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The Alaskan Boundary. The *modus vivendi*, by which a settlement for the present of the Alaska boundary question has been effected is of course satisfactory to the United States, since it has evidently proceeded upon the principle of conceding most, if not all, the claims of the American Government to territory in that region. The South African war and its contingencies make it exceedingly desirable for Great Britain that, as far as possible, all subjects of irritation with other nations, and especially with the United States, should be removed from the arena of discussion. The present arrangement in reference to the boundary question will hardly be satisfactory to this country, even as a *modus vivendi*, though a cordial acquiescence in it under present conditions is doubtless the duty of Canada. It is of course understood that such acquiescence in no way prejudices the claims of either country in the matter, and Canada will no doubt continue to demand that, if the British claims are not conceded by the United States, they shall at least be so far recognized as to be made the subject of international arbitration. According to the text of the agreement the provisional boundary line established by the *modus vivendi* is as follows:

"In the region of the Dalton Trail, a line beginning at the peak west of Porcupine Creek, marked on the map No. 10 of the United States Commission, December 31, 1895, and on sheet No. 18 of the British Commission, December 31, 1895, with the number 6,500; thence running to the Klehini (or Klafheela) River in the direction of the peak north of that river marked 5,020 on the aforesaid United States map and 5,025 on the aforesaid British map; thence following the high or right bank of the said Klehini River to the junction thereof with the Chilkat River, a mile and a half, more or less, north of Klukwan; provided that persons proceeding to or from Porcupine Creek shall be freely permitted to follow the trail between the said creek and the said junction of the rivers into and across the territory on the Canadian side of the temporary line wherever the trail crosses to such side, and, subject to such reasonable regulations for the protection of the revenue as the Canadian Government may prescribe, to carry with them over such part or parts of the trail between the said points as may lie on the Canadian side of the temporary line such goods and articles as they desire without being required to pay any customs duties on such goods and articles, and from said junction to the summit of the peak east of the Chilkat river, marked on the aforesaid map No. 10 of the United States Commission with the number 5,410, and on the map No. 17 of the aforesaid British Commission with the number 5,490. On the Dyea and Skaguay trails, the summits of the Chilkoot and White passes."

United States Politics. On Thursday of next week elections will be held in eleven States of the American Union. These States are Massachusetts, Iowa, Maryland, Kentucky, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Virginia, Mississippi and Nebraska. In some of the States the elections include more than in others. In Iowa, Massachusetts, Maryland, Mississippi, Kentucky and Ohio full State tickets are to be elected. Though the present is what is known as an "off year," the elections are exciting keen interest, and this is especially so in respect to those of Ohio and Nebraska, since in each of these States the contest is expected to be close and the result may have much to do with determining the chances for re-nomination of the two men whose names are now most prominently before the country as candidates for the presidency. While it appears to be generally conceded that the Republicans are likely to carry Ohio, a result adverse to the now dominant party is regarded, in some quarters at least, as possible, and

to meet such a reverse in his own State could hardly fail to damage seriously Mr. McKinley's prospects for re-nomination. There appears, however, to be less reason to expect that the Republicans will meet defeat in Ohio than that they will be victorious in Nebraska. The more prosperous condition of the west affords a much less congenial soil for the propagation of the political ideas and doctrines which led to a populist victory in Nebraska in 1896, and if the result of next week's election shall demonstrate that in spite of his best efforts Mr. Bryan is unable to hold his own State, it will be an added proof of the hopelessness of his candidature for the presidency.

