

The Planet

P. STEPHENSON, Proprietor.

ALL ABOUT AN ARMY CORPS.

According to the general belief, an Army Corps amounts to a bare 30,000 men, says Answers, an old country magazine. But as a matter of fact, it is a much stronger force. For, in addition to the three "divisions" of infantry, which number close on 30,000, there are cavalry, mounted infantry, and many other kinds of troops.

An Army Corps is built up in the following way:

First, there is the unit, called a company, consisting of 113 men and three officers. Eight companies are added together to form a battalion—that is, 928 persons altogether. But there are also added a machine gun with its operators, and several officers to form the staff, so that the battalion on a war footing is about 1,000 strong.

From battalions are formed brigades. Four battalions make a brigade, but to these 4,000 men others are added, such as a company of the supply column, to take charge of supplies, a field hospital, with its medical men, and nurses, and a bearer company to bring the wounded off the field. So that a brigade totals out at 4,346 of all ranks.

Next comes the division, consisting of two brigades, or 8,692 men. But now, again, others are added. For instance, there are three field batteries of six guns each, six wagons, and a large number of officers, gunners, drivers, etc. There is also added a squadron of cavalry, a company of engineers, a whole supply column, men to bring up and distribute ammunition, and a field hospital. So that the division numbers about 10,000, all told.

Finally, to make an army corps, you add together three divisions. This makes 30,000; but once more a lot of extras are added, such as corps cavalry, numbering, generally, 187 men, corps artillery, corps engineers, balloon corps, telegraphists, ammunition park, and field hospitals. Thus, while each "division" has its cavalry, artillery, field hospital, etc., the corps, as a whole, has extra numbers of these. The general in command has also a large staff; and, taking it altogether, the army corps usually amounts to close on 36,000 men of all ranks. But now and again, for special reasons, this strong force is strengthened by a few more regiments of cavalry, as is being done at present in the case of the Transvaal expedition.

Then, every army landing in a foreign country has to move inland to do its fighting capacity. It will have to be supplied with provisions, ammunition and all sorts of stores.

The place from where they are sent is called the "base" (Durban in the present instance), and the route over which they pass is called the line of communications. Now, the enemy is always looking for a chance to swoop down on this line of communications, and, by seizing the stores, cripple the invading army. Hence, a strong force has to be sent to protect the base and the line of communications. Obviously, the number will vary according to the country invaded, and the distance of the field of action from the base.

In the Transvaal, the route from Durban up to the region of Laing's Nek will have to be protected. And the force which is being sent out to do the work will amount to 9,397 of all ranks, consisting of infantry, cavalry, artillery, engineers, etc. At the base there will also be a strong body of 2,832 men. So that the army corps, with its necessary troops, will amount to 52,138.

What this army means it is difficult to realize. When it is marching along a road an Army Corps extends into a length of twenty-five miles, or nearly half way from London to Brighton. Cavalry could, of course, go pretty quickly over ground, and so could artillery. But the march of the whole army has to be timed to its slowest members, the infantry. These can only march about thirteen miles a day. If you reason it out, therefore, you will see that if the vanguard came in view of the enemy at noon on Monday nothing could be done in the way of fighting on a large scale till Wednesday, for the rear of the army would not have arrived till noon of that day. This fact, that it takes two days for an army corps to pass a given point, gives some idea of its immense size.

To get this force together means something. Everyone, of course, knows of what is called the linked-battalion system. A battalion of troops goes to India, and its sister battalion remains at home. The battalion at home has to send out men to keep the Indian (or colonial) battalion up to full strength. Hence the home battalion is never at its full strength, it is always taking in raw recruits; and now when the home battalions have to be made up to full strength the reserve is called out. All these men, scattered over the country, have to be communicated with; they get a free railway pass and three shillings to pay expenses. They come as quickly as possible to Aldershot or some other military centre, and there they receive uniform, arms, ammunition, and the like.

The men already in the army have to get a lot of extra things also, and

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It would astonish a reader to see the list of supplies for an army corps. Here are a few of the items of the "reserve" of clothing alone:

41,000 pairs of boots.
25,000 pairs of canvas shoes.
60,000 shirts.
18,000 pairs of socks.
9,800 cloaks and great coats.
7,000 pairs of bootlaces.
8,800 each of brushes, caps, tins of grease, combs, holdalls, sponges, etc.
20,000 lbs. of pipeclay.
60,000 lbs. of soap.

