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The Morning Astorian.

VOL. L.

ASTORIA, OREGON, TUESDAY, MARCH 20, 1900

NO. 245

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MAFEKING NOT YET RELIEVED

Free Staters Still in the Field
and Rallying at Smithfield.

BULLER IS AGAIN ACTIVE

Battle Expected to Take Place in
Natal Between His and Boer
General Bothas' Forces.

LONDON, March 20. 4 a. m.—The war office has had no news up to this hour confirming the report of the relief of Mefeking, but George Wyndham, the parliamentary under secretary of war, replying to a private inquiry in the lobby of the house of commons about midnight, smilingly said: "I think it is all right."

The Free Staters seemingly have not quite collapsed. They are in considerable force around Smithfield, though much dispirited. Kroonstadt, where the Boers are concentrating, is thirty miles from Bloemfontein. It is surrounded by a country of hills and jungles. General Gatacre is now resting at Springfontein, preliminary to joining Lord Roberts.

General Buller's bill work before Lady Smith has given him experience which is about to be used in forcing the Biggarsberg range. It is believed that 25,000 of his 40,000 men are about to engage General Bothas' force and the next news of fighting will probably come from Natal.

Thirty-two thousand additional troops for South Africa are now at sea.

MOMENTOUS QUESTION.

The Wearing of the Shamrock on the
Occasion of the Queen's Visit
an Important Concession.

NEW YORK, March 19.—T. P. O'Connor, M. P., in the London Daily Mail, writes:

"I am asked to state my views with regard to the momentous announcement as to the proposal by the queen of the wearing of the shamrock by Irish soldiers and as to her majesty's visit to Ireland.

"As to the wearing of the Shamrock, it is a tribute to Irish nationality which will be greatly appreciated. The symbolical things of life are all apparent in themselves small things. The Shamrock materially is a small plant, but the wearing of it means to an Irishman centuries of sacred memories and country's wrongs resisted, hopes maintained.

"The sanction of the wearing of it by the Irish soldier, then, is a concession—I had almost called it a tremendous concession—to Irish sentiment by the British throne which must have vast consequences.

"But, speaking assuredly in no spirit of carping objection, but as an illustration and a lesson, may I point out that the conduct of English ministers towards this small question is a very remarkable and significant example of the slowness and dullness of wit, the want of imagination, insight and sympathy which have characterized all the relations between England and Ireland?

"While the Scotch soldier could wear the thistle without interference, while the Welsh soldier could wear the leek, the Irish soldier for year after year was sent by some stupid officer to prison because he wore the emblem of his nationality. And when an Irish member, session after session called attention to the fact in the house of commons he was howled at by English members, and received either an abrupt or a positive answer from the minister.

"And now, after all the bitterness of these years, after the imprisonment and the snubs and all the rest, the delay is ended by order of the highest and greatest figure in the realm.

"I will not say, as can be said about so many other concessions to Irish feeling, 'too late, too late,' but assuredly the concession has not come too soon.

"And now as to the visit of the queen to Ireland I find this act a touching and, if I may use the word, a statesmanlike and eloquent proof added to the many others that the present sovereign is one of the wisest that ever ruled these lands."

LEFT TO THEIR FATE.

European Powers Will Make No Attempt to Help the Boers.

NEW YORK, March 19.—Great Britain's declaration that she will not tolerate the intervention of any power effectually prevents Europe from at-

tempting to end the hostilities in progress in South Africa.

"This statement was made last night in Washington by a well-informed diplomat who had carefully followed international events transpiring in the Old World.

"The European horizon," he continued, "is remarkably clear for England. Had intervention been contemplated action would have been taken when British prestige had suffered such a severe blow by the reverse of General Buller before Ladysmith, of General Gatacre at Stormberg, and General Methuen at the Modder river. The fact that Russia did not at that moment interfere shows conclusively, I believe, the truthfulness of the peace sentiments entertained by the czar, which he endeavored to have incorporated into international law by the conference held at The Hague. I think it may be set down as absolutely correct that Russia does not propose to take advantage of Great Britain's present preoccupation in South Africa. It is true that the loan just made to Persia will increase her influence with the people. That loan, however, is not due to the South African war.

