

THE SOUTH AFRICAN WAR.

It is not easy to understand why General Cronje remained in his lines at Magerfontein until the night of the 15th. His rear guard was attacked the next morning, but resisted desperately until dark. The body of the Boers reached Klop Kral Drift, where they crossed to the south bank of the Modder River. On this day, the 15th, the British troops captured 126 wagons of the Boer transport. The next morning, Saturday, the 16th, General Cronje was in full retreat south of the Modder River. Saturday night General Macdonald, at the head of the Highland Brigade, made a forced march of 20 miles in hope of reaching Koodoos Rand Drift in time to attack the enemy, while General French, at the head of his cavalry division, pushed eastward. On Sunday, the 17th, the British made an assault on General Cronje's lines and killed and wounded. Lord Roberts arrived on Monday, the 18th, and began the tactics which forced Cronje to give up the next morning. It is easy to understand that Lord Roberts outgeneraled Cronje, but it is not easy to understand how Cronje was so completely surprised that he was not able to leave his lines until the night of the 15th. Cronje must have underrated the mobility of Lord Roberts' forces, or he must have been without information that it would seem easy for him to obtain a friendly country. It has always been reported that the Boers had many heavy guns mounted at Magerfontein, but there do not seem to have been many guns of heavy caliber surrendered at Paarde Drift. Reinforcements to reach Cronje would have to arrive by rail from Lady Smith, via Hantsfontein, or from Lady Smith via Harrismith to Bethersede, and thence westward by road to Winburg, where they would again take rail for Bloemfontein. To have moved these troops from Natal in time to help Cronje it would have been necessary to start them a week before the 20th, for by that date Lord Roberts' dispositions were such as to make reinforcement impossible. The Boers are probably only moving their positions between Bethersede and Lady Smith, while they set their camps off, and news of the relief of Lady Smith may be expected at any moment. The Boers will doubtless concentrate all their forces for the defense of Bloemfontein. If they can get there in time, but Lord Roberts is already half way from Jacobsdal to that city. It is quite likely that the scene of the war will before long be transferred from the Boers to the line of the Vaal River, which however could be turned by a strong force moving from Mafeking on Pretoria.

NOTE AND COMMENT.

Cronje literally ran his campaign into the ground. Chairman Jones' silver speech proved to be golden silence. The tariff is always ready to be quarreled about, when Congress has nothing else on hand. If March comes in like a lion, we trust it will remember that there are no Boers in this vicinity. The society girl who fears that the chain trust will gobble up the golf links has no cause for alarm. If the officers of the Iowa are docked every time she is, they must have to spend most of their time aboard ship. A jurymen in the Moloney trial says he would not go through such another experience, especially with the handwriting experts, for a good farm. Mr. Altgeld says the young man of today can not travel on the road to independence. As he thinks anarchy is independence, it is perhaps just as well. "It was something of a 'has-been' when it came. 'It was old and grizzled' older himself than I." "Was thought to be a 'trailer' on 'The Name.'" "As 'the fighter' days are all over, he is past. 'But 'sin' ask the Government a advice. 'Whether it was fit to be in 'fight' with: 'I just set his mind to think' some or twice. 'Then he squared things up for old Mafeking Hill." There were Generals and Marshals and all those, There was Captains and Lieutenants there in no. But among 'em there was no one, as we know. That could 'old a 'sit a candle in 'em 'fobs". Some American papers recently had no end of fun with The London Daily Mail because it spoke of a motor car on "a long route to New York, eight miles beyond Boston." "Another illustration of the Englishman's abysmal ignorance of things American," it was said. But for once the cap seems to fit the other head, for the Mail explains that its remark referred to England and not to the United States. There is, it seems, a village named New York eight miles from Boston, England, and curiously enough there is also a Bunker Hill in the same neighborhood. Some time ago a rich but ignorant woman wrote to the Weather Bureau in Washington, asking that she be given a lawn party on a certain day and asking the bureau to see that it was clear on that day. To make her communication more impressive, she enclosed a list of the names of several prominent people she intended to invite. "I entered into the humor of the thing," says Professor Moore, "and sent her an answer to the effect that the afternoon she designated had already been bespoken by a poor washerwoman, who wanted to obtain some rain water with which to wash clothes, and that on this account I could not possibly make it clear on that date."

The Oregonian

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TO DAY'S WEATHER - Occasional rain, with southeast wind.

PORTLAND, WEDNESDAY, FEB. 28

IT IS A NAVAL PROBLEM.

