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GREAT BATTLE IN PROGRESS

**Buller's Forces Have Now Massed
for the Grand Effort.**

THE OUTCOME UNCERTAIN

**British Probably Outnumbered But
the Boers Fear to Meet Them
Outside the Trenches.**

LONDON, Jan. 19, 4 a. m.—Military critics in affiliation with the war office consider that the expected battle along a wide arc south and west of Ladysmith can hardly be delayed beyond today.

From Durban it is reported fighting has already begun. General Buller's forces engaged in flanking operations across the Tugela are some 12,000 or 14,000 bayonets, 1,200 horses and 40 guns. Disposition of his other 15,000 or 20,000 men is not known although the assumption is that the whole army will be in action when the hour for a combined movement arrives. General Buller has probably 25,000 men and 80 guns, all told.

Estimates of how many men and guns the Boers have to oppose him are mere guess work. In not replying to General Lyttleton's shell fire they are using the tactics that proved so successful in the battles of Magerfontein and Colenso—lying low in their trenches and thus hoping to conceal their precise position until the infantry advances.

The war office announces that next week there will be embarked 72 guns, 3,750 men and 2,210 horses. This is the largest consignment of artillery ever sent abroad.

SEVERE FIGHTING REPORTED.
Warren Pounding the Boers Within 17 Miles of Ladysmith.

LONDON, Jan. 19.—A special dispatch from Durban, dated Wednesday says: "Advices from Potgieter's drift, dat yesterday (Tuesday) say that Sir Charles Warren has arrived within 17 miles of Ladysmith and that the British wounded are arriving at the Mool river field hospital by every train from the front, indicating that there has already been severe fighting."

"Neither report has yet been confirmed."

OVER THE TUGELA.
Both Lyttleton and Warren Forced Their Passage Last Tuesday.

SPEARMAN'S FARM, Natal, Jan. 18, 10 a. m.—General Lyttleton's brigade, with a howitzer battery, crossed the Tugela river at Potgieter's drift Tuesday, January 18. The water rose above the waists of the men. The Boers fired two shots and then recalled their forces to the trenches, the passage being uninterrupted.

The British advanced in skirmishing order and the small kopjes on the summits were occupied by 6:30 p. m. During the night it rained heavily.

Yesterday (Wednesday) the Boer trenches were vigorously shelled in front of Mount Alice, while the British remained in possession of the kopjes and plain. Heavy mist enveloped the hills, but the maul guns and howitzer battery made good practice. On the Boer right a breach was made in the sand bag emplacement where it is supposed the Boer guns had been placed. The cannonade was heavy and continuous and the Boers were observed leaving the trenches in small parties. The hill facing the British position was shelled next.

General Warren has forced a passage of the Tugela seven miles west.

THE ANXIETY INTENSE.
London Awaiting News of a Big Victory or Reverse.

NEW YORK, Jan. 18.—A dispatch to the World from London, says: "The anxiety in regard to General Buller is intense and increasing every hour."

The public and most of the war experts are inclined to take a gloomy view of the situation.

Mr. Williams, the Leader's war critic says in this (Thursday) morning's issue, "Floods in the Tugela river may have postponed action. We mentioned Thursday as the day upon which the news of it would be officially promulgated. Our own information goes only till Monday night. It is to the effect

that General Warren holds the Tugela passages.

The war office will probably communicate this statement to the recorders and commentators simultaneously with the news of the relief of Ladysmith.

"We are bound to say that the midnight bulletin at the war office made a bad impression. It is as certain as anything can be that General Buller secured on yesterday morning two passages across the Upper Tugela. He may have pushed forward and been defeated but it is improbable. He may have had a small reverse on his right where he could not be very strong. But it is just as likely that he is pushing steadily on toward his goal."

"If there should have been another reverse the shock will be felt all the more by the country on account of the apprehensions excited by the misadroit working of the midnight placards."

ENGLISHMEN IN BOER RANKS.

Report That the Free Staters Have Forced British Residents to go to the Front.

LONDON, Jan. 18.—The correspondent of the Times at Laurence Marquis, telegraphing yesterday says:

"An old British resident in the Boer republic, who has just been expelled, informs me that ten per cent of the Free State commando are British who have been compelled to go to the front."

The Boers are so disappointed and disheartened that he predicts that single big reverses would be followed by a wholesale dispersal of the Free Staters who are disgusted with the Transvaalers.

