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ROBERTS IN FREE STATES

The British Army Now Fighting Within Boer Territory.

THE ALLIES MELT AWAY

Little Opposition Met With and Relief of Kimberly a Question of Only a Few Days.

LONDON, Feb. 15, 4:20 a. m.—A British army for the first time since the war began, is inside the Boer frontier. Lord Roberts, with at least 40,000 infantry, 7,000 cavalry and 150 guns has turned the Magersfontein lines, before which the British forces have been encamped for ten weeks, and with half his corps he is already operating in the Free State territory.

A battle has not yet been fought but large tactical advantages have been gained. The relief of Kimberly is within measurable reach and the way to Bloemfontein is appreciable easier. The dispatches sketch Lord Roberts' three days' work. A forward movement was begun Monday when Colonel Hanney set out with a brigade of mounted infantry from Hammah, on the Riet, eight miles from Jacobsdal, the Boer supply base.

Monday General French, with a cavalry division, seized the crossing of the Riet river at DeKils drift, south of Jacobsdal, and eighteen miles east of the Honey Nest kloof. He skirmished with the Boers and cleared the way for 20,000 infantry, who followed across on Tuesday. With his three cavalry brigades and horse artillery General French rode to Modder river, a distance of 25 miles, and took three fords, with the high ground beyond the river and five Boer camps. He had a few casualties in brushes with the Boer horse.

General French has now fixed himself on General Cronje's main line of communication with Bloemfontein and 20,000 infantry, with 72 guns, are being pushed up to support him there. Lord Roberts' dispatches, wired from inside the Free State and on the Riet river, left him Wednesday morning. His advance had not been opposed by the Boers in force. Their patriots melted away as the British moved forward. The Boer army is likely to be felt in a day or two and a battle is consequently imminent.

As to what forces General Cronje has now at his disposal and as to where he proposes making a stand against the invaders, no one here connected with the war office knows anything.

The forces immediately at the disposal of Lord Roberts are placed at 50,000. Quite possibly Lord Roberts has 10,000 or 20,000 more. It is now realized that the incidents at Rensburg have been out of all proportion. Merely skeleton lines were maintained there while the troops were being secretly and rapidly concentrated on Modder river.

The facilities with which 20,000 men have already been sent beyond the rail terminus shows that Lord Kitchener has been fully successful in organizing the transports. He is now supposed to be down the line, sending forward more troops and getting together more transports.

About five miles of ox and mule wagon trains are estimated for each division, so that Lord Kitchener, who is reputed to have more skill than a circus manager in handling field transport, has an immense labor in hand.

LONDON, Feb. 14.—The war office has issued the following message from Lord Roberts, received this evening:

"DeKils drift, Feb. 14, 8:10 a. m.—General French left this point at 11:30 yesterday morning with three brigades of cavalry, horse artillery and mounted infantry, including several colonial contingents, in order to seize a crossing of the Modder river about twenty-five miles away. He reports, by dispatches, dated 5:30 p. m., that he had forced a passage at Clip drift and has occupied the hills north of the river, capturing three of the enemy's laagers, with all their supplies, while General Gordon of the Fifteenth Hussars, with his brigade, who had made a feint at Ronderval drift, four miles west, has seized it and already the drift between it and Clip drift, together with two more laagers.

"General French's performance is brilliant, considering the excessive heat and a blinding dust storm, which raged during the latter part of the day.

"Owing to the rapidity of his movement, General French met with but slight resistance, his loss being small. Lieutenant Johnson, of the Inniskilling dragoons, is the only officer reported to be severely wounded.

"The Sixth division was last night on the north bank of the Riet, at Waternat drift, and is moving to the support of the cavalry. The Seventh division is here and will go on this afternoon.

"Four officers and 53 men had to be

sent last evening in returning wagons to the railway line, prostrated by the heat and exhaustion."

BULLER'S ACCOUNT.

Principal News in London Early in the Day.

LONDON, Feb. 14.—The only war news of any kind this morning is an official dispatch from Buller from Cheley, announcing a reconnaissance at Springfield, resulting in no gain of ground on either side. Captain Hamilton Russell, Lieutenant C. Churchill and ten men were wounded and Lieutenant Pillington and six men were captured by the Boers. The dispatch contains detailed accounts of what appear to be unimportant operations. They only tend to throw light on the situation by proving that the Boers are actively following Buller's every move.

From Lord Roberts, at Modder river, where all eyes are turned, there is no word.

A dispatch from Mafeking says the garrison there can hold out until June. Buller's dispatch from Cheley, dated February 12, says:

"The commanding officer at Springfield reports this morning that a squadron of the First dragoons, moving to the outpost line, covering the right flank, met a party of Boers near Fustenberg. The Boers in reaching the crest of a hill first, opened a heavy fire on the squadron, which retired without support, and the Boers retired." The dispatch then gives casualties as already cabled.