Self-interest is a controlling factor with the majority of human beings. Now what is right, but not in the rank of a great part of mankind. In this spirit of "business" the American people look upon the prospect of an isthmian canal as a "business" proposition. The advantages and disadvantages, together with the commercial danger, are being weighed by the public. The Hay-Pauncefote treaty are endeavoring to weigh the advantages and disadvantages, together with the commercial danger, are being weighed by the public. The Hay-Pauncefote treaty are endeavoring to weigh the advantages and disadvantages, together with the commercial danger, are being weighed by the public.

with a European power, the conflict must be upon the seas. We must be ready to fight, and to fight on either ocean, or in the Gulf of Mexico. It would avail nothing to race away from battle and slip through the canal, shutting it against the warships of the enemy. That would leave one coast or the other at the enemy's mercy. Besides, if we are too weak to face it, why then there are many harbors to run into. If we cannot fight successfully, a closed canal will be of small benefit, and the riches of seaboard cities would become the spoil of our foe. We must close the canal to the enemy, not by wrecking its gates or sinking a vessel in it, but by beating the foe and keeping its warships away from the entrance, as England is prepared to do at Suez. This is a far more difficult matter, perhaps, than Suez presents in England; but the situation will also present vast difficulties to the enemy. Already our navy is strong—how strong we do not know. It is easy to compare tonnage and size of guns, but we have learned that fighting quality is of chief importance. We are already vastly stronger on our feet than on our water, and we have no fleet. Our fleet consists of two or three. Our Government now has over sixty war vessels, of all types, under construction, including a number of first-class battle-ships and cruisers. It is probable that within ten years the United States navy, in fighting quality, will equal or surpass any navy of the world, with the possible exception of Great Britain's. While that navy we shall probably remain at peace. She is our best customer for agricultural staples, and we afford her a sure source of food supply. In case of war with another power, England would likely be neutral at the worst, and might become our ally.

A HISTORICAL QUESTION.

The origin of the Monroe Doctrine is a subject on which a correspondent calls in question a statement heretofore made by The Oregonian; and he requests further and more specific information from The Oregonian, in support of its former statement. If this journal is prepared to give it. Writers admit that there may be some ground for the contention that the so-called Monroe Doctrine had grown into a sort of national tradition before it was formulated by the President whose name it bears. But the suggestions drawn from statements by Washington, Jefferson and Madison are little to the purpose; for those statements were uncertain, indefinite, and even nebulous. The late Charles Francis Adams claimed the policy for his father, John Quincy Adams, who records that at a cabinet meeting held May 13, 1823, it was discussed "whether the ministers of the United States in Europe shall be instructed that the United States will not join in any project of intervention between Spain and the South American states which should not be to promote the complete independence of those provinces." This was communicated to the British government, in the following July.

John Quincy Adams was Monroe's Secretary of State, Spain was rapidly losing her American colonies through revolution, and the rulers of Continental Europe, under the inspiration of the Holy Alliance, were considering whether they should not help Spain to recover and hold them. Great Britain declined to follow or assist the Continental powers in this undertaking, and George Canning, then at the head of the British ministry, recalling the communication made by our government in 1823, proposed to send to London that the United States should co-operate with England in preventing European interference with the revolted American colonies of Spain. This was communicated to our government at Washington. Following this (December 2, 1823), Monroe embodied in his message to Congress the doctrine since known as the "Monroe Doctrine." While the doctrine is claimed by Charles Francis Adams for his father, John Quincy Adams, Charles Sumner insists that Canning is entitled to the credit; and Canning himself, in speaking of it afterwards, proudly declared: "I called the New World into existence to redress the balance of the Old."

The fantastical method of trying to find history in Sibylline leaves and Delphic oracles is not a favorite one with The Oregonian, especially in cases where it finds plain, natural and unpeachable narrative.

British citizens have a right to be jubilant over the capture of General Cronje and his command on the anniversary of Majuba Hill; but let them bear in mind that it does not end the conflict in South Africa. Less than a week ago an Englishman at Cape Town sent out a warning against the belief that one or two British successes would close the war, and declared the Boer "a foe most dangerous, subtle and powerful in methods"—an estimate to which British Generals will agree—and expresses his belief that a satisfactory settlement of the war can be brought about only by vigorous and unflinching prosecution of the campaign from all directions. Undoubtedly he is right. Relaxation of activity, temporizing with the enemy, or stoppage of reinforcements will only prolong the war. The Boer system of fighting stock, depending for a system of civilization and government that is in natural antagonism to the British system. They are in deadliest earnest, and the more vigorously the British make war the quicker and more surely will there come peace to South Africa. Cronje's defeat is not decisive of the struggle, and in all probability bloody battles are yet to be fought before equality of rights for Boer and Briton is established.