"They have no money and no foodstuffs, except underground wheat and mealies in the Free State, and the payment of official salaries has been suspended. In consequence of defective transports, the men at the front often go for days without food. Rifle ammunition is running short and what was condemned by General Joubert at the beginning of the war as dangerous is now being used."

"A correspondent of the Standard and Diggers News says that the Boers in Natal are quarrelsome, cantankerous, overweary of waiting and of the hardships of camp life, and that they criticize their generals."

"Information from Pretoria says that Boer government refuses to accept the claim for licenses made absentee Uitlanders. It is difficult to trust to the efficiency of Potgieter's control over the goods passing through to the Transvaal. There is little doubt that goods are smuggled over the border but it is impossible to say whether these are contraband, owing to the fact that the Boer agents command unlimited money and that the Portuguese officials can easily be bribed or hoodwinked."

BRITISH PATROL AMBUSHED.
Detachment of Australian Troops Are Killed or Captured.

RENSBERG, Jan. 17.—A patrol, composed of 16 men of the New South Wales lancers, and South Australians, was ambushed yesterday by Boers and overwhelmed after a severe fight. Eight of the detachment have escaped and have arrived in camp. The remainder were killed or captured.

This morning a patrol visited the scene of the fight and found one dead Australian and one wounded man. A number of dead Boer horses were also found, showing that the Australians had made a gallant fight before surrendering.

It appears that when the Australians encountered the first body of Boers and found their retreat cut off, they galloped for a nearby kopje, hoping to beat off the Boers, but on arriving they found another force of burghers concealed.

IS LADYSMITH RELIEVED?
Reports From Lord Roberts Indicate That Such Rumors Are Untrue.

LONDON, Jan. 18.—Rumors from Cape Town that Ladysmith is already relieved are apparently ahead of facts. In any case Lord Roberts, whose report was dispatched this morning, was not aware of it, and his dates preclude any possibility that the troops mentioned in his dispatch have so soon reached the beleaguered town. Though there are some discrepancies in the telegrams, the whole tenor of the news tends to show that General Buller's advance began with good prospects of success, but it is generally recognized that with an enemy so resourceful as the Boers have proven themselves to be, it is idle to indulge in overconfidence.

The net result, so far as known, is that Buller occupies commanding positions north of the Tugela river.

BOERS OCCUPY PRIESKA.
CRADDOCK, Cape Colony, Saturday, Jan. 13.—The Boers have occupied Prieska, a village on the Orange river, about ten miles northwest of the De Aar.

SALEM BOWLERS DEFEATED.
THE DALLIES, Jan. 18.—In the bowling contest tonight The Dalties Commercial Club won. Score: The Dalties 2, Salem 1.

THE MOVEMENT HAS NOW BEGUN

Battle Cry of the British "On to Ladysmith."

BULLER'S RINGING ORDER

**His Men Going to the Relief of Their
Comrades—"There Will Be
No Turning Back."**

**MOUNT ALICE, Near Potgieter's
Drift, Natal, Monday, Jan. 15.**—A forward movement for the relief of Ladysmith began yesterday, January 10, from Frere and Chevelly.

Lord Dunderdonald's mounted brigade, with the Fifth brigade under General Hart, comprising the Dublins, Connaughts, Inniskillings and Border regiments, proceeded westward to Springfield. The position had previously been thoroughly reconnoitered.

A few miles outside of Frere, Lord Dunderdonald passed targets elected by the Boers to represent a force advancing in skirmish order. Evidently the Boers had been firing on these from the adjacent hills.

Lord Dunderdonald pushed on and as the main column advanced it was notified that Springfield was not occupied by the Boers and that the Fifth brigade had taken possession. The British transport extended for several miles and comprised some five thousand vehicles.

The mounted Brigade advanced rapidly, not meeting with any opposition. The British scouts had minutely searched all suspicious country but there was no sign of the enemy.

The column advanced to Mount Alice, facing the enemy's mountain fortress. The Boers had been at Potgieter's drift the previous day but a body of the South African horse swam the stream under fire and brought over a pontoon from the Boer side.

The Boers were evidently surprised at the appearance of the British.

A camp could be seen on Tugela heights, facing Mount Alice, but the enemy quickly struck the camp and cleared off into the mountains. A bugle was seen leaving for the hills on the right, presumably with General Joubert or some other commander.