This is only the reserve. The total of things carried may be guessed from the fact that a single regiment of cavalry carries 2,500 tins of blacking, 2,300 brushes, 4,650 pairs of socks, 1,944 flannel belts, and so on.

To transport the army corps to South Africa no less than 250,000 tons of shipping will be required, or a fleet of thousand-tonners numbering 250. And this is independent of all the supplies that will have to follow. The force will have at least 10,000 horses, 332 two-horse carts, 978 four-horse wagons, 328 six-horse wagons, and 98 big guns.

In addition to the fighting men there is, of course, a whole host of men for other duties, such as sappers, miners, drivers, buglers, trumpeters, telegraphers, military police, post-office clerks, interpreters, store-men, farriers, bootmakers, bakers, etc.

There are tools, stores, tents, 120 yards of bridge, sixty miles of telegraph line, twenty miles of cable, 120 ovens for baking bread, ten field hospitals, balloons, and bicycles.

The ammunition for the artillery alone requires 134 carts and wagons, drawn by 1,880 horses. For each soldier there has to be carried over 300 rounds of small-arms ammunition on to the field, and for each man three pounds of fuel for kindling purposes alone. Then there are medicines, forage, books, writing materials, cooking utensils, and hundreds of other things.

As for the duties of the different parts of the army, those of the engineers, telegraphists, balloonists, etc., are clear enough. But among the fighting men the cavalry act as scouts during the march, spreading out, in the shape of a fan, some eight or ten miles in front of the main body.

When it comes to encamping the infantry are next the enemy, with the cavalry and artillery safe behind them. And when fighting begins the cavalry first find out the position and strength of the enemy. Then the artillery leads off at a range of nearly three miles. After a bit it comes up to within a mile. When it has silenced the enemy's artillery, the infantry advance in three separate divisions—one behind the other. If they succeed in defeating the enemy, the artillery moves down the fugitives and the cavalry ride in and sabre them.

The request in Private Burrell's letter from South Africa for a copy of The Planet should remind the friends of the boys that newspapers from home cannot reach them too often.

The new voting machines are said to be a great success. That's more than can be said of the old ones, the hidebound partisans who prefer to vote any day for a name rather than for a principle.

A Winnipeg despatch says that for the coming Dominion bye-election there on the 25th, E. D. Martin, independent Liberal, a brother of Joe Martin, and A. M. Patten, Labor, are candidates already in the field. It is not known what action will be taken by the Sifton wing of the Liberals. They received a pretty thorough rout at the Provincial elections, but rumors are current that they may oppose Martin, who will stand on the old Liberal free trade platform.

The following does not make pleasant reading:—Last year's consumption of whiskey was the highest ever reached in the United Kingdom, according to the English temperance journals, being more than a gallon a head for every man, woman and child. Compared with 1878, there has been an increase in deaths from chronic alcoholism of 82 1-2 per cent. among men and of 145 1-2 per cent. among women.

It occasionally happens that the servants of the people get it into their heads that they are greater than their masters, says the London News. This appears to have been the case in Guelph, where out of ten aldermen who opposed the submission of a civic reform by-law nine sought re-election and six were defeated. Chathamites will know what to do next January if those new pavements do not materialize.

Whoever secures the chairmanship of the property committee may count on getting a difficult and thankless position to fill. As a rule, either the city's interests or the holder's popularity has to suffer. Which, in the past, has depended largely on whether the chairman controlled the fire brigade or the fire brigade the chairman. Ald. Cowan made one of the best chairmen the city ever had, but we imagine he reaped little thanks for the time he put in or enemies he made in doing his duty by the corporation.

The Department of Agriculture at Ottawa recently issued a bulletin on "Experiments in Pork Production" conducted at the Central Experimental Farm. The importance of this bulletin to the farmers of the great pork-raising counties of Kent and Essex can easily be understood. In a few days The Planet purposes reproducing this bulletin very fully and, through the kindness of Mr. Saunders, director of the Experimental Farm, who loaned it the cuts, will be enabled to make the article much more interesting by means of illustrations.

Horrible! That good Tory paper, The Chatham Planet, has begun sneering at Imperial titles. It has an article on "Our Tinpot Titled Nobility."

