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The Morning Astorian.

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NO. 168

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NO CHANGE IN WAR SITUATION

Beseiged Towns All Safe Up to Sunday—Rations Are Short.

GEN. GATACRE IS CRITICISED

London Clubmen Pronounce Him an Unsafe Commander For a South African Division.

LONDON, Dec. 12, 4:45 a. m.—With the exception of Sunday's article at LadySmith, which morning papers are unanimous in regarding as a brilliant piece of work, there are no further allusions from the seat of war. The war office dispatch reports that Mafeking was safe up to December 4, but that the Boers had been shelling the town since November 27, with increased effect.

Rations had been reduced in view of a probably long siege.

BOLD EXPLOIT

British Make a Bold Blow Up a Boer Gun, and Escape With the Usual Big Loss.

LONDON, Dec. 12.—The war office office publishes the following dispatch from General Buller:

A dispatch from General White, dated December 11, says:

Last night Colonel Metcalf and 500 men of the Second Rifle Brigade succeeded in capturing a Boer howitzer on the hill. They reached the crest without being discovered, drove off the enemy and then destroyed the howitzer with gunpowder.

When returning Metcalf found his retreat barred by the Boers, but he forced his way through, using the bayonet freely. The Boer losses were considerable. The British losses were as follows: Lieut. Ferguson and eleven men killed, three officers and 41 men wounded, and six men captured.

GATACRE CRITICISED

London Club Men Think He is Unfit to Command a South African Division.

NEW YORK, Dec. 12.—A dispatch to the Tribune from London, says:

When the army corps first went out to Africa, General Gatacre was generally regarded in military circles as the strongest of the three division commanders. General Methuen was called the ideal guardman and tactician of the parade ground. General Clery was known as the schoolmaster in strategy, owing to his connection with the staff college and with manuals on military science, and also as the best dressed officer in the army and the most popular clubman and epicure. General Gatacre had the reputation of being a seasoned soldier who had seen more military service than either of his colleagues, and had done brilliant work in Egypt before Omdurman.

Both Gatacre and Methuen were known as military martinet, who expected the men under them to work hard, whereas Clery was a less rigorous disciplinarian and more considerate in his treatment of his soldiers. General Clery has not and a chance to show how good a strategist he is, but General Methuen has so proved to be a poor tactician, although a strong fighter, and the enemy has not been able to entrap any portion of his force. General Gatacre has shot his bolt and the best that the admirers can say is that South Africa has always been the graveyard of military reputations.

If General Gatacre receives his privilege it will be because sympathy is excited by premature attacks like that made by Lord Durham yesterday, who in the safe retirement of a fat stock sale luncheon, described Gatacre as a man unfit to command troops in South Africa. Lord Durham overshoot the mark in declaring the war office was responsible for the disaster at Stormberg in appointing General Gatacre to the command of a division when the opinions of officers who had served under him were known.

A more practical line of criticism would be to censure the war office for not sending out a larger force of cavalry and artillery in good time and not in arming General Gatacre with adequate facilities for scouting and gun practice, without forcing him to depend upon treacherous spies as guides and then finding himself outclassed in guns.

General Younghusband and other military experts who were willing to discuss the question publicly yesterday contented themselves with laying stress upon the necessity of having cavalry for scouting and with explaining Gatacre's motive of surprising an entrenched position when he did not consider himself strong enough to force it by frontal attack, as a sound one. Later details of the retreat from

GUERRILAS IN THE PHILIPPINES

Aginaldo's Scattered Forces War by Assassination.

THE NATIVES ARE IN TERROR

American Authorities Making Examples of Them Whenever Caught—Suppression a Hard Problem.

MANILA, Dec. 12.—Colonel Smith, with a detachment of the Seventeenth Infantry, surrounded and captured in a village near Malasqui, a party of guerrillas who had made their headquarters there.

The party included the band which assassinated seven officials at Malasqui for friendliness to the Americans. All are insurgents who became bandits when the disintegration of the Filipino army began. They kept the country around Malasqui in a state of terror for several weeks and committed 25 murders in less than that number of days. When they were caught they were promptly sent to General MacArthur's headquarters at Bagumbang by train.

It is expected they will be speedily tried and either shot or hanged as an example.

The whole country north of San Fernando and between San Fernando and Manila, except within the permanent line of troops around the cities and closely patrolled stretches of the railroad, swarms with similar bands. Probably they will be increased by the men from Pilar's army, many of whom are making their way south to join the insurgent force in Cavite province.

These people devote their energies to ambushing commissary wagons and picking up soldiers who leave their commands. Every day some wagon train is fired upon or some soldier disappears. General Wheeler's secretary, Mr. Garrett, was alarmed and snatched by a band of natives within sight of headquarters, his assailant pursuing him nearly into the headquarters building. The policy of these ruffians is to make the country uninhabitable for Americans and to frighten the natives into refraining from giving assistance to Americans, as well as to compel the inhabitants to support the insurrection.

A brother of the president of Imus went outside the town the other day to harvest some rice. He was captured by his compatriots, accused of being a spy and executed. Only a small portion of the insurgent arms have been surrendered and the problem of suppressing this guerrilla warfare is anything but easy of solution. Some American officers think it is worse than fighting Indians, owing to the difficulties of the country.

DEBATING THE FINANCIAL BILL

The Measure Has Strong Support From Both Sides of House.