"Negotiations for its subscription were begun before the war commenced. Great Britain knew of it but did not try to prevent Persia from obtaining the money from Russia. It is untrue that Russia has been massing troops on the frontier of Afghanistan. Those reports were probably put in circulation by persons desirous of distracting attention in England from events occurring in South Africa.

"It is to be expected that the presidents of the South African republics will endeavor to secure peace through diplomatic means. They probably fully understand by now that there is no prospect of a second Majuba Hill and that if peace comes before their governments are wiped out it must be achieved by diplomatic negotiations. Just how this is possible, however, in view of Great Britain's positive declaration, I cannot say. The note from the United States enabled Lord Salisbury to play a strong card at the right time. His declaration has done much to clear the atmosphere for Great Britain and has shown the world the intention of the British government to destroy the two republics.

"Undoubtedly the governments of Europe have destroyed the prospect of compensation, but there is no talk of concerted action at present. It seems to me that had the decision been at all serious, action would have been inaugurated by the other powers when the English troops were in such a desperate plight in South Africa. The Boers now seem demoralized; the English have an immediate force with which to conquer them and it is hardly probable that the rebels sustained some weeks ago by the British troops will be repeated."

GERMAN MEAT QUESTION.

Proposal Made to the Agrarian Party
to Raise the Duty on Wheat
Instead of Meat.

BERLIN, March 19.—The Frankfurter Zeitung says:

The government has made the offer to the Agrarian party that if they will abandon their opposition to the importation of pickled meat the duties on American grain will be raised after the expiration of the commercial treaty.

The duty on wheat will be increased from 3 marks 50 to 6 marks per double centner. On the subject of the meat inspection bill the semi-official Hamburger correspondent says:

"It is certain that America will not quietly accept limitation or to speak more correctly, an absolute prohibition of the importation of meats. We must reckon with counter measures on the part of the United States, which will do immense damage to our commerce and shipping.

"It is true that for years past American commercial legislation has been run on such lines as to give us little reason when drawing up customs regulations for Germany to pay any particular regard to American trade. In fact, in certain quarters reprisals are even called for against the treatment of German exports to America, but even if such reprisals should have any chance of success, it would be a mistake to give expression in the form of the prohibition of imported meat instead of extending them to general commercial legislation, for by introducing special legislation of this character we give Americans not only the pretext but the right to tax German commerce."

LAWLESSNESS AT SEATTLE.

Another Unprovoked Murder Committed on the Street.

SEATTLE, March 19.—An unknown man was shot and instantly killed last night on a well-lighted business street in the heart of the city. He was about 45 years old, brown hair and moustache, grey eyes and neatly dressed. He fell bleeding to the sidewalk with a 38-caliber revolver at his feet. The police say it is a case of suicide, but circumstances throw an air of mystery around the tragedy. No clue to his identity was found on his person.

BRYAN SPRINGS HIS PLATFORM

Free Silver Favored and Everything
Else Denounced.

GREAT ENTHUSIASM AROUSED

Mention of the Leader's Name Evokes
Cheers of Wild Delight—His Candidacy
Enforced by the Pops.

LINCOLN, Neb., March 19.—In effect, William J. Bryan announced tonight to the democratic party and to the nation at large, the platform which he considers best for the democratic party and practically upon which he desires to stand if nominated at the Kansas City convention.

The platform which was adopted by the Nebraska democracy with the greatest enthusiasm re-affirms the Chicago platform, declares for "sixteen to one," opposes a large standing army and denounces the action of the republican party on the Puerto Rican tariff bill, declares against trusts and imperialism and favors the choice of United States senators by a popular vote.

The platform is practically the creation of Bryan. He did not write it personally, but he was consulted concerning it and before it was read to the convention he had approved of it throughout.

The platform adopted by the populist convention was substantially the same as that adopted by the democrats. It differs somewhat in form, but conflicts in no essential point. Both conventions today were enthusiastic for Bryan, to the last degree, and every mention of his name was greeted with cheers of delight and approval.

Instructions were given to both delegates to stand for Bryan in the Kansas City and Sioux Falls conventions.

The platform says: "We favor a state constitution which will prohibit the organization of any monopoly within the state and also to prevent a monopoly organized elsewhere from doing business within the state; but we further believe that congress should supplement the efforts of the state by legislation which will require every corporation before engaging in interstate commerce to show that it has no water stock and that it has neither attempted in the past nor is attempting to monopolize any branch of business or the production of any article of merchandise."

