

COKE AS LOCOMOTIVE FUEL.

THE WAR.

The Boston & Maine R.R. began the use of coke as a locomotive fuel in April last, and the experiment then begun has proven so satisfactory as to have been continued until 100 locomotives are now in regular service with this kind of fuel. All the switching engines in the larger cities reached by the road use coke and the total number is made up by engines in passenger service. By the courtesy of Mr. T. A. Mackinnon, first vice-president and general manager, and Mr. Henry Bartlett, superintendent of motive power a representative of the 'Railway age' was recently afforded ample opportunity for investigating the use of coke as fuel and for obtaining all possible information. The results of observation may be summed up in the statement that the consumption of this fuel by the locomotive is without indication of smoke except for a slight blue haze, which appears when the engine is working hard. The writer in one ride upon one of the coke-burning engines gave rather close attention to the method of firing practiced, which was in all particulars in accordance with previous information. Most of the firing was done during stops, although with no apparent necessity for so doing, since the rule was sometimes deviated from. The fire box door was kept on the latch at all times. It is stated that it is possible to run from 12 to 15 miles between firing, and on the occasion in question the run into Boston was made without firing beyond Salem—14 miles. The train consisted of ten passenger coaches and baggage cars.

The coke used by the Boston & Maine is obtained from the New England Gas & Coke Co., closely affiliated with the Dominion Coal Co. The coal used is from Cape Breton, and a large plant has been established at Everett, Mass., from which when completed gas will be furnished to the city of Boston. On account of the present incomplete state of the piping, the production of coke, ostensibly a by-product, has been the main business. The Boston & Maine uses about 300 tons per day, and will make use of a considerably larger quantity as soon as increased facilities enable it to be obtained. The Main Central obtains a small quantity from the Boston and Maine and the Boston & Albany, on which road coke has been used to a limited extent for a few months, obtains its supplies from the manufacturers.

There seems to be little question in the minds of those who have given the matter the most careful study, that with the reduction in cost brought about by improved methods of manufacture, coke has assumed a definite place among locomotive fuels. President Tuttle unhesitatingly expresses his belief in it as the ideal fuel, and the experience of his road in its use should go far towards bringing about its consideration by other roads upon which the smoke nuisance is a problem."

The Yukon country is no longer the remote, perilous, comfortless region we had pictured it but the other day. What with railroad and telegraph communication and the commercial and social facilities a modern community is bound to surround itself with, anywhere, Dawson City is to-day a reasonably cheerful place to live in. Among other institutions it has a board of trade, whose first meeting and election of officers has been held.

The Daily News has a despatch from Ladysmith dated Tuesday at 10.30, which gives the first independent account of the cutting off of Lieut. Col Carleton's column in the engagement at Farquhar's farm. The correspondent says.

"The column was sent out Sunday night, made a wide detour and reached the spurs of the Drakensberg before dawn. Col Carleton stormed the heights with the bayonet and maintained his position against great odds, until his ammunition was exhausted and surrender became inevitable. Nearly 200 had then been killed and wounded."

The report comes from Rome that Portugal will permit the landing of British troops at Lourenço Marques. This coincides with the view strongly prevalent in some quarters here that the British invasion of the Transvaal will be made from that point.

London November 5.—Troopship Kildonan Castle the largest troopship in the world, sailed from Southampton last evening for South Africa with more than 3,000 souls on board with their kits and weapons balloons, bridge pontoons, and machine guns, ammunition and hundreds of tons of other military necessities. She takes 29 officers and 827 men of the First Welsh regiment, 28 officers and 961 men of the second Northumberland Fusiliers and 33 officers and 425 men of various regiments and branches of the service and a mascot goat presented to the Welsh regiment by the queen.

November 5.—A feint of artillery firing enabled General White to administer a severe defeat to the Orange Free State forces by the capture of the Boer camp behind Bester's Hill. For this purpose the Lancers, Hussars, Natal carbiniers and Natal Border rifles started under General French at sunrise and got within striking distance before the enemy were aware of their presence. A field battery was also sent and it secured a good position, commanding the enemy's camp which was a large one, lagged with army wagons and other vehicles.

Bester's Hill was well fortified and provided with good guns. At 9 o'clock the British opened fire, the Boers replying with spirit but bad aim. The British quickly sent a 42 pound shell into the camp, inflicting terrible loss and spreading panic among the enemy. Our cavalry then stormed the position, the Boers fleeing precipitately, leaving many dead and wounded as well as the whole camp and equipments in the hand of the British. The success will upset the plans of the Orange Free State commander and possibly will prevent them giving further trouble from the west.

Daar Junction, November 6.—A citizen of Kimberley, who has just got through the enemy's lines, says the sortie made by the British last week was a brilliant affair. The enemy outnumbered the British but were thoroughly thrashed.

The Ninth Lancashires were the heroes of the day. The manner in which they charged the superior force of the enemy on the hill was as fine a performance as the Gordon Highlanders at Dargai.

Estiourt, Natal, Saturday November 4.—It is reported that the Boers lost 800 in killed and wounded and captured in Thursday's battle on Tatham's farm, near Ladysmith. The fighting was resumed yesterday

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