

The Semi-Weekly Telegraph

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ST. JOHN N. B., WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 13, 1899

NO. 26.

SUCCESS AND REVERSE

Brilliant Achievement by Hunter at Ladysmith

Minimized by a Serious Reverse at Stormberg--Gatacre Was Led Into a Trap by False Guides --Lost Above Six Hundred.

COMMUNICATION WITH KIMBERLEY.

London, Dec. 8.—General Forester, who has the following despatch, dated at 9 o'clock last (Friday) evening to the war office from Cape Town: "Telegraph and railway communication to Modder River has been re-opened. A battery of field artillery and a battalion of infantry were despatched from Modder River against Commandant (Mrs) Loos' force of 1,000 Boers, with one gun, who had destroyed the railway. Our losses were 14 wounded.

MATHURIN FACING THE ENEMY.

London, Dec. 8.—Some interesting light on the position of affairs along the western frontier is thrown by a despatch issued by a Boer agency last evening in Berlin. The despatch says: "Commandant Prins Loos' force is near Jacobsdal, between Modder River and the River. General Cronje is still on the Northern bank of Modder River, his rear being protected by fortified positions at Spytfontein. The hills between Modder River and Spytfontein and those between Jacobsdal and Biet River are occupied by Boers. Commandant Delany's force is stationed between Gras Pan and Hope's Nek Kloof."

THE BOERS GOT ENOUGH AT MODDER RIVER.

According to a special despatch from Lorenzo Marques, the Modder River battle is described by a Boer correspondent with General Cronje as "one of the fiercest the Boers ever experienced." The correspondent says: "General Cronje's wing sustained almost solely the fearful attack of the British right throughout the day. The Transvaalers tenaciously held their positions until 7 o'clock in the evening, when the three State batteries were forced to retire by the heavy British shell fire. General Cronje then retired under cover of darkness after facing the concentrated fire of all the British batteries.

MODDER BRIDGE FIXED.

The Times has the following from Modder River dated Dec. 5: "The river is low and the railway bridge is rapidly approaching completion. The first train will cross tonight. After extraordinary exertions the pontoon bridge has been completed."

METHUMB IN TOUCH WITH THE BOERS.

London, Dec. 8.—The following advice has been received from Gen. Methumb today that the following has been received from Orange River station: "Railroad culvert was blown up near Gras Pan this morning. The telegraph was also cut. The guides report heavy firing of guns to the north. Mounted infantry received a severe fire, while patrolling six miles towards the North from a hill. There was no casualty. An hour's cannon firing has been heard at Kimberley."

CANADIANS MAY BE ENGAGED.

London, Dec. 8, 6.52 p. m.—The war office has just issued the following: "No further news has arrived from Gen. Methumb today but the following has been received from Orange River station: "Railroad culvert was blown up near Gras Pan this morning. The telegraph was also cut. The guides report heavy firing of guns to the north. Mounted infantry received a severe fire, while patrolling six miles towards the North from a hill. There was no casualty. An hour's cannon firing has been heard at Kimberley."

taking part in the fighting which the despatch says is going on.

AUSTRALIANS HAVE AGAIN JOINED THE CANADIANS.

Montreal, Dec. 8.—The Star's special cable from London says today's Cape Town cablegrams announce the Australians, with whom the Canadians left Cape Town, arrived at Orange River December 3 and went into camp in the midst of a dust storm. The men are very fit and are delighted with the prospect of fighting as they were placed on active service immediately on arrival.

LADYSMITH HAS SUFFERED LITTLE.

Ladysmith, Dec. 7 (via Weenen).—The total British casualties here since Nov. 1st are five officers and 26 men killed and 15 officers and 130 men wounded, with three missing.

THE BOER REPORT ON THE BOMBARDMENT.

Pretoria, Dec. 7.—The following despatch dated today 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 this morning the naval guns in Ladysmith replying vigorously to our fire."

THE COLENSO BRIDGE RESTORED.

Freeze Camp, Dec. 8.—The trestle bridge is finished and the trains are now traversing it.

COL. GIROUARD PRAISED BY THE PRESS.

Montreal, Dec. 8.—Col. Girouard's arrangements have elicited the warm appreciation of the London press. The Daily News military expert says his plans for the restoration of the destroyed bridge will enable us to repair them and that will certainly astonish the Boers and upset their calculations on which they based their ideas of the difficulties we should meet in an advance on Pretoria.

CAN TALK TO LADYSMITH.

London, Dec. 8.—A war office despatch from General Buller confirms the statement that heliographic communication has been fully established with Ladysmith, and that General Buller and General White have been conferring as to the future movements.

DEADLY HOWITZER.

Comparison Between This Engine of War and the Ordinary Gun. A howitzer and a gun are two very different articles, writes a military correspondent. A gun is long for its weight of metal and a howitzer is short. A gun can only be elevated to a moderate angle (with the 15-pounder 15 deg.) whereas 45 deg. or even 70 deg. of elevation is nothing for a howitzer. A gun fires one charge only, but a howitzer has many.

HALF THE REGIMENT AT THE FRONT.

Orange River, Saturday, Dec. 9.—Half the men of the Canadian contingent have gone forward. Like the Australian contingent, they have been put to stiff work since their arrival and have been building sidings, erecting platforms and rendering the usual routine service. They are in excellent condition and very zealous.