FIRST DEMOCRATIC SPEECH

Driggs of New York, Explains His Reasons For Favoring the Adoption of the Gold Standard.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 12.—There is such great pressure for time on the part of members of both sides who desire to participate in the currency debate in the house that three night sessions were ordered today.

The interest in the debate is not keen, judged by the attendance in the galleries, although members themselves are listening attentively to the speeches. Only one democrat thus far has spoken in favor of the bill, Driggs of New York, who announced today that he had pledged himself before election to support the gold standard and proposed to redeem that pledge. He will be joined by several of his Brooklyn colleagues and probably several others.

When Driggs rose, many republicans left their seats and went over to the democratic side to listen. Driggs declared he believed the dignity and pre-eminence of the United States would be advanced by placing this country upon the gold standard of the most highly civilized countries of the world.

"I do not arrogate to myself," said he, "addressing his democratic colleagues, 'the presumption to say to you that I am right and you are wrong, but I believe that a democrat would respect me less, if, knowing how I feel, I should not openly avow my convictions and keep the pledges I made.'"

Driggs announced that he would remain a consistent democrat save only upon the question of free coinage.

THE PHILIPPINE CABLE

WASHINGTON, Dec. 12.—Among the bills introduced in the house yesterday was one by Jones, of Washington, for a cable to the Philippines, to cost not to exceed \$5,000,000, and the creation of a cable commission.

WANTS TO KNOW

Pettigrew Asks for Information Regarding Dewey.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 12.—Whether Admiral Dewey, acting for the United States government, formally or informally recognized the Philippine republic at Manila, is a question which Pettigrew of South Dakota, desires the navy department to answer.

He introduced a resolution today directing the secretary of the navy to supply the senate with information on the subject, but Chandler of New Hampshire, objected to its immediate consideration.

Following this objection Pettigrew and Chandler had a sharp tilt over a (Continued on page 4.)

BOSTON GOES REPUBLICAN

Great Many Democratic, Anti-Expansion Strongholds Give Republican Majorities.

DISASTER TO ISLAND OF CERAM

Overwhelmed by a Tidal Wave and Over 5,000 People Destroyed.

SAN FRANCISCO, Dec. 12.—The Bulletin says: The disaster that overtook the island of Ceram on the second of last month cost the people of that district an immense loss in lives and property. The steamship America, Maru, which arrived yesterday, brought advices from Ceram and reports that 5,000 people were destroyed on that island alone when the dreadful earthquakes of November shocked the Japan coast and agitated the lands adjacent to the empire.

The sea came forward in the shape of a huge tidal wave and forced the water into the bay entrance. It came up 15 feet over the low lands. At Pauholy and Samasova, on the bay, the waves swept over the tops of trees 30 feet high. Out of nearly eighteen hundred inhabitants only forty escaped.

A NEEDED CHARITY

Society of Anglo-Americans Who Will Supplement the "Penny" a Day.

CHICAGO, Dec. 12.—A general committee composed of representatives from the various British societies in and about Chicago, met at the Great Northern hotel and formed an organization to raise money for the relief of widows and orphans of British soldiers and sailors killed in the South African war. An entertainment will be given in Central Music hall January 13. British-Americans have already subscribed \$400.

There are to be 1200 vice presidents chosen from the leading British-Americans of Chicago. The name of the organization is Society of Sons and Daughters of the British Empire. A ladies auxiliary will also be organized to act in conjunction with the society.

NEWS VIA LONDON

Philippine Doing Many Astonishing Feats Not Alluded to in American Dispatches.

LONDON, Dec. 12.—Reuters Telegram Company has received the following dispatch from Hong Kong: "The insurgent government (so-called) of the Philippines will be changed to a dictatorship to continue hostilities against the Americans exclusively by methods of guerrilla warfare. The Filipino army is being split up into small bodies, the troops taking oath before separation that they will fight until their country's rights are recognized. A force of United States marines who landed at Vigan, South Ilocos province, from the battleship Oregon, was defeated by the Filipinos under General Finco (Tino) Dec. 4. Manila newspapers, despite the censorship, admit that General Lawton is missing."

VON BUELOW'S SPEECH

German Papers Make Extensive Comments as to the Significance of His Statements.

LONDON, Dec. 12.—The Daily Chronicle in an editorial discussing Count Von Buelow's statement in the Reichstag, says:

"Count Von Buelow talks of the lessons of the Hispano-American war. This may mean that, if Germany had possessed the fleet he wants her to build, she would have saved Cuba and the Philippines to Spain. Are we to presume that he thinks Germany an inviolable and America a hammer? If so, it is idle talk of a cross German travesty for the purpose of defense."

PHILIPPINE PITFALLS

G. Washington's Aginaldo's Humane Methods of Warfare.

NEW YORK, Dec. 12.—A special to the Tribune from Washington, says: In hospital reports which reached the war department from Manila is chronicled the first casualty due to falling into a Tagal pitfall which contained the horrible device of bamboo posts, set firmly in the hole and sharpened at the top for the purpose of impaling the unwary.

The American troops have frequently found such traps on the line of march and especially in front of insurgent trenches. Ordinarily the traps have been simply deep holes in the jungle covered with long grass and although soldiers have frequently fallen into them, no serious injury has resulted.

On October 25, when 45 men of company I, Nineteenth Infantry, were en-

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