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**SITUATION IS NOW ALARMING**

No News Received From General Methuen Since Sunday.

**HIS COMMUNICATIONS CUT**

Boer Positions Rendered More Formidable By Delay—British Are on the Defensive.

LONDON, Dec. 21.—4.45 a. m.—The gravity of the military situation is again becoming recognized in the public mind owing to the complete absence of news. Nothing has been heard from Lord Methuen since Sunday, and it is found that his communications have been cut off. It is believed his position is dangerous.

A correspondent of the Daily News, telegraphing from Middelburg last Saturday, says:

"The Boer position, already formidable on December 11, has since been greatly strengthened, extending to an area of 40 miles. It is extremely difficult to reach the front by any route, and the Boers have been placed before all the trenches at every point, guns have been got into position, and there is every evidence that the Boers are well supplied with ammunition. Only a powerful attacking force can hope to make a successful attack."

The latest dispatches seem to show that the British forces are standing on the defensive at all points. General Buller is ordering the troops now arriving at Cape Town to proceed to Durban to reinforce the Natal column. The absence of news from him has led to the surmise that he is trying to join General White by a flank movement.

The government expects the total of the yeomanry and volunteers to reach 8,000. Baron Chesham will command, with Lord Lansdale as adjutant general.

The papers are now generally joining in a free criticism of the government and war office, as day by day fresh proofs of its unpreparedness come to light.

**BULLER'S GUNS RECOVERED**

Rumor That the Boers Were Prevented From Taking Them Across the River.

LONDON, Dec. 20.—It still seems doubtful whether the guns that General Buller abandoned at Colenso are in the possession of the Boers. According to a dispatch to the Associated Press from Durban, sent off on the evening of the battle, and which has just been received here, the guns remained where they were left by the British troops, and were covered by heavy guns of Hildyard's brigade, occupying a commanding position. The dispatch adds that the Boers had this far not attempted to cross the river and capture the guns, while advice to the Associated Press from Pretoria under the same date says that an official Boer dispatch reports that two guns, 12 wagons and a quantity of ammunition were captured, besides 20 prisoners.

Further accounts of the Tugela river battle emphasize the ignorance of the British intelligence department in regard to the disposition of the Boer's forces. The British were not aware that the Boers were entrenched along the series of low lying hills immediately northward of Colenso's bridge until the staggering fire compelled them to retreat, when the attack seemed about to succeed. The Boers were also in greater numbers than anticipated.

It becomes clear also that the British guns were lost in attempting to get within effective range of the Boer artillery, showing that the latter out-ranged the British ordnance, which, in spite of numerical superiority, was wholly inadequate to reply to the long-range Boer guns. The British war office comes in for searching denunciations from the Times today for not providing proper artillery. It is pointed out in this connection that the longer-ranged naval guns, participating in the same attack, escaped.

There was no news this morning to enlighten the general situation. The war office reported that General French reconnoitered northward of Arundel Monday, December 18. After shelling Jansfontein farm, three miles eastward of the Boer position, the New Zealanders advanced and occupied the farm; the Boer guns then opened and the Boers advanced to the attack, until ordered to retire.

LONDON, Dec. 20.—A special dispatch from Durban, Natal, dated Saturday, says it is rumored that General Buller called for volunteers to recover the abandoned guns, and that a party issued from camp after midnight and brought in the guns, which were uninjured.

**THE BOERS ARE HUMOROUS**

Send a Message to Powell at Lady Smith Enclosed in a Shell.

LONDON, Dec. 20.—The last news from Mafeking, dated the 5th, has just been received. It says a desultory bombardment was continued and that sharpshooters were engaged in a smart duel mornings and evenings. The dispatch also describes a novel method of sending messages adopted by some Boer on December 4. A five-pounder shell fired into the town that day did not explode. It was opened and was found to contain a letter as follows:

"Dear Powell: (Colonel Buller) Possibly excuse this iron message. No other means of communication. Please tell Mrs. — that mother and the family are all well. Don't drink all the whiskey; leave some for us when we get in."

A revised list of British casualties at the battle of Colenso show 117 non-commissioned officers and men were killed.

**BATTLE DETAILS**

Buller Had Cavalry and Artillery With Both Wings.

NEW YORK, Dec. 20.—A dispatch to the Tribune from London says: General Buller sends the Telegraph an account of the Tugela battle which expands the information conveyed from other sources. General Buller did not definitely mention that he had cavalry and artillery with both flanks, and the inference was that all the cavalry was away to the east engaged in stemming a Boer turning movement in that direction. Mr. Burleigh says definitely that both cavalry and artillery were with each wing. The British front extended a distance of six miles, while the marvelous rapidity of the Boer movements gave them, as it were, a front in the air, enabling them to change and diversify positions as occasion demanded.

