

# The Morning Astorian.

VOL. 1.

ASTORIA, OREGON, SATURDAY DECEMBER 16, 1899

NO. 171

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## BULLER WAS BEATEN BACK

His Attempt to Force Tugela River Repulsed With Great Loss.

FULL STRENGTH ENGAGED

The Retreat Well Ordered, but Accompanied by Fearful Sacrifice of Officers and Men.

ELEVEN GUNS ABANDONED

The Reverse Was Unexpected and Terrible—England Frenzied With Rage and Humiliation—The Situation Is Desperate.

LONDON, Dec. 16, 12:45 a. m.—The war office has received a dispatch announcing that General Buller has met with a serious reverse. Buller was attempting to cross the Tugela river. Finding it impossible to effect his object, he ordered a retirement in order to avoid greater loss. He left it to be seen.

Following is the text of General Buller's dispatch announcing his reverse: "Buller to Lansdowne, Chieveley Camp, Dec. 15, 6:29 p. m.—I regret to report a serious reverse. I retired in full strength from our camp near Chieveley at 4 o'clock this morning. There are two favorable places in the Tugela river and it was my intention to force a passage through at least one of them. My intention was to force one of the other with one of the brigades, supported by a central brigade. General Buller was to attack the left flank of General Buller's right and General Buller on the right to take the center and to support it.

Early in the day I saw that General Buller would not be able to force a passage and I directed him to withdraw. He had, however, attacked with great gallantry and his leading battalion, the Connaught Rangers, I fear, suffered a great deal. Colonel I. G. Brooks was seriously wounded.

I then ordered General Buller to advance, which he did, and his leading regiment, East Surrey, occupied Colenso station and the houses near the bridge. At that moment I heard that the whole artillery had set out to support the attack, the Connaught and Sixty-sixth field batteries, and six naval 12-pounder quick-firers, under Laing, had advanced close to the river in Lord's desire to be within effective range. It proved to be full of the enemy, who suddenly opened a galling fire at close range, killing all their horses, and the gunners were compelled to stand to their guns. Some of the wagon teams got stuck for the troops in a donga and desperate efforts were being made to bring out the field guns.

The fire, however, was too severe and only two were saved, by Captain Schofield and some drivers, whose names I will furnish.

Another most gallant attempt with three teams was made by an officer whose name I will obtain. Of 18 horses, 12 were killed, and as several drivers were wounded, I would not allow another attempt, as it seemed that they would be merely a shell mark, sacrificing life to a gallant attempt to force the passage. Unopposed by artillery, I directed that the troops withdraw, which they did in good order.

"Throughout the day a considerable force of the enemy was pressing on my right flank, but was kept back by the mounted men under Lord Dundonald and a part of General Buller's brigade.

"The day was intensely hot and most trying on the troops, whose conduct was excellent.

"We have abandoned 10 guns and lost by shell fire one. The losses in General Buller's brigade, I fear, are very heavy, although the proportion of severely wounded, I hope, is not large.

"The Fourteenth and Sixty-ninth field batteries also suffered severe losses. We have retired to our camp at Chieveley."

FURIOUS ARTILLERY DUEL.

Garrison at Ladysmith Replying to the Boer Guns on Umbuluzi Hill.

LONDON, Dec. 15.—A special from Freer camp says that simultaneous-

ly with the bombardment of Colenso a furious artillery duel commenced between the garrison, at Ladysmith and the Boers on Umbuluzi Hill. The following named officers of the Highland brigade, who were reported to be missing after the battle of Magerfontein, were killed. Captain MacFarlane, Lieut Ramsay and Captain Brodie, and the following subsequently died of their wounds: Col. Downham and Lieut Campbell.

INCAPABLE GENERALSHIP.

Belief Current in England That the South African Troops Are Not Properly Led.

NEW YORK, Dec. 15.—A dispatch to the Tribune from London, says: "Cretaceous and pessimistic have had the field ever since it was known that General Buller had retired from his advanced position after waiting over eight days in the hope that the Boers would evacuate their rifle trenches and allow him to convert a drawn battle into a victory.

There was a feeble rally of credulous optimists for a few hours, while a fresh exchange rumor was current that Ladysmith had been relieved and ten thousand prisoners taken by Buller, but the depression and gloom steadily deepened as the full extent of General Buller's losses were revealed and the cold, hard truth was discovered that the Highland brigade had been encircled, like Garter's force, while seeking to surprise the enemy and slaughtered without having a soldier's chance of winning a victory.

From every London and provincial journal came a loud outcry for more troops, another division at once, and a fresh army corps behind it, and if necessary every man to the front in order to relieve a national disaster and restore the British prestige throughout the empire. One public stenographer journal warned the "leaders" that they were likely to be criticized with a widespread agitation, the like of which arose during the Crimean war.

Military writers lost their self-possession and advised the abandonment of Kimberley to its fate, the withdrawal of Buller's force to the Orange river where it could go to the rescue of Garter and defensive tactics in general until a second and even third army corps could be sent to South Africa. They failed to print the true moral of this week's disasters, which is that fresh troops are not wanted so much as generals capable of directing them cautiously and effectively against a wary and ingenious foe.