MACRUM AND HIS LETTERS.

There has appeared in various newspapers a facsimile of an envelope on which was printed "State Department, U. S. A." and on the other side the American Consulate at Cape Town, which was opened by the British censor at Durban, and then forwarded to Consul Macrum, at Pretoria. This facsimile is published in order to prove that the British censor did actually open an American Consul's letters, destined to a country with which the British are at war. It has not been doubted that such letters had been opened; but Secretary Hay says that the censor did not notify the State Department about it, and has not yet done so. He did, however, give out the statement to the newspapers, keeping the envelopes in his own hands, evidently to serve as a basis of sensational attack on the department. But he made no official report on the facts, and the department never heard of his complaint till he had given it to the newspapers. Secretary Hay says that Macrum did inquire about the matter, and a correspondent now learns that the British government had no knowledge of any interference with Macrum's mail, and moreover that such interference was contrary to instructions. We shall look in a little time for a disavowal by the British government of the act of its official, and an apology for it. If this should not be sufficient—if we are determined not to be appeased—we can take the counsel of our bellicose fellow-citizens and declare war. The British censor was probably a superserviceable fool, of the type of Macrum himself. The latter was known to be an ardent sympathizer with a people with whom the British are at war; and the former seems to have thought, in the excess of his loyalty, that he would intercept letters addressed to his countrymen, and to the effect upon our national standing, and, in a narrower sense, upon the interests of the Pacific Coast. The commercial value of the canal is known to the people of this coast, and it is well understood that it would greatly increase the effectiveness of our navy by adding to its mobility. But we naturally want to know whether the advantages to accrue from trans-shipment, and whether we desire the canal so much as to guarantee safe passage for vessels of a nation with which we may be at war. In short, would not the canal increase our dangers? Theoretically, yes, to some extent; practically, not at all. If the United States shall be at war

try prove this result is not necessary. Farmers as a class very properly resent as an impertinence the effusive pliancy that talks to them of "empty pockets" and other matters of private business, as they feel abundantly able to take care of themselves.

The health authorities of Astoria urge the citizens of that place to engage in a general rat-killing as a precautionary measure against the introduction of the plague into that port. The idea is a good one, but it may be feared that general response to the command, "Poison the rats," without more specific directions for procedure than are embodied in these words, will not prove altogether satisfactory. Poison, as every one knows, should be put out for vermin with the greatest caution, and with a proper degree of intelligence. The well-known proneness of rats that have partaken of poisoned food to die in the most inaccessible places—under the floors, between partitions, behind cellar walls—any place where in their wretchedness they can crawl away and hide—is conceded, and this order is generally obeyed, the more so because the rats are not conspicuously in evidence throughout the city, warning the people of danger from polluted air that may carry fevers and other disorders into their homes. It is all right to kill the rats, but unless terriers, cats or clubs are used, specific directions as to the manner of procedure should be given.

Raising Angora goats will, without doubt, soon become an important industry in sections of Oregon wherein the clearing of land must precede agricultural operations. Cheapness is prime requisite in making lands that are in a state of nature ready for the plow, or for seeding to pasture grasses. Experiment has proved that a flock of goats combine for land clearing purposes cheapness and thoroughness, and furthermore, that they pay their way during the process. According to the report of the Industrial Convention held at Dallas last week, the practically waste lands of Western Oregon are capable of supporting 1,000,000 Angoras without infringing upon any other industry. Whereas there are at present not more than 35,000 of these animals in all this wide range. The creatures increase rapidly, are sturdy and healthy, produce a profitable fleece and require a minimum of care. Certainly these qualities should commend the Angoras to the favorable consideration of landowners who have suitable ranges for them.

It is not necessary to discriminate against Puerto Rico in taxation in order that a precedent may be fixed against conditions that some seem to object to compel us to erect States in our new possessions. We can govern the islands as Territories and over our Territories Congress has always had plenary powers. Justice to these islands in the matter of taxation and commercial intercourse will not carry with it Spanish or Malay statehood. The people of the United States will at all times have this matter in their own hands. The objection, then, against the proposed taxation is not in itself valid. It is only in cases where it finds plain, natural and unpeachable narrative.

FOR RATIFICATION OF THE TREATY THAT GAVE US THE PHILIPPINES.