The Times correspondent says the Boers had only 10 guns and adds that the British naval guns made excellent practice yet the Boer artillery did not seem to have been silenced and apparently Colonel Loog's intention was to get within range of the Boer guns, which were making havoc of the British infantry. In all probability Buller's troops were under an artillery fire, although they could not make an adequate reply.

**SOMETHING WILL FALL**

A British Critic Who Falls to Reckon the Boers as Factors in the Recent Reverses.

NEW YORK, Dec. 20.—A dispatch to the World from London says: In the total absence of news from South Africa the military expert of the Morning Post is forced to devote his criticism to the government.

"The history of the war up to today," he says, "is a history of the consequence of the intransigence of the cabinet from May to October.

"The British government in July and August instead of getting the army ready and on the spot was trying to polish up its conscience and even in September it could not bring itself to send more than 10,000 men to South Africa.

"A victory is now urgently needed, and the sooner to be had promises to be in Natal where the British and the Boer forces are now facing each other like wrestlers but, taking a general view, there has been no fall. The longer the wrestle the heavier will be the fall in the end, but it is yet to come."

**PRAYERS FOR PEACE**

NEW YORK, Dec. 20.—A dispatch to the World from Antwerp says: Two great prayer meetings were held tonight at Rotterdam by Dutch pastors gathered from all Holland. The Transvaal hymn was sung and 5000 pence collected for the Boer wounded. A resolution was passed to send a circular to all British pastors asking them to preach and pray for an end to the hostilities. Amsterdam and The Hague ladies are offering their services for the collecting of money, and many young men of good families in The Hague have decided to go to the Transvaal to join the Boers in the field.

**MORE TROUBLE COMING**

Emperor of Abyssinia Getting Ready for a Movement Against England.

NEW YORK, Dec. 20.—London papers just received display much anxiety over the attitude of Menelik, the emperor of Abyssinia, toward England. At present there is a dispute between this potentate and Great Britain as to the boundary between Egypt and Abyssinia and it is feared that Menelik may consider the present an excellent time to make a demonstration against the British.

The question of the frontier settlement was discussed last year at Addis Ababa where Mr. Rennell Rodd, first secretary of the British

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**MANILA IS IN SORROW**

Lawton's Death Regretted by Natives as Well as Americans.

**BODY TO BE BROUGHT HOME**

The Interment Will Be in Arlington—Movement Started For the Relief of His Family.

MANILA, Dec. 20.—Major General Lawton's body was brought from San Mateo to Manila this afternoon, his staff and a squadron of cavalry acting as an escort. It was found necessary to bridge the river. The body has been placed temporarily in a vault in the El Paseo cemetery, where many of the American soldiers have been interred, and a guard of honor will be maintained.

When Mrs. Lawton and her four children shall have completed their arrangements for returning to the United States, the remains will be taken on a transport with an escort of officers for final interment, as is thought probable here, in Arlington cemetery.

General Lawton's death has caused universal sorrow in Manila. No American officer had greater popularity among all ranks, and in his dealings with the natives he commanded their respect and confidence to a remarkable degree. The mayors whom he installed in the neighboring towns are arranging to attend the funeral in a body.

Thirteen Americans, including three officers, were wounded in the engagement at San Mateo where General Lawton was killed. It is estimated that the insurgents numbered 500. The Americans numbered 300 but the command had been much depleted by sickness. The insurgents retreated to the northeast, leaving six dead. It is now reported that the insurgents intend to concentrate at Santa Cruz, in La Guira province, and in the district east of Laguna de Bay.

The American secret service reports that Aguinaldo has joined the Marikina forces.

**LAWTON DIED POOR**

WASHINGTON, Dec. 20.—A general order was issued from the war department today announcing the death of General Lawton to the army officially and paying an appropriate tribute to his worth. It is the intention of officials to have the remains brought to the United States for final interment but it is not known when this can be done.

General Lawton died a poor man, therefore some of his friends have thought proper now to come to the aid of his family as is shown by a statement addressed to the American people today:

"Major General Henry W. Lawton, United States volunteer, whose death occurred at San Mateo, has left little but his good name as a legacy to his wife and children. The piece of property purchased by him as a home in California has a mortgage of half the purchase price still outstanding and unpaid. The undersigned have voluntarily associated themselves together for the purpose of raising funds to pay off the indebtedness. Contributions will be thankfully received by them and be devoted to the object hereinabove set forth. Aid of newspapers of the country is requested.

"Contributions will be received by any one of the following: H. C. Corbin, John F. Weston, William Ludlow, W. E. Shafter."

**THE PRESIDENT'S SYMPATHY**

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"I have learned with inexpressible sorrow of the death of Major General Lawton and ask to share with the officers and men of the Eighth corps in their grief. One of the most gallant officers of the army has fallen. The country mourns the death of this intrepid leader. Convey to Mrs. Lawton my heartfelt sympathy in her overshadowing affliction."

