mafeking had been relieved.

It is known through dispatches from Magalapye that preparations were completed there to advance in force on Nov. 15th from Rhodesia, for the purpose of repairing the railroad line and restoring communication with Colonel Baden-Powell.

The Bowers, however, were strongly entrenched near Gaberones, midway between Magalapye and Mafeking.

Reinforcements for Gatacre.

Reinforcements are rapidly arriving at Sterkstroom to strengthen General Gatacre, including the much needed artillery.

The authorities expect speedy news that Gatacre has taken the offensive, thus diverting a portion of the Orange Free State forces now obstructing the advance of General Methuen.

Skirmish With Boers.

A detachment of Cape police had a skirmish with Boers on Thursday, Dec. 7th, near Indwe, while Gen. French reports important reconnoitering on Wednesday, Dec. 6th, from Naauwpoort, showing preparations to attempt the recapture of some of the British towns occupied by burghers.

In Communication With White.

A war office dispatch from Buller confirms the statement that heliographic communication has been fully established with Ladysmith, and Buller and White have been conferring as to their future movements.

WESTERN BORDER.

A Dispatch From Pretoria Reports Fighting Near Modder River—Dissensions in the Boer Camp.

Pretoria, Wednesday, Dec. 6.—Fighting commenced near Modder River at 6 o'clock this morning.

Isolated.

London, Dec. 8, 6.25 p.m.—The war office has just issued the following:

"No further news has arrived from General Methuen to-day, but the following has been received from the Orange River station:

"A railroad culvert was blown up near Graspan this morning. The telegraph was also cut.

"Guides report heavy firing of guns in the north."

The foregoing implies the Boers cut the line of communication behind Gen. Methuen, who is apparently fighting.

Cronje's Complaint.

New York, Dec. 8.—The Herald today prints the following advices from special correspondents to the London Telegraph:

Modder River, Monday.—It is reported that serious dissensions have broken out in the Boer camp between the Transvaalers and Free Staters. Gen. Cronje insists on putting Transvaaler officers in command of the Free State forces, and says that the latter will not fight.

A Canadian Killed.

Quebec, Dec. 8.—News was received here to-day that Bertie Nathan, formerly a member of Quebec High school cadets and of the Eighth Royal Rifles, who enlisted in the Grenadier Guards some years ago, was killed at the battle of Belmont. He was born and educated in this city.

IN NATAL

Boers Have Mounted Heavy Guns Around Ladysmith and the Batteries Are Working Steadily.

New York, Dec. 8.—In discussing the present status of the war in the Transvaal a cable from London to the Tribune says that two great battles are impending before Ladysmith and Kimberley.

One leading English journal, impressed with the conviction that the situation of White's army is critical, deprecates delay and well nigh raises a cry of "On to Ladysmith." It has also published evidence of large reinforcements, which Gen. Cronje has received from Natal and Mafeking, to enable him to make a strong stand at Spytfontein. The war office, however, is satisfied to allow Gen. Buller a free hand.

The gravest feature of the situation in Natal is the marked improvement in the artillery practice of the Boer batteries around Ladysmith. While the naval gun had knocked out a big Creuzot and a howitzer, two more siege guns had been brought up, and according to the London Times dispatches, three Creuzots, four big howitzers, two batteries of long range field guns and other heavy ordnance were working steadily. The range, moreover, had been reduced all round the garrison.

Gen. Buller not only knows these facts, but has provided so strong a relief column that the siege will be practically raised as soon as Clery is ready to strike the first blow.

The British forces in lower Natal are now estimated at 27,000, and Gen. Clery will have not less than 20,000 men for operations on either flank of Colenso.

Bombardment of Ladysmith.

London, Dec. 8.—Latest advices from Frere camp show the bombardment of Ladysmith was continued on Thursday, Dec. 7th. A pneumatic gun on Umubulawana hill commenced the work.

The Tugela river is low.

Free Staters are reported to be looting Acton Holmes on the way back to the Free State border.

Steamer Captured.

London, Dec. 8.—A special dispatch from Capetown announces that the British gunboat Partridge captured the British steamer Mashona, which left New York on November 3rd, via St. Vincent, November 16th, laden with flour for the Transvaal.

The cargo will be landed at Capetown and the ship released.

Cabinet Council.

London, Dec. 8.—The cabinet held a two hours' session to-day. Lord Salisbury had recovered his health sufficiently to preside.