Our Washington correspondent points out that it is going to be exceedingly difficult for the Democrats to frame a platform which will bring in to them what may be termed the anti-imperialist vote, for the reason that if Mr. Bryan is the Presidential candidate, the convention cannot short of repudiating him, take exception to the acquisition of the Philippine Islands. Senator Hoar has recalled what most men remember, that the treaty of peace with Spain, which gave us our undisputed legal title to the Philippines, would not have been confirmed if Mr. Bryan had not personally insisted, with democratic passion, to induce them to vote for it; and as Senator Hoar points out, if ratification had been deferred, the treaty would have been so amended as to place the Philippines, politically and internationally considered, in the same condition that Cuba is in today.

It is argued that Mr. Bryan, even more than Mr. McKinley, is responsible for the Philippine complication, because the President was placed in a position where he was compelled to act and take responsibility, while Mr. Bryan's interjection of himself into the matter was entirely gratuitous. In this view, it is held that it will be exceedingly difficult for the convention which shall nominate Mr. Bryan to the Presidency to take ground against the completion in opposition to our control of the Philippines. If Mr. Bryan had not taken a hand in the matter, it might have been possible to formulate an indictment against Mr. McKinley and the Republican party on these grounds which would have obtained a very considerable degree of public support.

On the other hand, using Senator Hoar's argument it may be held that if Mr. Bryan had not interfered, there would now have been no Philippine complication, and the war with Aguinaldo would have taken place here, and, more than almost any one else, is the responsible party.

A LEFT-HANDED SHAKE.

Senator Francis Maynard, of New Hampshire, has just returned to his home in Nashua from Louisville, Ky. He arrived in Kentucky just after the shooting of Mr. Geibel, and witnessed the execution of the murderer. During his stay in Louisville he was introduced to Colonel Jack Chinn. "We were introduced," said Senator Maynard, "by a mutual friend, and he left hand to me. At the time I thought it a bit queer, but after I saw him do the same thing with several other men, I came to the conclusion that he was left-handed. Perhaps my face indicated my surprise at his manner of shaking hands, for he turned to me a few minutes later and remarked: 'Now, Mr. Senator, you have noticed perhaps that I shake hands with my left hand? Well, we have grown accustomed to that during the past few days. I have learned to keep our right hands close to our pockets just now.'"

ENGLAND AND THE TREATY.

While one section of the press in the House of Representatives is urging the treatment of the Isthmian canal as a purely American channel for the development of American shipping, the Ministry in England is being sharply criticised for surrendering the rights secured to Great Britain in the control of such a canal under the Clayton-Bulwer treaty, without obtaining any consideration in return, such as the Alaskan boundary. The ground of this criticism is that the American Government, or the legislative branch of it, will regard the gratuitous concession made to the United States as due solely to a weak and cowardly desire to win the goodwill of America.

SERVED SLAVE ADAMS' ADMINISTRATION.

Roswell Bardsley, of North Lansing, N. Y., is said to be the oldest postmaster in the service of the United States. He was appointed in 1829, when John Quincy Adams was President, and he has since been fixed at the munificent sum of \$12 a year. Since then he has kept his place. He is 91 years old.

THE FACTS IN THE CASE.

Chicago News. "Timkins—But is your income sufficient to justify you in marrying? Simkins—I'm afraid not. Timkins—Then what reason have you for talking such a step? Simkins—I have no reason at all, I'm in love."

CURIOUSITIES OF CRITICISM.

Amusing Condemnations of Many Masterpieces Approved by Time. In a lecture by Mr. Gwynne Collins he remarked that some of the most amusing curiosities of criticism were to be found in the writings of 18th-century critics, especially when they condescended to make fun of the works of great authors of their rude predecessors, such as Bacon, Shakespeare and Hooker. What are now recognized as Shakespeare's masterpieces were treated with great contempt by even cultivated men of the age. One of these, Thomas Rymer, in some severe criticism of Julius Caesar, spoke of the author's head being full of "the most unnatural ideas." While his history alone furnished him with good names. Not less extraordinary seemed the judgment of Voltaire on "Hamlet," which was pronounced as "the work of a drunken savage, and it was said to find our own Goldsmith writing of Hamlet's soliloquy, "To be or not to be," as a heap of absurdities. But if Shakespeare is to be judged at the hands of 18th-century critics, Chaucer and Spenser fared worse.

Very strange had been the judgment of contemporaries on the work of contemporary writers. One of the most accomplished men who ever lived, wrote of "Paradise Lost": "A blind old schoolmaster has written an epic poem on the fall of man, in which there is nothing but a childish and senseless fable." In the Edinburgh Review for October, 1807, Wordsworth's beautiful "Ode to a Daisy" was described as "that an old fellow and as long to estimate the merit of the poem." An unprinted ode on "Intimations of immortality," since pronounced to be the highest mark of modern poetry, had been called "a far fetched and unmeaning piece" by one of the Quarterly Reviewers. In the Quarterly Review that indications were not wanting that the particular vein of humor which had hitherto yielded so many of our best poets was now exhausted. In conclusion, the lecturer made a plea on behalf of honest criticism, and remarked that critics had a great responsibility, inasmuch as by virtue of a tacit contract had undertaken to judge fairly and impartially all work submitted to them.