Continuing, the Cheley dispatch says:

"Dundonald, with 700 mounted men, a field battery and the First Royal Welsh fusiliers, on February 12, reconnoitred high ground which the enemy has been in the habit of visiting. The enemy evacuated it with the loss of two men, after slight resistance. When the force retired on completion of the reconnaissance, the enemy returned in considerable numbers and kept up a heavy rifle fire, wounding Lieutenant C. Churchill, of the South African horse. Five men are missing."

It is not quite clear who wrote the dispatch, as Generals Lyttleton, Hildyard, Warren and other generals are believed to be in the neighborhood of Springfield.

SPECULATING ON THE SITUATION

Later Reports From Rensburg Give Rise to Comment in London.

NEW YORK, Feb. 14.—The dispatches announcing the British "retirement" at Rensburg are not satisfactory. "Our losses are not yet known," says the Daily Mail's correspondent.

There was hot fighting all day and at night the British retreated. This news is the more depressing to London because only a few days ago it was believed General French was able to take Colesburg. If the Boers are able to defeat General Clements in a decisive engagement, they may threaten Lord Roberts' base of supplies at De Aar Junction. This unexpected show of strength by the Boers at Colesburg has amazed those who were predicting an easy march for Lord Roberts through the Free State. The experts who saw in General Buller's capture and abandonment of Vaal Krantz a fine piece of strategy say that General Clements' retreat to Rensburg is part of the same policy, to engage large forces of Boers while Lord Roberts demolishes Cronje.

It is believed that General Buller has withdrawn his whole force from Potgieter's drift and Springfield to Cheley, and is exactly where he began two months ago.

The London Leader's war expert says:

"South African military opinion calls for 10,000 or 15,000 men as soon as possible and this on the ground of mercifulness and ultimate economy.

"This would bring our strength there up to nearly a quarter of a million men and this force to put down two small republics whose united white population is supposed not to exceed 450,000 men, women, children and Uitlanders.

"Nothing but this fact was needed to demonstrate the futility of the ministerial scheme of army reorganization laid before parliament on Monday.

"The precise nature of Lord Roberts' movements on Modder river and Orange river are wrapped in mystery. Certain it is that the country General French maneuvered the Boers out of Northern Cape Colony has been re-occupied by the Boers. General Buller is keeping his own secrets, but we may look for another move on his part in a day or two, probably east of Coleso."

The Morning Post's war expert says:

"The announcement of new appointments confirms the supposition that a large force has now been assembled at Modder river.

"The offensive cannot be carried on along the whole line and the commander-in-chief must determine the point at which he will act.

"It looks as though the Boers had taken their forces away from Magersfontein to reinforce the commands at Colesberg, where a victory would threaten the British communications between Cape Town and Modder river."

The expert compares the situation to the American civil war at the time when the army of the Potomac held all the Confederate forces in Virginia, while the Western armies moved down the Mississippi and through the heart of the Confederacy to Atlanta and Savannah and thence north to General Lee's rear.

NEARLY BROKE THE CONVENTION

Delegate to the Anti-Trusters Introduces a Firebrand.

AIMED IT AT MR. BRYAN

The True Colors Show Themselves and Democrats and Republicans Fight With Old-Time Vigor.

CHICAGO, Feb. 13.—Stormy scenes characterized the sessions of the national conference preceding the final adjournment tonight.

The climax came when Delegate Joseph Parker, a middle of the road populist, surprised the conference with a resolution pledging the delegates to vote for no party that does not stand for the government ownership and the principle of direct legislation. The democrats interpreted this as an attack on W. J. Bryan, and were on their feet in an instant to block the movement. A score of delegates took the floor and all tried to talk at the same time.

"You must not stifle free speech here," was shouted. "Everybody must be heard," was a warning that came from a delegate in the gallery. Chairman Monnett was in doubt as to what to do. Disorder reigned for ten minutes and then Chairman Monnett temporarily adjourned the convention.

A strong attempt was made at the conference today to offset the partisan effect of the resolutions adopted yesterday denouncing the pending currency bill. Frank S. Monnett, the permanent chairman of the conference, made a speech in which he declared the purpose of public ownership of public utilities was being carried in the republican party, as well as the democratic party.

"In the republican northwest," said he, "sixty-five per cent of the public utilities are owned by the public, whereas, in many southern democratic states, less than five per cent are so owned."

"I would remind the convention that Ohio, which is the state of the president, is also the home of the Sherman anti-trust act. If we have an Attorney General Griggs we also had an Attorney General Olney."