London, Dec. 9.—From the announcement that howitzers and cavalry have reached General Methuen and that Gen. Buller has received the heavy artillery for which he was waiting, it is thought the advance will no longer be delayed, and news of important battles in both directions is expected soon.

Ready for Sharp Fighting.

Besides foreshadowing Gen. Buller's advance, the fact that he has ordered 200 stretcher bearers from Pietermaritzburg to assist the regular ambulance corps, indicates that he anticipates sharp fighting.

The latest pigeon from Ladysmith furnished Gen. Buller with an important map sent by Gen. White, presumably showing the disposition of the Boer forces and the vulnerable points.

Bridge Completed.

Engineers at Frere camp have done a good week's work in completing the trestle bridge, a distance of over 200 feet, and an armored train is now repairing the line in the neighborhood of Chieveley.

Dum-Dum Bullets Seized.

The news from Cape Colony is not satisfactory from the British point of view. Small outpost skirmishers have occupied various points, and at Queenstown a quantity of rifles and ammunition, including dum-dum bullets and Martini's belonging to disloyal Dutch, have been seized.

The latest advices from Stormberg indicate that the Boer position there is exceptionally strong.

Prisoners at Bloemfontein.

The war office has received the following dispatch from Gen. Forestier-Walker, British commander at Capetown: "The Free State government reports that there are 35 prisoners at Bloemfontein, including Lieut. Tristram, of the Twelfth Lancers, who is severely wounded."

Reports received at Capetown from Bloemfontein say everybody has been compelled to do military duty, including Mr. Fraser, chairman of the Volksraad.

The Free Staters, it is alleged, have decided not to defend Bloemfontein, as it is not fortified, but to make a stand at Bainsvlei, south-west of Bloemfontein.

Special reports say President Steyne's mind is failing.

Excursionists Visit Ladysmith.

According to dispatches from Ladysmith excursions are running weekly from Pretoria, bringing numbers of gaily attired Dutch women who take up points of vantage on the hills and closely scan the proceedings in the town.

Siege Train Shipped.

A siege train was shipped to South Africa to-day from Southampton.

IN NATAL.

British Capture Lombard's Kop—Creuzot Gun and Howitzer Destroyed—Boers Advancing to Meet Estcourt Column.

Boer Head Laager, Ladysmith, Dec. 8.—The British made a sortie between 1 and 2 o'clock in the morning.

They crawled up a ravine and stormed and carried Lombard's Kop, which was held by the Boers, and in which were placed a Creuzot gun and a howitzer. These guns were destroyed with dynamite.

The British captured a Maxim gun and then retired.

The Lancers, Hussars and Guards made a sortie west of Ladysmith under cover of a heavy artillery fire, which the Boers returned briskly.

The British afterwards returned to Ladysmith.

The Boers losses are reported to have been slight.

A strong burgher column has crossed the Tugela river at Colenso with the object of attacking the British Estcourt column.

The Advance to Colenso.

New York, Dec. 9.—A London cable to the Herald says that the long expected advance for the relief of Ladysmith has begun in a movement toward Colenso, and that the Boers are concentrating their attention on provisioning for a retreat from Pietermaritzburg.

Shelling Ladysmith Hospital.

New York, Dec. 9.—A special to the World, dated Ladysmith, Dec. 7th, contains the following:

"The Boers spent Thursday in shelling the town, especially the hospital in the town hall in the afternoon. One shot killed one and wounded nine men. Twelve hospital orderlies are now wounded.

"General White had warned the Boer commander that the town hall was used as a hospital, but warning only produced further fire.

"The Boer guns are being fired with great accuracy, but the luck of the British continues."

Coolies Starving.

Frere Camp, Dec. 9—Two hundred and thirty-four coolies, whom Gen. White refused to receive at Ladysmith, have arrived here in a starving condition.

Court Martial.

Ladysmith, Dec. 8.—Major Brazmus and Leiut. Malan will be tried by court martial in connection with the loss of guns.

CAPE COLONY.

General Gatacre Commences His Advance—Three Thousand British Troops Are Marching on Colesburg.

London, Dec. 9.—A special dispatch from Pretoria, dated Friday, Dec. 8th, says 3,000 British troops, preceded by an armored train, are advancing on Colesburg from Naauwpoort.

