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GENERAL WHITE THOUGHT TO BE TOO PRECIPITATE

His Experience as an Indian Fighter Unsuits Him for Boer Tactics.

THE SPECULATIONS IN LONDON CLUBS

Feeling of General Distrust and Fears of a Serious Disaster to English Arms Freely Expressed On All Sides.

NEW YORK, Oct. 31.—A dispatch to the Tribune from London says:

There was a general feeling of uneasiness at every London club house last night when the bulletin from the war office was posted. Early in the day there had been rumors that the Boer had advanced on Ladysmith and had begun a fire of shells with their 40 pounders, but that the British artillery had silenced the Boer guns. It was also reported that General Joubert had ordered an advance in great numbers upon the British left flank and that a battle was in progress.

General White's report, or so much of it as the war office chose to give out, described an indecisive engagement preceded by a mysterious movement to clear his left flank, with no details of the return of the two battalions of the Royal Irish Fusiliers and the Gloucester regiment.

Experts shook their heads solemnly in commenting upon General White's mules and his doubtful expression of hope that the guns of the mountain battery would be recovered. As for the general engagement it was clear that General White had brought it on and had not been attacked by General Joubert, if he were in command. General White had sent out two brigade divisions of artillery and five battalions of infantry, covered by the cavalry under General French, to attack the position where the enemy had planted their guns.

The Boers were not where the guns had been, but were further behind,

massed in great strength and prepared to fall back upon their reserves. The British were drawn for several miles but finally returned to camp after an indecisive engagement of several hours.

Not a single line of this dispatch could be made to spell out a victory. The disappearance of the Irish Fusiliers and the Gloucester regiment with a mountain battery was a mystery which baffled the ingenuity of the optimists who attempted to explain it. There was a general feeling of distrust at midnight and fears were expressed at every club house that a serious reverse was impending, especially as the Boer guns were admitted to have a longer range than the British field artillery.

Experts in the many clubs frankly confessed that the British soldiers who have been accustomed to fight recklessly with savage tribes, such as the Sudan Dervishes, were at a disadvantage in meeting cool, war foes like the Boers, who made a practice of falling back upon their reserves and luring their assailants into ambush. It was also generally conceded that the Boers were hanging back and were not seeking to make an attack before they were fully prepared to give battle.

The arrival of General Buller will probably tend to hasten a decisive contest since he will be on the ground and General White can receive orders from him to take the offensive. The two generals are close friends and have been intimately associated in devising

the general plans of the military operations. When Sir Redvers Buller sailed from England there was without doubt an understanding between them that the field force in Natal should remain on the defensive so far as possible until the arrival of the army corps and should not repeat Sir George Colley's fatal mistake of attacking a superior force and attempting to rush the Boers as though they were Afriks or Dervishes.

General Buller was reported by intimate friends on the eve of his departure of being apprehensive that General White's combative instinct as an old Indian fighter would overpower him and that he would not have the patience required for a purely defensive campaign. There was no ground for the reports that there was any feeling of jealousy between the two generals and that General White would seek to end the campaign by a series of decisive blows and leave nothing in reserve for General Buller except the direction of a grand holiday parade through the capitals of the two republics.

When General Buller is once at the headquarters at the Cape he becomes responsible for General White's maneuvers and is not likely to allow him to remain an idle spectator while the Boers are massing their forces around Ladysmith and seeking to break off communication with the sea.

General White's forces are not posted in the broad upland valley where Ladysmith lies, but strongly entrenched on the hills 400 or 500 feet above it. There will be high ground in the amphitheater of the hills where the Boers can mass their forces and train their long range guns, but General White has naturally selected the most defensible position commanding the approaches of the town. The Boers have already been testing the range, but are proceeding with deliberation and caution.

Military writers in today's papers, who are called upon to supply theories and surmises since the censorship shuts off any precise information agree that General Joubert is not likely to begin an assault with any determination until several bridges are destroyed and wires are cut between Ladysmith and the sea.

General White's line of communication with Durban is 189 miles by railway and can be menaced from the Orange Free State passes, or any por-

tion of the Boer forces operating below Ladysmith. The Boer commanders have cut communication at half a dozen points on the western border and General Joubert is expected to follow similar tactics before attacking Ladysmith in great force. General White evidently is not content to wait behind in trenchments while communication with his base is threatened and General Joubert's army is gradually massing against him.

General Buller will have calls upon him for reinforcements from every quarter on his arrival at the Cape. The military writers do not venture to forecast whether he will divert the earliest battalions, which are expected to land ten days hence, to Natal or to Kimberley. There is a general agreement among military men that he will expect the beleaguered garrisons to hold their ground for a few weeks and that he will carry out his original plans of attacking the capital, since this will be the most practical method of weaken-

ing and drawing off the Dutch forces from Ladysmith and Kimberley. It will also enable General White's army to co-operate finally in an advance upon Pretoria.

England is so eager for America's moral support that the announcement that Admiral Schley would take a strong squadron to the Cape is interpreted as a sign of sympathy. Good feeling is also read between the lines of the utterances coming from the state department on the subjects of non-intervention and neutrality.

ANOTHER FUED MURDER.

MANCHESTER, Ky., Oct. 31.—Another murder is reported in this county growing out of the Philpot-Griffin feud. Mark Hall, a renter living on George Philpot's farm, was shot and killed. Hall did not belong to the feud and it is believed he was mistaken for one of the Philpots. Green Griffin escaped from jail last night.

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