The report of the committee on national organization was unanimously adopted. M. L. Lockwood of Pennsylvania was unanimously elected president of the national organization. Franklin Wentworth of Chicago was chosen secretary; C. T. Bride of Washington, D. C., was elected treasurer, and W. B. Flemming, of Kentucky, financial secretary.

CONSUL MACRUM'S STATEMENT.

Left His Post in Pretoria Because He Objected to Acting as British Representative.

WASHINGTON, Feb. 14.—A statement was given out tonight by Charles E. Macrum, former United States consul at Pretoria. He says:

"I could not remain in Pretoria sacrificing my own self respect and that of the people of Pretoria, while the government at home continued to leave me in the position of British consul and not American consul. I had the humiliation as representative of the American government of looking into envelopes bearing the official seal of the American government opened and officially sealed with a sticker notifying me that the contents had been read by the censor at Durban.

Speaking of his removal as United States consul he said:

"Secretary Hay has been a silent or conniving partner to the discrediting reports of my official acts. When I accepted my post as consul I knew nothing of any secret alliances between American and Great Britain.

"There is not one soul who can point a single official act of mine which departed from the strictest neutrality."

SUIT IS COMMENCED.

Democrats File Their Petition to Oust Governor Taylor.

FRANKFORT, Ky., Feb. 14.—Governor Beckham's suit to compel Governor Taylor to surrender the office of governor to him was filed this afternoon. Judge Price has prepared a petition, which will be in the nature of an injunction and quo warranto proceedings.

The petition in the suit holds that W. S. Taylor is not the governor of the state and that with an armed force he holds possession of the executive building. It alleges that he is drawing money without authority of the law from the state treasury, pardoning convicts and doing other things that are detrimental to the welfare of the state.

The petition asks that the court enjoin him from exercising any duties as chief executive and from assuming any control whatever over the legislature.

Application for an injunction will be made Friday before Judge Cantrill at Georgetown.

The committee of democratic members of the legislature which came from Louisville for the purpose of investigating conditions here and determining whether it is safe for democratic members to venture within the precincts of Frankfort, returned to Louisville tonight. Members of the committee declined to hold any conversation with Adjutant General Collier or Governor Taylor and made Custodian Thompson of the executive building a go-between.

They first sent word to Governor Taylor that before the democratic members could think of returning to Frankfort all the soldiers must be sent away. No objection, they said, could be raised to a small number of a body guard to Governor Taylor personally. As for the legislature, it needed no protection. Governor Taylor replied through the medium of Custodian Thompson that the request of the committee could not be complied with, but promised that the legislature should not be molested in any way.

Some of the members of the committee said that in their opinion the meetings would continue in Louisville at least for the present. Several of them, however, expressed a personal willingness to return to Frankfort. The house and senate met at 11 o'clock this morning. Both houses lacked a quorum, and adjourned until tomorrow.

NO FEDERAL JURISDICTION.

Judge Taft Remands Kentucky Contest to the State Courts.

CINCINNATI, Feb. 14.—Holding that the federal court has no jurisdiction in the contests in Kentucky, Judge Taft this afternoon refused to grant the application for an injunction against the Kentucky state board of elections and the democratic contestants for state offices other than governor and lieutenant-governor.

BIG APPROPRIATION BILL.

Naval Provisions Greater Than Since the Civil War.

NEW YORK, Feb. 14.—A special to the Herald from Washington says: This year's naval appropriation bill will carry more money than has been voted by congress in any regular appropriation bill since the civil war and probably will authorize expenditures as great as those under the regular and the allotments from the fifty million dollar national defense fund in the fiscal year 1899.

The estimates of the navy department for the year footed up \$75,000,000, and the department would like to have every cent for which it asked. Congress will scale down the estimates wherever practicable, but it is expected when the bill becomes a law it will carry at least \$65,000,000.

The first draft of the measure has been prepared by a sub-committee of the house committee on naval affairs and is now under consideration by the full committee.

Even with the omissions of purchase of armor, the first draft of the bill carries a total of about \$62,000,000.

It is the aim of the committee to bring the total in the bill, including the appropriations for new ships and armor plate down to \$60,000,000, but it is doubtful whether this can be done.

Aside from the items under the head of the increase of the navy for which the department estimated \$22,983,101, an increase of more than \$12,000,000, the heaviest increases are under the head of public works, including improvements at navy yards and stations, new dry docks and new buildings at the naval academy. The department's estimates for public works footed up nearly \$15,000,000, an increase of more than \$8,000,000.