General Buller took up his quarters in a pleasantly-situated farm house belonging to Martinus Pretorius, who had disappeared. On Friday a loud explosion was heard. Subsequently it was found that the Boers had destroyed a bridge under construction seven miles above Potgieter's drift.

General Buller has issued a spirited appeal and instructions to his forces, beginning:

"We are going to the relief of our comrades in Ladysmith. There will be no turning back."

The order proceeds to advise the men, when they charge, regarding the conditions under which they should receive a surrender of any of the enemy. It also warns them that the Boers are treacherous in the use of the white flag.

This order has been received with enthusiasm. The march was very trying but the troops are now encamped amid very pleasant surroundings. Their health is excellent and all are confident.

BOER CONSUL-GENERAL.
NEW YORK, Jan. 18.—Montague White, until recently consul-general of the South African republic, has been in New York for a week, and is about to go to Washington. It is supposed he is on a diplomatic mission. He refused to be interviewed.

BOERS BUSY ENTRENCHING.
LONDON, Jan. 18, 9:40 p. m.—The war office has issued the following: From Buller, Spearman's camp, Jan. 18: One field battery of artillery, a howitzer battery and Lyttleton's brigade are across the Tugela at Potgieter's drift. The enemy's position is being bombarded by us.

Five miles further up Warren has crossed the river by a pontoon bridge 35 yards long. He hopes his force will be evening have advanced five miles from the river to his right front. The enemy is busily engaged entrenching.

"From Roberts, Cape Town, Jan. 18: Gatacre reports that 500 men of all rank have been moved from Bushman's Hoek to Hoppersburg, and the Seventy-fourth field battery and one company of mounted infantry from Hoppersburg to Bushman's Hoek. Otherwise there is no change."

ENGLAND NOT IN THE WAY

**Clayton-Bulwer Treaty Will Not
Obstruct Nicaragua Canal.**

HER ASSURANCES RECEIVED

**Only Condition Is That British
Rights Elsewhere Shall Re-
ceive Just Consideration.**

NEW YORK, Jan. 18.—A special to the Herald from Washington, says: It was said tonight by a member of the foreign relations committee that an understanding exists between the United States and Great Britain under which this government can proceed with the construction of the Nicaragua canal without reference to the provisions of the Clayton-Bulwer treaty.

There is no doubt that since the negotiations for the abrogation of the Clayton-Bulwer treaty failed and since the agitation of the construction of the canal has been taken up by congress, that a discussion has occurred between the two governments and it is understood that Great Britain has given this country assurances that it need not let the convention of 1850 stand in the way of action.

It has been known for a year that Great Britain was willing to abrogate the convention on condition that she received concessions in the Alaska boundary controversy and it is possible if she has made the statement credited to her, she has coupled it with the understanding that her rights elsewhere will receive consideration in return for her concession.

Representative Sulzer has prepared an amendment to the Nicaragua canal bill requiring that American labor be employed in connection with the construction of the canal.

WILL ASSIST POLICE.
Chinese Six Companies to Help Exterminate the Highbinders.

SAN FRANCISCO, Jan. 18.—The Chinese six companies of this city have agreed to assist the police in terminating the highbinder war which has been raging in Chinatown for some time past. Today the six companies subscribed \$17,500 which will be offered as a reward for the apprehension of the murderers.

FIRST NOME STEAMER.
SAN FRANCISCO, Jan. 18.—The first freight of the year for Nome left yesterday afternoon on the steamer Bertha. The freight will be landed at Unalakleet and when the ice begins to break it will be transferred to the steamer Sadie and taken into Nome.

CHICAGO BOARD OF TRADE.
Sir Thomas Lipton Applies for Membership.

CHICAGO, Jan. 18.—Sir Thomas J. Lipton, owner of America's cup challenger Shamrock, has applied for membership in the Chicago board of trade.

SIGNIFICANT COMPARISON.
Regulars Won the San Juan Battle but Volunteers Claim the Pensions.

WASHINGTON, Jan. 18.—A large number of claims for pensions have been received by the pension office as a result of the Spanish war. At the battle of San Juan there were 192 regulars killed, 1097 wounded and 55 missing. The claims for pension from the regular army number 2,962.

At that battle 34 volunteers were killed, 177 wounded and 45 missing. Claims for pensions from the volunteers number 3,558.

One volunteer regiment lost none in killed, wounded or missing, but has 418 claims for pensions pending.

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