Howitzers for Methuen.

New York, Dec. 9.—A London cable to the Tribune says:

"Lord Methuen will soon receive six of the eighteen howitzers which arrived in South Africa a few days ago. The remaining twelve have gone to Durban to be sent to Gen. Buller.

"It is said the two generals have been delaying their advance awaiting the arrival of these powerful guns.

"These are guns equal to the best artillery in possession of the Boers, and are capable of discharging at long range lyddite shells of fifty pounds. Owing to some reason, which is an official secret, these howitzer batteries were held in England until the Boers had dragged every piece of artillery to the battle fields, and were outclassing the British.

"Lord Methuen's infantry would have been greatly protected against loss had these howitzers been added to his artillery force before."

Purchase of Mules.

St. Louis, Mo. Dec. 9.—Capt. Marshall, an officier in the British army, has closed a contract with a local firm for 1,000 Missouri mules, to be used in South Africa.

LORD METHUEN'S TROOPS.

Infantry.	
Scots Guards, 1st battalion and reserves	1,350
Coldstream Guards, 1st and 2nd battalions	1,700
Grenadier Guards, 2nd and 3rd battalions	1,700
Loyal North Lancashires, part of 1st battalion	850
Northumberland Fusiliers, 1st battalion	850
Northamptonshires, 2nd battalion	850
South Yorkshire Light, 2nd battalion	850
1st Argyle and Sutherland Highlanders	850
Cavalry.	
Ninth Lancers	500
New South Wales Lancers	250
Field Artillery.	
Sixty-second Battery, with 6 guns	75
Seventy-fifth battery, with 6 guns	75
Naval Brigade.	
Royal Marines from battleship Monarch	250
Detachment from cruiser Powerful, with 10 guns	150
Detachment from cruiser Doris, with 10 guns	100
Total force	9,900

ENTERTAINED AT GRAND FORKS

Banquet to Visiting Business Men Last Night Was a Great Success.

(Special to the Times.)

Grand Forks, Dec. 9.—Last evening's banquet to the visiting business men made a record of which the bright little city has reason to be proud. In the magnificent dining hall of the Hotel Yale were seated 200 guests. Speeches were made by distinguished members of the party and were calculated to have a very marked influence in promoting the prime object of the trip, in increasing the bonds of union which should exist between business men of the coast and interior. The speech of the evening was made by Hon. T. Mayne Daly in reply to the toast of the "Dominion and Provincial Parliaments," to which Senator Reid and Thos. Earle, M. P., also responded. The toasts of "Sister Cities," proposed by Mr. McLeod, Grand Forks, was responded to by Mayor Goodeve, Rossland; T. McQuade, Victoria; F. Buscombe, J. C. Maclagan, J. A. Harvie, Fort Steele; J. W. Macdonald, Nelson, and "Mining Interests," proposed by Mr. Gosnell, was responded to by J. J. Campbell, of the Hall mines smelter.

Songs and music enlivened the evening's proceedings.

This morning the party visited Granby smelter, the mines and other points of interest.

They left at 10.30 for Robson, thence to Nelson for to-night.

MEETING OF PARLIAMENT.

Another Proposal to Build a Railway From Pyramid to Dawson.

(Special to the Times.)

Ottawa, Dec. 8.—Parliament has been further prorogued to January 22nd.

Logan, Jenks and Outbit, of Amherst, N. S., will make application at the next session of Parliament for an act to incorporate a company to construct a railway from a point at or near Pyramid Harbor Inlet, near the head of Lynn canal, or from the international boundary line near the village of Kluckwan, northerly to Dalton's post on Dalton trail, and following the Dalton trail to Fort Selkirk, thence continuing by the most feasible route to Dawson City.

AGAINST AMERICANS.

(Associated Press.)

Santiago de Cuba, Dec. 9.—The meeting held at the Antonio Maceo Club last evening to celebrate the anniversary of the death of Maceo, developed a violent patriotic demonstration against the Americans. This club represents the national party and is composed of colored people. One prominent colored politician said the time was nearly ripe for the spirit of free Cuba to leap from the grave of Maceo, and drive the intruders from the island.

The local press violently criticises President McKinley's message.

VENEZUELAN INSURRECTION.

(Associated Press.)