The house committee has not yet decided whether all the new ships recommended by Secretary Long shall be authorized this year or not. In view of the fact that little progress has been made with the ships authorized last year, and as the ship yards of the country are pretty well filled with work, there is a disposition on the part of some members of congress not to authorize the full programme urged by the secretary. The most troublesome question is that of providing armor for the ships already authorized.

AMERICA'S NEW NAVY.

Secretary Long Gives Congress Important Facts and Figures.

WASHINGTON, Feb. 14.—The secretary of the navy has sent to the senate a statement of the number of vessels under construction and of naval officers available. The statement was made in response to a resolution of inquiry. It shows that are sixty-one vessels of all classes now building and that with these vessels in commission they, together with those now in use would reach a total of 1,000 vessels, whereas there are now only 1,094 officers. There are 14,099 men in the navy.

GOOD FOR PORTLAND.

PORTLAND, Feb. 14.—It is announced that the Illinois Central railroad will establish an agency in Portland for the purpose of handling cotton shipments to the Orient.

TEST VOTE ON FINANCIAL BILL

But One Republican Senator Will Oppose Its Final Passage.

CHANDLER AMENDMENT LOST

No Propositions of International Bimetallism Will Be Entertained By This Country.

WASHINGTON, Feb. 14.—Throughout its session today the senate had the financial bill under discussion. After 2 o'clock the debate proceeded under the 10-minute rule, and at times became spirited and interesting.

Late in the afternoon a test vote, indicating the approximate majority on the passage of the bill, was taken, when Chandler offered an amendment to authorize the president to appoint commissioners to "any international bimetallic conference that might be called," which was defeated by a vote of 45 to 35.

The Chandler proposition out of the way, the discussion proceeded on the amendment brought in by the finance committee, providing that the provisions of the bill are not intended to place any obstacles in the way of international bimetallism.

The democratic senators arraigned the republicans for reporting the amendment, declaring they were insincere and that the proposition was intended to hoodwink the people and to catch votes.

No vote on the amendment was reached. The final vote on the amendment and bill will be taken some time tomorrow.

The vote on the Chandler amendment follows:

Yeas—Allen, Bate, Berry, Butler, Chandler, Chilton, Clay, Cochran, Culbertson, Harris, Helfield, Jones (Ark.), Jones (Nev.), Kenny, McEnery, Martin, Money, Morgan, Pettus, Rawlins, Sullivan, Teller, Thimman, Turner, Turner—25.

Nays—Aldrich, Allison, Burrows, Caffery, Carter, Clark (Wyo.), Cullom, Davis, Deboe, Dewey, Elkins, Fairbanks, Foraker, Foster, Frye, Gallinger, Hale, Hanna, Hansbrough, Hawley, Keam, Lindsay, Lodge, McBride, McCumber, McMillan, Mason, Nelson, Penrose, Perkins, Platt (Conn.), Platt (N. Y.), Proctor, DeLoach, Ross, Sewell, Shoup, Simon, Spooner, Thurston, Vest, Warren, Wetmore, Wolcott—45.

CANAL AND THE MORMONS.

Mexican Dailies Paying Much Attention to These Questions in the United States.

CITY OF MEXICO, Feb. 14.—The Mexican papers are giving much attention to American topics, especially the proposed construction of the Nicaragua canal and the Mormons. The latter subject is of especial domestic interest on account of the flourishing Mormon colonies in the northern part of the republic.

El Tiempo, the clerical daily, censures the government for liberal treatment of the Mormons, saying that here all doors are thrown open to them, lands freely given them and what is a thousand times worse, they are permitted to open schools.

Taking a wholly distinct view of the Americans and their ambitions, El Mundo, the organ of the liberal party now in power here, comments on the adoption of the Nicaragua canal project by the American congress and says that "Mexico, like all Latin-American countries having territory on the Pacific is bound to be benefitted by the canal."

"The fact that the canal will enable us largely to increase our exports of ore is sufficient evidence that it will be highly advantageous to us."

The Mexican Herald says that by the construction of the canal the United States extends its southern coast line far to the south and that the canal will be the means of making the Mexican west coast ports prosperous and will enable Mexico to build up its Pacific coast in preparation for sharing in the commerce which is to fill the Pacific ocean as was predicted by Seward, whose policy President McKinley is consistently carrying out.

HOAR NEEDS BOOSTING.

BOSTON, Feb. 14.—In the house a resolution has been introduced by Representative Mellen (dem.), expressing confidence in Senator Hoar. Mr. Mellen stated prior to the session of the house that the order was the result of an attack made on Mr. Hoar at the Middlesex County Club last night by Congressman of Washington.

ANOTHER COLORED CHAMPION.

SAN FRANCISCO, Feb. 14.—Jack O'Brien, of Philadelphia, was knocked out by "Young" Peter Jackson (colored) in the fourteenth round tonight.