PREPARING FOR THE SIEGE OF PRETORIA.

London, Dec. 9.—Russia is sending Gen. Gukelov, of the general staff, as attaché to the Boer head laager. A siege train was shipped to South Africa today from Southampton.

SATURDAY'S SUMMARY.

Gen. Methumb Has His Howitzers—Buller Got a Map From White by Pigeon. London, Dec. 9.—The announcement that the howitzers have reached General Methumb and that General Buller and cav-

ally has received the heavy artillery, which he was waiting for, that the advance will be no longer delayed and news of important battles in both directions is expected soon.

Besides foreshadowing General Methumb's advance the fact that he has ordered 200 stretcher bearers from Pietermaritzburg to assist regular ambulance corps indicate that he anticipates sharp fighting.

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

TRANSVAAL FLOUR APPROPRIATELY.

London, Dec. 8.—A special despatch from Cape Town announces that the British gunboat Printridge has captured the British steamer Mashona, which left New York Nov. 3, via St. Vincent Nov. 16 for Delagoa Bay, laden with flour for the Transvaal. The cargo will be landed at Cape Town and the ship will be released.

PERMISSION TO LEAVE FOR AFRICA.

Ottawa, Dec. 8.—Major Dobell, of the imperial army and son of Hon. Mr. Dobell, has been granted a special leave to leave his regiment and go to South Africa to join the Canadian contingent. This was at first refused.

MAIL STEAMERS AT HALIFAX.

The Huron Arrives and the Monterey Sails—Quick Passage by the Californian. Halifax, Dec. 8.—A number of letters from members of "H" Company, of the Canadian contingent to the Transvaal was received this morning, and they caused many enquiries from friends of members of the company as to health of our volunteer soldiers, their experiences on the voyage and the views of the prospects in the Transvaal. All the letters seem to agree that every member of the company is cheerful and happy and that the voyage up to the date of writing had been pleasant. Some of the letters had been evidently written or finished in a hurry, one from an officer having been written in ink and finished in pencil.

FURTHER PARTICULARS OF THE SORTIE.

London, Dec. 10.—A special despatch from Ladysmith, by way of Freeze, adds to the war office account, dated Saturday, of the capture of the Boer guns near Poppoort Hill, during the sortie of the 18th Hussars, with cavalry and artillery, reconnoitered in the direction of Poppoort Hill, with a view of cutting the Boer communications. The 18th Hussars, pushing forward, drew a furious fire and suffered heavily, losing four killed and 17 wounded.

THE BOER ACCOUNT.

Pretoria, Dec. 9.—Boer head laager, Ladysmith, Friday, Dec. 8.—The British troops made a sortie between 1 and 2 o'clock in the morning. They carried up a ravine and stormed and carried Lombard's Kop, which was held by the Boers and on which were placed a breast gun destroyed by dynamite. The British captured a Maxim gun and then retired. The Lanciers, Hussars and Guards made a sortie west of Ladysmith at daybreak under cover of a heavy artillery fire which the Boers returned bravely. The British afterwards returned to Ladysmith. The Boer losses are reported to have been slight.

BOERS CROSS THE TUGELA.

Pretoria, Dec. 9.—A strong burgher column has crossed the Tugela river at Chibula with the object of attacking the British Eastcourt column.

A DUTCH COURT MARTIAL.

Pretoria, Dec. 8.—Major Bormasus and Lieut. Malan will be tried by court martial in connection with loss of guns.

STARVING COOLIES ARRIVE.

Freeze Camp, Dec. 9.—Coolies to the number of 234, whom General White refused to receive at Ladysmith, have arrived here in a starving condition.

SUMMARY OF THE WAR.

London, Dec. 11.—4.44 a. m.—It is hard to say too much to regard General Gatacre's reports near Stormberg as the most serious defeat British arms have yet sustained in the whole campaign. Already the official advice shows that two men were killed, nine officers and seventeen men were wounded and nine officers and 596 men are missing. But it is evident that the worst is not yet known. The proportion of wounded and killed is so small, when compared with the missing—who are undoubtedly prisoners in the hands of the Boers—that the supplementary list

of casualties is awaited with serious misgivings.

It is also feared that there were serious losses of guns and equipment.

Effect on the Dutch.

The most serious aspect of the affair is the effect it is likely to have on the Dutch in Cape Colony who have been wavering as to whether to throw in their lot with the Boers. Hosts of the northern farmers are likely to join the rebellion. Besides foreshadowing General Methumb's advance the fact that he has ordered 200 stretcher bearers from Pietermaritzburg to assist regular ambulance corps indicate that he anticipates sharp fighting.

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

The engineers at Freeze in completing the trestle bridge, a distance of 200 feet and an armored train is now repairing the line in the neighborhood of Chibula.

The news from Cape Colony is not satisfactory. The latest advice from Stormberg indicates that the Boers' position there is exceptionally strong.

The war office has received the following despatch from General Fortier-Walker, the British commander at Cape Town: "The Free State government reports that there are 25 prisoners at Bloemfontein, including Lieut. Tristram of the 12th Lancers, who is severely wounded."

Reports received at Cape Town from Bloemfontein say everybody has been compelled to do military duty, including Mr. Fraser, the 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 Rainvald, southwest of Bloemfontein.

Special reports say President Steyn's mind is falling.

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

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