The Globe. Well, are the tin-pot titled nobility of this country not worth an honest sneer? You don't suppose this great family journal is going to seriously criticize the past, present or future decorating of the little nobodies who, in many instances, have had handles tacked on to their names for heaven only knows what. The amusing part of the whole business, however, is that it is our friends, the Liberals, in spite of all their professions of democracy, who are madly elbowing each other in the ribs in their struggle to get decorated.

If Mr. Whitney can read the public pulse aright he must realize that the coming man, politically, is the one who will wage a vigorous war against the ascendancy of private corporations. The Ontario ministers are so tied up with these bloodsucking concerns that they will not, cannot, dare not, do anything to relieve the people. The opposition, therefore have a clear field. Half measures or silent legislative votes, however, will not win public support. The electors are in a cranky mood at present and will only be satisfied with the most aggressive of campaigns. The wings of the private corporations must be clipped and if the Conservative opposition is not prepared to do the clipping thoroughly the electors will certainly turn elsewhere.

JUST WHAT IS NEEDED.

Minneapolis Journal.

A reasonable hint—In case of sunstroke, loosen the neckwear of the patient and put ice water on his wrists.

TERSE BUT TRUE.

Memphis Scientist.

The to-hell-with-England folk in the south will please observe that cotton takes a down-shoot upon every report of a British reverse in South Africa.

HARWICH-TAX NOTICE

I will be at Geo. Stephens store, Chatham on Saturday Dec. 30th, and January 13th, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. to receive taxes.
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1st Justice Collector.

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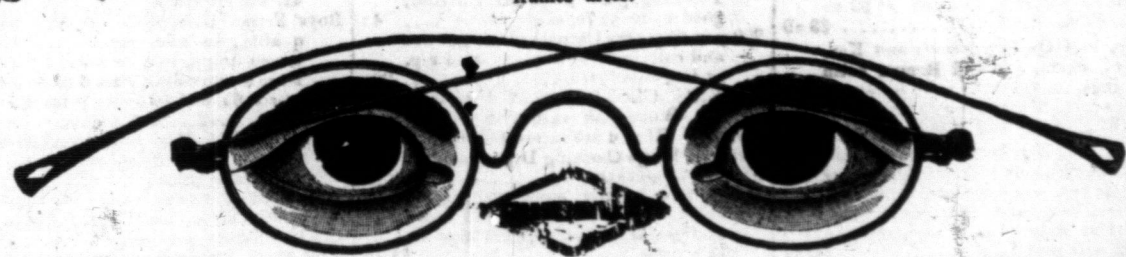
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The British naval guns at Chieveley camp continue their ineffective, long-range fire night and day, to divert Boer attention from the movements of British troops.

West Kent Farmers' Institute.

Meetings of the Institute will be held as follows:—Chatham Township Hall, Jan. 13th, 1900. Afternoon Session at 1.30 Presidents Address; 2 p.m., address "breeding and feeding of cattle" by John McMillan, of Seaford; address "breeding and feeding the bacon hog" by W. C. McGregor, of Tilbury; address "the orchard for profit" by F. M. Lewis, Burford. Evening Session 7.30, Presidents address; address "the Ontario Agricultural College" by John McMillan, Seaford; address "cultivating clover hay" by W. C. McGregor, Tilbury; address "ornamenting the home" by F. M. Lewis, Burford. Dover Township Hall, Jan. 15th, 1900. Afternoon session 1.30, Presidents Address; address "breeding and feeding cattle" by John McMillan, Seaford; address "cultivation and curing clover" by W. C. McGregor, Tilbury; address

"corn growing" by F. M. Lewis, Burford. Evening session 7.30, Presidents address; address "hog feeding" by John McMillan, Seaford; address "potato growing" by J. R. Longmore, Raleigh; address "ornamenting the home" by F. M. Lewis, Burford. Other speakers will take part in the discussion. Come and give us the benefit of your experience. Come one, come all. W. C. MCGREGOR, Pres., Tilbury.

J. R. LONGMOORE, Sec'y, Chatham.

Municipality of Raleigh.

TAKE NOTICE that the Municipal Council elect of the Corporation of the Township of Raleigh will meet in the Township Hall, on Monday, the 8th day of Jan., 1900, at 11 a.m., for despatch of business. Per Chap. 223, Sec. 254, R. S. O. A. E. ROBINSON, Clerk.