

Oregonian

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PORTLAND, OREGON, WEDNESDAY, MAY 23, 1900.

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HOURS—From 9:00 A. M. to 9:00 P. M. daily, except Sundays and holidays.

REDUCTION OF WAR TAXES.

Repeal of the Revenue Law at the Next Session.

WASHINGTON, May 22.—The House leaders have decided to reduce the war taxes at the next session of Congress, and a resolution will be prepared tomorrow to give the committee on ways and means leave to sit during the recess of Congress. The committee will meet next autumn, when a measure will be prepared for presentation to the House immediately after it convenes in December. Mr. Payne's resolution for a sine die adjournment June 6 will be favorably reported tomorrow.

MINE DISASTER.

Report of a Terrible Accident in North Carolina.

ASHEVILLE, N. C., May 22.—It is reported here at midnight that an explosion occurred in the Cannon mine, near Charlotte, tonight. The news comes that between 50 and 60 miners were killed, but this is not confirmed. It is hardly possible that the report can be verified before morning, as the telephone office is closed.

RICHMOND, Va., May 22.—A report reached here after midnight from Greensboro that a disaster has occurred in the coal mines at Cannon. An explosion occurred some time after the night shift went on duty and it is said that 50 miners have been killed.

FIGHT TO A FINISH

Boers Stand Ready to Resist to the Last.

THE DUTCH SPIRIT IS RISING

Roberts' Main Army is Moving and is Expected to Cross the Vaal River This Week.

LONDON, May 22, 2:30 A. M.—The Transvaal Government has informed the correspondents at Pretoria that it has not considered and does not intend to consider unconditional surrender, but will fight to a finish. The foreign Consuls have been informed that Johannesburg will be defended, and the government announces that it will not hold itself responsible for injury to property resulting from the defense measures. The dispatches affirm that President Kruger, President Steyn and all the most prominent leaders of both republics, after a prolonged interchange of views, are determined to continue the resistance, but that a minority of the leaders advocate surrender without terms.

Mrs. Reitz, wife of the Transvaal State Secretary, and her family, with the families of other officials, have gone to Lourenco Marques, Johannesburg and Pretoria are being cleared of noncombatants. The Boer chiefs, who now recognize the possibility that they may have to defend these cities, are preparing with the utmost haste. The Boer spirit has been rising from a low ebb, and is now ready for a steadfast resistance.

Nevertheless, according to the Daily Chronicle, long messages in Dutch have been received by the British Government from the Boers, in which President Kruger seeks peace. According to one account, Kruger surrenders unconditionally; according to another, he asks for terms. There seem to be good reasons for believing that he is earnestly endeavoring to secure peace terms, but cable inquiries fail to confirm the assertions that correspondence has recently passed between Great Britain and the Transvaal respecting terms.

Roberts on the Move.

Lord Roberts is again moving. The British infantry left Koonstad Monday, and headquarters were expected to leave yesterday. The railway has been restored, and the first train is due to arrive today. The Boers are being driven from their positions along the Rhenoster River. General Dewet commands, as General Botha is ill.

The advance of Lord Roberts will probably be swift. It is the expectation of well-informed observers here that the Vaal River, 55 miles beyond Koonstad, will be crossed by the end of the week. Sir Redvers Buller, general in chief of his troops, congratulating them on the result of their 10 days' operations, says they were only checked at Laing's Nek by a fresh command sent from the Transvaal. General Buller's cavalry brigade, engaged the rear guard of the Boers at Laing's Nek Sunday, capturing a number of wagons and taking some prisoners. His artillery shelled the Nek. The Boers, in their retreat, laid waste the territory, blew up bridges and burned several houses, as many as six in Newcastle. The British artillery of the navigation colliers was culled.

General Buller, replying to residents of Newcastle, who presented to him a trophy, said he expected to return from Pretoria soon.

Nothing new concerning the relief of Mafeking has come through. All the accounts of the engagement May 18 extol the bravery of the Canadian, Lord Darnley's column arrived at the rendezvous one hour after Colonel Plumer, showing with what accuracy the movements were timed.

Miner Speaks Well of the Boers.

Sir Alfred Milner, speaking at Cape Town Monday before an enormous assembly, praised the Boers for their extraordinary courage and endurance. He referred to the remark of a previous speaker who had condemned the Boers as "cowardly scoundrels." He said: "There are many among our enemies who deserve to be honored for their heroism. Although cases of treachery and barbarity have occurred, they have been exceptionally few. The conduct of the Boers is that of brave men fighting for a bad cause. Yet they are entitled to respect."

One of the morning papers suggests that the men of England should present a trophy to Lord Roberts. Sir Alfred Milner's correspondent at Mafeking during the siege.

The British who are in the hands of the Boers at Pretoria, by extraordinary means, learn of the British victories as soon as the Transvaal authorities, and they build bonfires and sing "God Save the Queen." The Pretoria people are apprehensive of the release of the prisoners, and agitate for a transference of the whole number to a point inside the British lines, saying that 4000, more or less, makes no difference.

McKinley's Refusal.

The morning papers continue to discuss at length President McKinley's refusal to present the Boers to the Congress of the Boer hopes. The Times says: "The Boer delegates in the United States have had an interview with President McKinley, and the answer is exactly what we had a right to expect from the Chief Magistrate of a great friendly nation. It is just as well as things have turned out. Mr. McKinley made a tender of offices to Lord Salisbury, which we did not appreciate when we first heard it, for the answer which the President's suggestion necessarily called forth has served a double purpose, as it made the position of this government and nation unmistakable to the world, and armed Mr. McKinley with indisputable reason for refusing to listen to the Boer emissaries."

"The refusal of the United States to interfere in a quarrel which is none of their will further exasperate, we are afraid, the rump parliament of the well-known champions of justice and freedom, the Novosti and the Novoe Vremya, both of which are in the worst humor now over our recent successes."

Kruger Looking Ahead.

The Laurence Marques correspondent of the Times says he has it on unquestionable authority that President Kruger has transferred the bulk of his property in the Transvaal to personal friends in order to avoid its confiscation by Great Britain. The same correspondent telegraphing Monday, says: "The German liner Bundesrath has been detained here all day for a special train from Pretoria bringing the families of prominent Boers. The utmost secrecy regarding the identity of them is maintained, but it is believed that among them are Mrs. Steyn and Mrs. Reitz."

Rumor of Buller's Defeat.

There was sharp Paris selling on the Stock Exchange today, accentuated by a rumor that Buller had been defeated by the Boers at Laing's Nek. Nothing is known in London tending to confirm the report.

TWO NEW BISHOPS

Deadlock Broken in the Methodist General Conference.

HAMILTON AND MOORE ELECTED

Women to Be Admitted to General and Electoral Conferences—Constitution Adopted.