The situation is not in reality so desperate as either the leader writers or the amateur strategists imagine. Lord Methuen's army has not been crushed nor ought there be serious difficulty in protecting its line of communications which is guarded by not less than ten thousand men.

The chief danger is that Kimberley may be overwhelmed by the victorious Dutch force and Methuen's army left in the air without an objective or a motive. But the Boer commanders have been slow to follow up their opportunities hitherto and seem incapable of conducting an offensive warfare.

General Buller's repulse coming after General Buller's reverse, may increase the disloyalty and foment civil war in Cape Colony, but so long as Mr. Buller and the premier remain in office these effects will be minimized.

BRITISHFOOD ON THE WAR.

One of the rugged England Ever Underfoot and Must be Fought to Ruin.

LONDON, Dec. 15.—Speaking at a Unionist meeting in Hackney, London, last evening, Rear-Admiral Lord Charles Fitzroy said that he looked around the secretary of state for war, Lord Lansdowne, that the government was not sending enough troops to the Transvaal.

"Large reinforcements to all our auxiliaries for fighting," he continued, "must be dispatched immediately and more ships must be placed in commission in order that Great Britain may be prepared for eventualities. The Boers are a mobile force and they have heavy, modern artillery. We need more quick firing guns.

"I must say that I never thought that we are sending out enough men. When once it was known that we had to send an army corps I told Lord Lansdowne—as far back as November 2—that he would not be sending enough. In the fire department when it is thought that four engines would be needed to cope with a conflagration, it is a wise plan to send eight. The war office should have acted on the same principle.

"This war is one of the biggest upon which we have ever embarked, owing to the surrounding political circumstances, and if necessary every mother's son among us must go to the front. British pluck and money will win and then, with equal rights for all, the British flag must fly over the whole of South Africa."

## WILL MEET AT PHILADELPHIA

June 19 Set For Date of McKinley's Renomination.

A FULL COMMITTEE MEETING

Payne Reapportionment Resolution Postponed at Request of the President.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 15.—The national republican convention will convene at Philadelphia on Tuesday, June 19, next. The place and date were decided upon by the national republican committee tonight, after a friendly contest for the honor of entertaining the convention between the city selected, Chicago, St. Louis and New York.

The meeting of the committee was held at the Arlington hotel and was presided over by Senator Hanna, the chairman of the committee. Forty-three of the 45 states and each of the six territories were represented. Senator Foraker held a proxy for Charles L. Kurtz, national committeeman from Ohio, and Senator Wolcott, a proxy for J. P. Saunders of Colorado, these being the only absentees.

In addition to the committee, many of the big wigs of the republican party were in attendance.

The proceedings throughout were enthusiastic and harmonious, every speech that was made emphasized the fact that President McKinley would be renominated and that the convention will be in effect simply a ratification meeting.

The claims of the rival cities were presented by distinguished citizens of each in the open session. The balloting occurred in the afternoon behind closed doors. Upon the first ballot Philadelphia received 31 votes, Chicago 29, New York 7, and St. Louis 5. On the second ballot the contest narrowed down to Philadelphia and Chicago, the New York votes going to Philadelphia and the St. Louis vote being split between Philadelphia and Chicago.

An amusing incident occurred in connection with this ballot. After it was concluded and announced as Philadelphia 25 and Chicago 21, T. N. Jamieson, national committeeman from Illinois, suddenly discovered that in the excitement he had forgotten to vote. He demanded that the vote should be recast, and this was accordingly done, but it did not change the result, Chicago gaining only the one vote of the committeeman from Illinois. Philadelphia won by the narrow margin of one vote. As the ballot was secret there is no record of the city for which each committeeman voted.

It was the desire of the leaders at the meeting today that the convention should be held June 12, and that date would have been selected had it not been that it conflicted with the date of the Rhode Island election. June 5 was selected, but the date was reconsidered and changed to 10th, in the hope and belief that before that date congress will have adjourned.

The committee considered briefly a resolution from Delaware that the committee take some action to prevent two contending delegations from appearing from that state. The committee decided that it had no jurisdiction. Several committees were appointed, and an adjournment was taken until tomorrow, when the Payne resolution for changing the system of representation will be brought up for consideration.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 15.—The Payne resolution for the reapportionment of delegates to the republican national convention on the basis of the republican vote cast in the states and territories, will not be pressed at this meeting of the national committee. Payne had fully intended to offer the resolution tomorrow and to urge its adoption, but after a conference with the president tonight, decided to abandon the effort to have it acted on at this meeting.

Much opposition had developed to the proposed change and the conclusion was reached that it was inexpedient to push the matter this time.

DEBATE WAS BITTER.

Personalities Entered Into the Financial Discussion Yesterday.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 15.—The closing day of the general debate on the financial bill proved to be one of exceptional interest. At the outset a sharp personal colloquy occurred between representatives Wheeler and Berry of Kentucky over the charges growing out of it. Considerable feeling was shown.