PHILADELPHIA FOR EXPANSION.

Senior Associate Justice of Supreme Court Makes an Address.

Philadelphia.—At the dedication of the new law building of the University of Pennsylvania, Justice Harlan, Chief of the United States Supreme Court, said: "May I not add that now, more than at any period in our history, it is necessary that we be faithful to sound principles of government and liberty as related by law? Our country is reaching a critical and momentous period, and the utmost vigilance and the most unselfish services are demanded from every genuine American. The time has come when we must be Americans, through and through. We have no right to turn our backs upon public affairs or to become spectators of the drama which is being enacted before our eyes. Still less have we a right to enjoy the blessings and protection of this glorious land while continually saying and doing that which we find fault with in the hands of the enemies of the Republic. "Some people have a strange way in which to manifest their devotion to country. They rarely see in the operations of the Government anything to improve, and they never fall when the nation is having a dispute with other people, to say that our country is wrong and our adversaries right. "And they do this even while our soldiers are in far-distant lands endeavoring to maintain the rightful authority of the nation. Some have not hesitated to give the most bitter manner that those who from jungles ambush and shoot down our brave soldiers are fighting the battles of liberty and doing only what they have a right to do, while their honor is not at stake." "These men are never happier than when attempting to persuade their fellow-citizens that America is entering upon a dark and perilous future, and that what we fear most is that the liberty and well-being of the people will be lost if the Nation does not retreat the steps. For my own part, I believe that a destiny awaits America as bright as has never been vouchsafed to any people as that in the workings out of that destiny, under the leadership of Providence, humanity and transparency will be lifted up and power and grandeur will be recognized the fact that 'God is no respecter of persons' and that he 'hath made of one blood all nations of men.'"

LEE'S SURRENDER.

PORTLAND, Feb. 28.—(To the Editor.)—Who was Commander-in-Chief of the Union Army at the time of Lee's surrender? SUBSCRIBER.

THE ONLY PENNYLOPER.

Hartford Courant. Penney of Oregon—been an "ex" now and sooner than ever—holds Bryan responsible for the McKinley administration and all its works, "imperialism" and the coming gold-standard act included. He believes that Teller, or Hand, or Stevenson could have been elected in 1896, if he had been elected. They would have been nominated by the Chicago convention if Bryan had kept his mouth shut. But Bryan spoke his piece, the delegates left their benches, and the Democracy's cake was dough.

REMARKABLE GIFT.

Hartford Times. Mrs. F. E. Buttle has offered the New York Public Library a remarkable gift. It consists of 126 volumes of the most famous fiction and restaurant. She has collected most of them herself, and some are from Hungary, China, Japan and Russia. Mrs. Buttle stipulates that the volumes are to be kept sealed until 1955, as it is her desire that the coming generations may see what their ancestors ate.

CHICAGO RECORD.

"Clara, you don't accomplish anything because you waste so much time. "I don't waste time, but there is always something I would rather do than do something else."

DETROIT.

S. E. Kleier in Chicago Times-Herald. A happy child plays on the floor, And snatches his blocks and slugs, And he knows naught of ancient times, And susses out with wonder his words. But faith is in his heart, and when "The dark is knowledge of prey, And what is all the love of man— The faith that is in his heart, And against the faith he lives, he could claim one day."

DETROIT FREE PRESS.

"I hope I make myself plain," said the lady, trying to explain. "I hope not, madam," he responded, "I would prefer that I be stupid rather than that you be plain."

A QUESTION OF ADVANTAGE.

Journal. Man is distinguished from the beast by the power to speak his thoughts; the beast from the man by the power to keep its thoughts to itself.

A CAPTIVE MOOSE.

Bozon Transcript. So you're the thief that nibbles cakes and pie? That's right, I presently, have sought to kill— That have so long and well I did my skill— How soft your fur! How bright your line! How great your teeth! Now all my anger is— And vengeful impulses are heaped and still, I have no heart to work my deadly will. I can't be maimed by your mean treachery. O Moose! Earth is such a cruel place! Death lurks for all—favours no rank, no grade, And now is ever raging—ramp on race! "Thinkless! Then what reason have you for— And now must die without a show of grace! If you're no right to live—why were you made?"