**ARMY PROMOTIONS**

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Army—General officers to be brigadier generals (all late major generals of volunteers):

James H. Wilson, Fitzhugh Lee, Jos. Wheeler, Lieutenant Colonels A. R. Chaffee, J. C. Bates, Colonel S. M. B. Young.

Late brigadier generals—Lieutenant Colonel G. W. Davis, Colonel Theo. Swan, Colonel R. H. Hall, Colonel Lloyd Wheaton.

General officers—To be brigadier generals (late brigadier generals of

volunteers) Charles King, Fred D. Grant, Colonel R. P. Hughes, Colonel E. Overhine, I. Hale; also Colonel J. C. Smith, First California and Colonel Frederick Funston, Twentieth Kansas.

**ANOTHER TOWN CAPTURED**

WASHINGTON, Dec. 20.—Admiral Watson today called the navy department from Manila as follows:

Manila, Dec. 20.—The gunboat Concord, Ackley commanding, and Panipanga, Leigh commanding, the 19th inst, with two companies of infantry captured Bombon. John James, seaman, wounded in the knee, was the only casualty of the navy. Newark's battalion landed from the Caliao occupied Campora, on the north coast of Luzon. Burwell, of the Wheeling, co-operating with General Young like one service, landing a battalion, is doing excellent work daily in the north and west of Luzon.

**WOOD AT HAVANA**

HAVANA, Dec. 20.—Major General Leonard Wood, new governor general arrived here at daylight today on the steamer Mexico. From Habana for the major general's salute of 13 guns were fired and Cubans from Punta fired the governor general's salute of 21 guns by the explosion of potatoes.

**MORE PRACTICE SHIPS**

Navy Department to Ask an Appropriation for That Purpose.

NEW YORK, Dec. 20.—A special to the Tribune from Washington, says: The navy department proposes to ask congress for 1,900,000 to build two first-class training ships, of 3,000 tons displacement each, the vessels to be sheathed and provided with auxiliary sail power as well as steam propulsion.

Such ships are declared to be indispensable to maintaining a force of skilled seamen to work the warships now in the fleet. It is estimated that the two projected vessels cannot be completed within two years, and by that time the Essex, the Alliance and the Lancaster, which are now utilized for training purposes will be condemned and laid up in rotten rags.

It is regarded as extremely important that vessels adapted to the duty shall be ready to take their places and in the opinion of the chief of navigation, who is in charge of the matter, the only solution of the question is to build special ships fitted for the service.

The suggestion to utilize the regular cruisers and battleships for drilling green men and giving them experience by mixing them into the regular cruises is met by the objection that such methods have been repeatedly tried with the result of demoralizing the skilled crew and that it is poor economy to place novices on an expensive ship, where every man from the captain down, must be an expert in his particular line. Even a fireman from the best merchant ship or the largest establishment ashore is considered an unsafe man in the hold of a warship.

It is said that the enlisted strength of the navy today is nearly 4,000 men short of the legal limit and of the needs of the service. Many valuable ships have been thrown out of commission for lack of men. The authorized strength of the navy is 17,500 men and 2,500 apprentices.

**GOLD FOR ENGLAND**

NEW YORK, Dec. 20.—From the best information obtainable in Wall street today it was stated that at least \$2,000,000 in gold will be sent abroad Saturday.

**PORTLAND TO BE DONE-UP**

No River and Harbor Bill Will Be Passed This Session.

**ENGINEERS ARE TOO BUSY**

Work Already Authorized Will Be Suspended Owing to the High Prices of Material.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 20.—Chairman Burton of the river and harbor committee authorized the following statement today:

"There will probably be no river and harbor bill at the present session."

One strong argument against the bill is the fact that the engineers force will be occupied during the coming year with projects already provided for.

"In many cases the plans for improvements are not even completed. In others advertisements for bids have not yet been made. Another fact of importance is the increase in price of material in the last year. Some of the projects already authorized cannot be completed for the amounts estimated by the engineers."

**ATJOURNED TILL JAN. 1**

WASHINGTON, Dec. 20.—No business was transacted at the brief session of the house today. The time was occupied in filibustering against a motion to adjourn. The house finally adjourned until January 1.

**PITTSBREW IS ASHY**

Says the Administration Will not Give Him Information He Demanded.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 20.—In the final session of the senate today before the holiday recess, Pittsgrew, of South Dakota, in a characteristically to give speech, demanded to know whether it was to be the policy of the representatives of the administration to suppress facts and news when called for by a senator.

He said that he believed an effort was being made to prevent testimony taken by the war investigating committee from being sent to the senate and declared his purpose of not submitting to the suppression of information to which the people, in his opinion, were entitled.

Morgan, of Alabama, offered an amendment to Bacon's resolution guaranteeing to the people of Puerto Rico, Hawaii and the Philippines a republican government, and Hoar, of Massachusetts, introduced a resolution declaring how the people of the island possessions of the United States should be governed.

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