Later in the day, Bailey of Texas, until recently the democratic floor

leader, received close attention in a speech vigorously presenting the democratic organization. In marked contrast with Bailey's utterances, Senator, democrat, of New York, announced as a democrat that he believed in the gold standard and would vote for it.

The debate under five minute rules occupies tomorrow.

OTIS' DAILY REPORT.

American Troops Have Two Engagements With Separate Bands of Insurgents.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 15.—The war department today received a cablegram from General Oas giving the latest developments in the situation in the Philippines. The cablegram follows: "Batacider, Twenty-fourth Infantry, reports that on the 14th they had an engagement at the junction of the Magat and Rio Grande river, Isabela province, the enemy leaving four dead and five mortally wounded in the trenches.

Our loss was one drowned and four wounded. He says he is in need of clothing, provisions and money. Four hundred and seventy-five Spanish prisoners arrived this morning. Young at Banqui, in Northwestern Luzon, reports that his troops are still pursuing a remnant of the insurgents who have 23 American prisoners in their possession. Negro reports that Sergeant Roeder, of the Sixth infantry, with twenty soldiers and eighteen native police attacked 40 insurgents at Madrigal this morning. No casualties. The enemy's loss was 23 killed and many wounded.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 15.—The insurgent bands of bushwhacking insurgents who are caught by our forces in the Philippines are likely to be summarily dealt with. At a cabinet meeting today the matter was discussed and it was the general sentiment that the situation demanded vigorous treatment.

PROSPERITY IS UNBOUNDED.

Only Form of Depression Is in Speculative Lines Unconnected With Industries.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 15.—The unusual depression in stocks this week has displayed a great divergence between the trading and productive industries of the country and its speculation. Never has production been greater, the number of hands employed is larger, wages distributed higher, or purchasing power, based upon earnings, greater than at this time, and never have conditions of trade or returns of earnings and traffic given certainty of greater business for transporters. Yet, as the earnings of railways and manufacturing companies mount upward, their stocks decline as if it were disastrous for the road to double its earnings and ruinous for the mill to realize unprecedented prosperity.

Inflation capitalization has, of course, done much harm, and speculative excitement has counted profits in many cases long before they were earned. Money markets here and abroad have been strained by the British reverse in South Africa, and wherever they were overloaded have been pushed to quick and disastrous instead of gradual liquidation. The result is that industries and transporting companies realize great profits and speculative holders of their stocks realize severe losses.

The failures for the week were 218 in the United States, against 261 last year, and 28 in Canada, against 31 last year.

THE TOTAL WHEAT CROP.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 15.—The government report shows the total wheat crop is 547,300,000 bushels.

## ENGLAND VERY DEEPLY STIRRED

Buller's Defeat Most Serious Event Since Indian Mutiny.

ANOTHER IDOL SHATTERED

Hopes of Buller's Great Powers Have Ended in Disappointment—Reinforcement Will Be Rushed.

LONDON, Dec. 16, 4:30 a. m.—The news of General Buller's reverse was received so late that many of the newspaper comments today are confined to perfunctory expressions of extreme regret and disappointment and of the necessity of calmness and redoubled efforts to retrieve the position. This latest check is regarded as the most serious event in Great Britain's military history since the Indian mutiny.

The Standard says: "General Buller's dispatch is deplorable reading. It is now a familiar story of convulsed Boers and of British troops marching up blindly almost to the very muzzles of the enemy's rifles. It cannot be doubted that the moral effect will be to aggravate our difficulties over the whole field of operations.

"The country has discovered with great annoyance and surprise that subduing the Boer farmers is about the hardest work we have entered upon since the Indian mutiny. Their commandants have shown themselves able to give our generals useful but expensive lessons in modern tactics. Depression over the defeat of Great Britain's trusted and idolized commander is all the greater as, during the last 48 hours, there had been reports of the relief of Ladysmith. Yesterday the war office allowed it to be understood that the position of affairs in Natal was entirely satisfactory. The reaction is all the more pronounced on this account.

It had hardly been realized until now, even after the experience of the week, that General Buller could fail. Virtually nothing had been allowed to leak through regarding his preparations, but the public waited patiently in the confident belief that he was taking such time and precaution as would ensure success.

No independent reports of the engagement have yet been allowed to come through, but General Buller's own dispatch tells the sad story in sufficient outline to show that the British have been entrapped again by the astute Boers. It is expected that he will renew his attack shortly.

Immediately upon receiving the news the war office decided to mobilize still another division and to replace the losses of the artillery. The necessary reinforcements will be hurried off as speedily as possible.

Fifteen transports are due to arrive at Cape Town between December 17 and January 8, with about 15,000 troops of all arms, but unless General Buller is able to renew the attack, which is exceedingly doubtful, the British generals will be compelled for another fortnight or more to remain on the defensive.

The latest dispatches indicate the continued bombardment of Ladysmith, whose position is now very perilous. The list of casualties among non-commissioned officers and men in the fight at Magerfontein, just issued, shows 55 killed, 253 wounded and 78 missing. This, however, is apparently not a complete list.

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