Continuing, it says: "We favor the immediate declaration of the nation's purpose to give the Philippines, first, a stable form of government; second, independence, and third, protection from outside interference as it has for nearly a century given protection to the republics of Central and South America."

"We favor the expansion of trade by every legitimate and peaceful means."

THE NEBRASKA POPULISTS.

Split in the Convention and the "Middle of the Roaders" Flock by Themselves.

LINCOLN, Neb., March 19.—In the populist state convention today the committee on credentials decided against the claims of the "middle of the road" populists from Omaha to be classed as delegates and barred them from the convention.

The position of D. Clem Deaver, of Omaha, as a member of the populist national committee from Nebraska was declared vacant and E. E. Thomas, of Omaha, was chosen in his place. Deaver was ousted for the reason that he was "not considered a member of the populist party."

After being denied admission as delegates to the populist convention, the "middle of the roaders" held a small convention of their own and appointed a Nebraska delegation to attend the populist convention at Cincinnati. They also decided to hold their state convention in Nebraska at some date after the Kansas City convention.

GOEBEL'S ASSASSIN KNOWN.

Said to Be Not a Republican but One of the Anti-Goebel Democrats.

CINCINNATI, March 19.—T. C. Campbell, who has been employed by the brothers of the late William Goebel to assist the commonwealth's attorneys in the prosecution of the assassins of Goebel, was here today.

In conversation Campbell said that so far as now known the assassin was not yet arrested. He added that the assassin would be arrested whenever a force of 3,000 armed men could be had to go to a certain county in Eastern Kentucky.

He said further that the attorneys for the commonwealth claim to have the proof to establish a conspiracy for the assassination, but he made the assertion that this conspiracy was not

charged against the republican leaders but against what is known as the "anti-Goebel party."

He further said it includes men who were officials prior to the late election and men who thought they became officials after the late election.

FRANKFORT, Ky., March 19.—News of the alleged confession of F. W. Golden, of Harboersville, in regard to the assassination of William Goebel, produced a sensation here today. Golden was formerly a guard at the penitentiary here under the republican administration and is well known.

It developed that the police and detectives have been watching his movements since the day of the assassination, on the theory that he knew something about it.

TEXAS ANTI-TRUST LAW.

Sustained by Decision of the Supreme Court in the Waters-Pierce Oil Case.

WASHINGTON, March 19.—The supreme court of the United States today rendered an opinion in the case of the Waters-Pierce Oil Company against the state of Texas, affirming the decision of the court of civil appeals of Texas. The case involved the constitutionality of the anti-trust law of Texas, which was sustained by today's opinion.

It was charged among other things that the Waters-Pierce Company was a member of the Standard Oil trust, as organized in 1882, and various other allegations were made, but the court did not enter upon a general discussion of trusts, contenting itself with a discussion of the Texas law as applicable to this case.

The suit grew out of the charge that the oil company violated the statutes of the state of 1889 and 1895 against illegal combinations in restraint of trade, thereby incurring the forfeiture of its permit to do business in the state. Justice McKenna said:

"The statute of 1889 was a condition upon the plaintiff in error within the power of the state to impose, and whatever its limitations were upon the power of contracting and whatever its discriminations were, they became conditions of the permit, and were accepted with it."

IN THE ASCENDANCY.

Dowager Empress of China Offering
Encouragement to the Anti-
Foreign Party.

PEKING, March 19.—The ascendancy of the anti-foreign party is becoming pronounced. The dowager empress appears unable to sufficiently reward the officials who exhibit marked hostility to everything not Chinese.

Hen Tung, probably the most bitterly anti-foreign official of the empire, was decorated with the three-eyed peacock feather, which has never been conferred for 86 years.

The notorious Li Peng Hing, who was dismissed from the governorship of Shantung on Germany's demand, has been advanced to his first rank as former governor of Shantung, Yuh Sen, and appointed governor of the Shang Si district, a snub to the powers interested.

THE BRIG TANNER.

Fears for Her Safety Aroused by Reports Brought to Frisco.

SAN FRANCISCO, March 19.—The steamer Coquill river, which arrived here today from the north, reports that when near Cape Blanco she passed through a quantity of lumber.

It is feared the lumber is from the brig Tanner, which is now 20 days out from Tacoma.

CHAIRMAN TAUBENECK DEAD.