Caraccas, Venezuela, Dec. 9.—A great battle is expected to take place to-day at Maracaibo. The government has stopped all private messages. An American steamer was not permitted to enter the harbor. The report that the Colombo army will invade Venezuela is untrue.

The War in South Africa

Methuen's Column is Now Ready to Cross the Modder River.

For the Relief of Ladysmith—British Troops Marching on Colenso.

London, Dec. 8.—A dispatch from Gen. Methuen's force at Modder River, dated Tuesday, Dec. 5th:

"Boers are seen daily passing between Syptfontein and Jacobsdale laagers. They frequently fire on patrols. The Mounted Infantry received severe fire while patrolling six miles towards the north, from a hill, but there were no casualties.

"An hour's canon firing has been heard at Kimberley."

The following dispatch, dated 9 o'clock Friday evening, was sent to the war office by Gen. Forestier-Walker from Capetown:

"Telegraph and railway communication to Modder River has been reopened.

"A battery of field artillery and a battalion of infantry were dispatched from Modder River against Commandant Prins Loss's force of 1,000 Boers with one gun, who had destroyed the railroad. Our losses were 14 wounded.

"Belmont has been strengthened by infantry, two guns and a cavalry regiment.

"Troops from Naauwpoort occupied Arundel yesterday (Thursday).

"Lord Methuen reports casualties, December 6th, on patrol duty: Missing, Lieut. Tristram and four men of the Twelfth Lancers; wounded, four men."

Ready to Cross the River.

London, Dec. 9.—The Times has the following from Modder River, dated December 5th: "The river is low and the railway bridge is rapidly approaching completion. Will cross to-morrow. After extraordinary exertions the pontoon bridge has been completed."

Lord Methuen's restoration of the railway lifts a load of anxiety here, but dangers still threaten his forces.

Position of Boers.

London, Dec. 8.—A dispatch issued by the Boer agency in Berlin says:

"Commandant Prins Loss's force is near Jacobsdal, between Modder river and Riet river.

"Gen. Cronje is still on the northern bank of Modder river, his rear being protected by fortified positions at Syptfontein. The hills between Modder river and Spytfontein, and those between Pacobsdal and Riet river are occupied by the Boers.

"Commandant Delarri's force is stationed between Graspan and Honeynest Kloof."

If this Berlin dispatch is correct—and it is specially significant when judged in connection with Gen. Forestier-Walker's advices to the war office—there must be 15,000 Boers around Lord Methuen, who is believed to have 11,000 men. Kimberley, however, possessing an armored train, can materially assist Methuen by harassing the Boers from the rear.

Opposing Gatacre.

London, Dec 9.—Gen. Forestier-Walker cables from Capetown as follows:

"The Boer forces near Gen. Gatacre's column are reported as follows:

"At Dordrecht, 800; marching from Jamestown to Dordrecht, 700, with six guns; at Stormberg, 1,500; at Waterfall, a large force, strength unknown; and at Molteno about 8,000."

Boer Account of Modder River Battle.

London, Dec. 9.—A special dispatch from Lorenzo Marquez, says the Modder River battle was described by a Boer correspondent with General Cronje as "One of the fiercest ever experienced."

The correspondent goes on: "General Cronje's wing sustained almost solely the fearful attack of the British right throughout the day. The Transvaalers held their positions until seven in the evening, when the Free State troops were forced to retire by the heavy British shell fire. Cronje retired under cover of darkness after receiving the concentrated fire of all the British batteries. The Boers freely acknowledged the Herculean assaults of the British and the death-dispensing fire of the attacking infantry. They held their position thirteen hours against the flower of the British army, replying solely with their Mausers maintaining uninterrupted rifle fire. The Boer artillery was silenced early in the battle through the overwhelming number of the British artillery."

SITUATION IN NATAL.

Boers Report that the British Are Advancing on Colenso.

Pretoria, Dec. 7.—A dispatch of today's date has been received from the head laager near Ladysmith:

"The British are advancing on Colenso, but last night passed without an attack. There was a desultory cannonade begun, the cannons at Ladysmith replying vigorously to our fire."

From Ladysmith.

Ladysmith, Dec. 7, via Wienen.—The British casualties since November 1st have been 5 officers and 26 men killed, 15 officers and 130 men wounded, and three missing.

The Boers are still around us in large numbers, but all within the town are well and cheerful.

THE BATTLE OF MODDER RIVER.