The News from South Africa. Very eagerly and anxiously English despatches have been read from day to day during the week past for information concerning the situation in South Africa. At the close of the preceding week the news of victories won by the British over the invading Boer forces in Northern Natal, at Glencoe and at Elandslaagte, had aroused great enthusiasm. But as further information was received, it became evident that, though the Boers had suffered a severe repulse, the victory of the British army was less decisive than had been supposed, and had been dearly purchased in the loss of General Symon, the brave and able commander at Glencoe, with a very large number of officers of lower rank, besides a heavy loss of men in killed, wounded and prisoners. The immediately objective point of the Boers was Dundee, and the repulse which they suffered at Glencoe, which is but a few miles from Dundee, did not prevent their advance upon the latter place in strength against which the British force was inadequate to defend the town. General Yule, who succeeded General Symon in command, accordingly relinquished the defence of Dundee, with his wounded, and marched southward, toward Ladysmith, with the purpose of forming a junction of forces with General White, who commanded the British force which had successfully engaged the Boers in the battle of Elandslaagte. For a few days much anxiety was felt in reference to General Yule and his contingent, as it seemed very possible that he might be attacked by an overwhelming force of Boers, but such apprehensions have been relieved by the announcement that he has formed a junction with General White at Ladysmith. In the situation, as far as known here at present writing, there is no cause for elation. The military forces of the Transvaal and the Orange Free State are united against the British army, and the Boers are not only greatly superior in numbers to the British forces now in South Africa, but they evidently have lost none of their old-time stubborn courage and fighting ability. They are ably officered, and armed with the most effective equipments of modern warfare. European experts direct their artillery fire, nor does it appear that the Boer of the present is greatly inferior to his father in his ability to handle the rifle. Their chief commander, Joubert, is a general of acknowledged ability and well versed in military science. All the facts indicate that the subjection of South Africa will involve for Great Britain a mighty struggle. But if the present situation does not justify elation, it affords ground for thankfulness. The British forces are now concentrated under General White at Ladysmith, and he is probably being strengthened by reinforcements lately arrived from England. Sir Redver Bullers, who is to take general command of the British forces in South Africa, is now on his way from England with large reinforcements. He is expected to reach the seat of war within a few days, and then the decisive work may be expected to begin. Meantime it is not unlikely that Joubert will use the present opportunity to make a strong attack upon the British forces at Ladysmith, with the hope of inflicting a defeat upon them before Sir Redver Bullers and the reinforcements from England arrive.

The Scene of Conflict. Those who desire to have any clear idea of the events taking place in connection with the South African war should carefully study a good map of the country. It will be seen that the extremity of the continent is occupied by the British possession of Cape Colony. To the north, on the shores of the Indian Ocean, is the colony of Natal, to the west of which is the Orange Free State. To the north of the latter, and beyond the Vaal river, lies the Transvaal, or South African Republic. Ladysmith, a town of about 4,000 inhabitants, is in Natal, about 40 miles from the Orange Free State border. Here the great body of the British forces in South Africa is gathered under the command of General Sir George White. His army is believed to number about 12,000 men. Here, also, the Boer Commander, General Joubert, is gathering his forces, and a great battle is expected. Nearly due west from Ladysmith, right across the Free State, is Kimberly, famous for its diamond mines. Kimberly is on the line of railway which, running northward from Capetown, skirts the western border of the Free State and the Transvaal and has a terminus at Bulawayo, in Matabilland or Rhodesia, far to the north of the South African Republic. This railway has been broken up at various points by the Boers. Kimberly is held by a British force and so also is Mafeking, about 200 miles farther north on the western border of the Transvaal. These places are beleaguered by Boer forces, and whether or not they can hold out until help shall reach them is problematical. The latest received news from them is, however, encouraging. It appears that at both places the Boers have been successfully engaged by the defenders, and that in a battle fought in the vicinity of Kimberly on Tuesday last a superior force of Boers suffered a severe repulse.

It is to Ladysmith that all eyes are now turned as the point of supreme interest. Here the Boer commander has massed his forces for attack upon General White's army, and as the Boers are probably as well armed and equipped as the British and greatly superior in numbers, the latter can hope to win only by virtue of superior discipline and generalship. Up to present writing (Monday) there is no news of a battle at Ladysmith, though it is probable that one is now in progress; unless indeed General White has deemed it best to move his forces southward and avoid a decisive engagement until the arrival of Sir Redver Bullers and reinforcements from England, expected during the present week.

—The latest news from the seat of war, received just as we go to press, is to the effect that an engagement of an indecisive character was fought in the vicinity of Ladysmith on Monday, in which General White's whole force was engaged against a greatly superior force of Boers, believed to constitute their main army under General Joubert. The Boers were advantageously posted upon a ridge of hills having a frontage of about 16 miles. Their artillery and rifle fire proved very effective, and as they were in greatly superior numbers, the British troops which had advanced upon the Boer position were after some hours fighting withdrawn, but this was accomplished in good order. The loss on the British side in killed and wounded is estimated at 90 or 100, and the Boer loss is believed to be larger. Toward the end of the fight a British naval brigade arrived from Durban and bringing their heavy guns into play quickly silenced the artillery of the enemy. These guns, General White expects, will be of great advantage in enabling him to contend against the heavy artillery of the Boers. On the whole the result of the engagement of Monday is reassuring, since it goes to support the hope that General White will be able to hold the Boer forces at bay until the arrival of the army corps from England, which is due now to arrive in Africa within a few days. Commander-in-Chief, Sir Redver Bullers has already arrived at Cape Town.