SEATTLE, March 19.—Herman T. Taubeneck, well known as the former chairman of the national committee of the peoples party, died in this city today. He came here recently for his health.

SUPPLIES FOR PHILIPPINES.

WASHINGTON, March 19.—Colonel Patten, of the quartermaster general's office, today completed arrangements for the shipment of about \$1,000,000 worth of clothing and equipment to Manila for the use of the troops in the Philippines during the next six months.

THE WARREN RELEASED.

Heavy Damage to the Government on Account of Quarantine Fumigation.

SAN FRANCISCO, March 19.—The United States transport Warren, recently released from quarantine, has begun to discharge her stores. It is asserted that the process of fumigation practically ruined all the flour on board, which means a considerable loss to the government.

The bodies of soldiers brought from Manila on the transport Duke of Fife will be taken to the Presidio military reservation today.

COMING HOME.

PANAMA, March 19.—The United States canal commission has left Colon for Costa Rica and will proceed from that republic to New York.

WAR CLAIMS TO BE ADJUDICATED

Commission Authorized for That
Purpose by the Senate.

IMPORTANT TIMBER LAND ACT

Citizens of Oregon, Washington and
California to be Allowed Timber on
Government Mineral Lands.

WASHINGTON, March 19.—Two measures of national importance and many of slightly less interest were passed by the senate today.

The legislative, executive and judicial appropriation bill, carrying more than \$25,000,000, was passed without debate. The measure providing for the appointment of a commission to adjudicate and settle the claims of the people of the United States growing out of the war with Spain, was also passed without opposition.

The sum of \$50,000 annually is appropriated for the expenses of the commission; the life of the commission being fixed at two years.

Davis, in charge of the measure, explained that the claims would be varied in character, but would relate to a large extent to the destruction of the property of American citizens in Cuba. Davis expressed the belief that substantially all the claims had already been filed with the state department and they aggregated about \$20,000,000. The bill provides that one appeal, namely, from the finding of the commission to the United States court of appeals.

A bill also passed the senate permitting citizens of the United States, bona fide residents of California, Oregon and Washington, to fell and remove for building, agricultural and other domestic purposes the timber growing or being upon the mineral lands of the United States.

For a brief time the Puerto Rican government and tariff measure was under consideration. Foraker, in charge of the bill, submitted some committee amendments. A few of them were agreed to, but the more important ones are still pending.

A free trade amendment to the bill was offered by Beveridge.

THE HOUSE.

WASHINGTON, March 19.—The house today refused to concur in the senate amendments to the Puerto Rican relief bill. Democrats supported the motion to concur on the ground that it would avoid further delay in extending relief to the inhabitants of the island, but the republicans stood firmly behind Chairman Cannon in his demand that the house should insist upon its original provision to appropriate not only the money collected on Puerto Rican goods up to January 1, but all subsequent monies collected or which are to be collected.

The fortification appropriation bill was reported today by the house committee on appropriations. It appropriates \$7,993,488 for carrying forward the plan of sea coast defenses begun in 1882. The report says:

"The scheme of sea coast fortifications contemplated by the Endicott board and which has been followed by congress in appropriations made since 1888, it is now estimated will cost in the aggregate \$112,000,000, of which sum there has already been provided nearly \$47,000,000."

PUERTO RICAN TARIFF LEGAL.

Injunction Proceedings to Restrain the
Collection of Duty Upon Such
Imports Dismissed.

NEW YORK, March 19.—Judge La-combe has denied the application for injunction restraining Collector Bidwell from collecting duty on goods from Puerto Rico which was asked for by A. S. Laeclles & Company. He says the complainants have an adequate, summary and expeditious remedy at law under the customs administration act.

THE SANTIAGO ACT.

Boss Preparing to Place British Prisoners Between Themselves and the Enemy.

NEW YORK, March 19.—A dispatch to the Tribune from London says: "The British officers now in Pretoria have been removed from the prison where Winston Churchill left them to new quarters in the outskirts of the town under Daspoort ridge. The reason for this change are not stated, but it is evident that General Roberts' army will have to expose a number of British prisoners to exceptional danger when Pretoria is invested."

TELEPHONE LINES PURCHASED.

PORTLAND Or., March 19.—The Inland Telephone Company has purchased the lines of the Blue Mountain Telephone Company in Eastern Oregon, amounting in all to 480 miles of line.