The following is an account of the battle of Modder River telegraphed to the San Francisco Examiner by its special correspondent, Alfred Kinnear:

Modder River, Nov. 29.—General Lord Methuen marched northward from the last battlefield at Belmont with the knowledge that another and severe battle would have to be fought. He had ascertained that the Boers, in strong forces on both sides of the Modder river, would dispute our passage to the last extremity.

We rested well on Monday night a few miles from the river, but the entire force was on the march again before dawn yesterday, one brigade far on the right, another well on the left. Soon after five o'clock we came in touch with the enemy.

Our Artillery Opened Fire.

After half an hour of shelling the Ninth Lancers and mounted infantry went forward and found the Boers in a farm, hotel grounds and pleasure gardens, but apparently not in force. All the buildings were surrounded by low walls, behind which hundreds of Boer marksmen could be concealed.

General Pole-Carew's brigade, on the left, was sent to make a feint attack in the hope that they would draw the enemy away, while the Guards' brigade forced a passage of the river. All this time a terrific artillery and rifle fire was in progress. About 9 o'clock the Lancers became engaged with the enemy. As they retired the Guards were pushed forward to the buildings mentioned. Little sign of life could be seen until the Guards got within 100 yards of the low walls, then

A Murderous, Appalling Fire

opened upon our men. The walls of the farm buildings vomited continuous torrents of lead. It was almost an ambush. The Grenadiers, the leading regiment, appeared to be almost cleared off the ground by the storm of bullets. The Guards fell back and took what cover they could. All the time the Boers played upon them with several Hotchkiss guns, which, however, were fortunately fired too high to do much execution. The fire from the Boer machine guns split and disabled a Maxim belonging to the Scots Guards.

British troops seldom faced such a rifle fusilade. They

Never Once saw the Enemy

and were unable to raise head or foot from the ground without being riddled. The infantry attempt failed to advance a yard in the fact of such a fire. By a series of short rushes our men at last sought to get to closer quarters with the enemy. The British strove to press forward, pouring volley after volley into the enemy's works and the ground was strewn with our dead. The British officers set the example to their men, sacrificing themselves unhesitatingly. Thus fell Colonel Stopford of the Coldstream Guards.

At length the Scots Guards reached the bed of a dried up water course, and dashed into it while the enemy's bullets swept over our heads. Up the slope to the opposite bank they climbed and stood on level ground, exposed to the enemy's fire. The cover afforded by the water course was gone. They were assailed by a murderous fire and the Boers

Simply Rained Bullets

on our forces. No one could live under the fire and the losses were heavy.

Meanwhile the Grenadiers, Coldstreams, Northumberlands and Highlanders were pushing on both sides of the railway line, which is higher than the surrounding plain. Every one who tried to advance along it was hit. The whole line was now about 600 yards from the south bank of the river, taking advantage of the little cover procurable. The infantry lay for hours returning the Boer fire, still not one of the enemy could be seen. By this time artillery fire had been brought to bear against the farm buildings; scores of shells went through them, and the walls were soon riddled. Once the farm house was on fire, but through all the

Storm of Shot and Shell

the Boers held their position with a grim tenacity that was little less than marvellous.

Late in the afternoon part of Pole-Carew's brigade managed to get across the river, far down to the left, and maintained their foothold. We lay on our arms that night, fully expecting another day's terrific struggle, but during the night the Boers quietly withdrew across the river into their intrenchments on the north side, carrying most of their dead and wounded. Thus we gained the field, but at enormous cost, nearly 500 of ours being dead or wounded.

A GIRL'S CONFESSION.

(Associated Press.)

Bowmanville, Dec. 9.—Ida Knight, a girl of thirteen, employed as a domestic at Osborne's farm house, confessed to committing the outrageous act in that household last Sunday evening, while Osborne and his wife were at church. The girl cannot account for her action, and says her employers have treated her with the utmost kindness since being in their service. She has been remanded for trial at the next assizes.

The house was entered, it was supposed by masked men, and the servant and children driven upstairs and paris green was mixed in the flour and everything eatable; a quantity of straw, paper, etc., in the kitchen was ignited, but the flames were extinguished before any damage was done.

CANADIAN APPEAL.

(Associated Press.)

London, Dec. 9.—The Privy Council has allowed the appeal in the case of the Queen versus Demois, from the judgment of the Queen's Bench of Lower Canada.