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The Morning Astorian.

VOL. L.

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NO. 284



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MAFEKING WILL SOON BE REACHED

Hunter Now Operating Within 195 Miles of Besieged City.

THE BOERS STEADILY RETIRE

General Hutton's Mounted Infantry Rout a Column of Irish-Americans, Who Appear for the First Time in the Ranks of the Boer Forces.

LONDON, May 5.—The mounted infantry with Lord Roberts, among which are the Canadians, have picketed their horses on the south bank of the Vet river, 15 miles north of Brandfort.

The head of Lord Roberts' columns has thus advanced 32 miles from Kamee sliding in two days or 53 miles north of Bloemfontein. Little powder was spent. The British work was hard marching, the Boers retiring out of reach of the British in the hills.

As General Hutton, with the first mounted infantry brigade, drew near Brandfort he saw a hanki clad body of troops ahead of him. He was surprised but thought they must be British. Soon, however, they opened fire upon the British, who replied heavily. They were the Irish-American brigade from Lourenco Marques, and it is reported that the Irish lost heavily.

Lord Kitchener arrived at Brandfort at noon and Lord Roberts at dusk. General French's cavalry are sweeping the country northward. The news greatly cheers London. Nevertheless, it has not been received with the fine rapture that attended the first successes of Lord Roberts. General Hunter's crossing the Vaal at Winderton brings the relief of Mafeking, 195 miles beyond, almost within a calculable interval. It is now regarded as quite possible that Mafeking may be succored before the queen's birthday.

ROBERTS' LATEST REPORT.

General Hunter Has Carried the Passage of the Vaal Without Opposition.

LONDON, May 4.—The war office this evening issued the following from Lord Roberts, dated Bloemfontein, Friday, May 4:

"The mounted infantry have gone on to Vet river. The rest of the force will march there tomorrow. The railway has been repaired to this point.

"Hunter reports the very satisfactory news that the passage of the Vaal has been carried at Winderton without opposition.

ENGLAND'S GRAVE SITUATION.

Ex-Secretary of State Foster Sees Disaster for the British in the Transvaal War.

NEW YORK, May 4.—A special to the Herald from Washington, says: That disaster threatens Great Britain as a result of the war in the Transvaal is the belief of John W. Foster, of Indiana, former secretary of state.

Mr. Foster has followed the military operations in South Africa making a close study of them, and at the same time giving keen scrutiny to affairs in Europe. To a reporter, Mr. Foster said:

"It is much to be feared that England is engaged in a protracted and, in the end, an alarmingly costly enterprise, in her armed contention with the Boers.

"It is to be anticipated that in the end, through the weight of numbers and superior resources England will win, but that will by no means end the struggle. At the present rate progress is not only slow, but every day's delay must increase the difficulties of the situation from a military point of view, and the same may be said with respect to a solution by diplomacy.

"It has been the history of all such struggles, and England has been no exception, that the disturbance of commercial relations and other questions, more or less involved, very soon make

nations restive. There might be no desire to interfere on general principles, but the influence of the financial, industrial and commercial interests often compel governments to act from economical considerations.

"No one can tell what is going on at this very moment among the maritime and military powers of Europe. At any time there might be a surprise. They surely cannot be looking on simply as indifferent spectators of a possible difficult international problem.

"The transportation of the largest army England has ever had in a single theatre of warfare operations more than half the distance between the two poles of the earth is in itself an expensive undertaking and a very difficult one. But this is the least element of consideration. The supply and maintenance of such a large force in the field over six thousand miles away from home, in a region difficult of access and with most inadequate means of transportation, is a problem to occupy mature military minds.

"Then there is the element of waste and destruction incident to an army in the field and in action. This necessitates constant replenishment, all of which by any increasing ration adds to the cost. As a military enterprise the end is evidently not in sight.

"But even if the fighting were ended, there would be a disoriented people to keep in subjection which would require an expensive military establishment.

"The experience of the war thus far has very effectually established the prestige of the Boers as fighters. They may be able to continue. If they do for a few months, other developments are not improbable. England, not perhaps exhausted, but embarrassed by protracted demands upon her fighting material in men, supplies and munitions of war, her army thousands of miles away, might find it difficult to head off foreign interference by substantial methods.

"They might not be in the nature of overt acts of military aggression or diplomatic inquiry, but such a lining up of forces as would be difficult to engage.

"The navy of England, it is true, is free to act, but what would become of British commerce and, commerce crippled, what would become of British manufactures, which signify industry and means of living? The time for diplomatic settlement in the first stages having passed, it is difficult to see how it can come in now without great loss of prestige. The British government is naturally sensitive. Some decisive action might open a way but that way is not in sight now.

"The United States would be the most natural intermediary. The leading European nations have their spheres in Africa. For that reason any suggestions from that quarter would be out of the question, in fact, have been warned against.

"This war in such a remote quarter of the globe is a more momentous affair than the casual observer supposes. It may result in some very grave upheavals in the world's conditions, as we now have them."

THE FIGHT AT BRANDFORT.

General Results Appear to Have Favored the Boers, Who Took Many Prisoners.

NEW YORK, May 4.—A dispatch to the Herald from Brandfort, dated Wednesday, says:

Today was full of fighting with an occasional lively skirmish. The Boer defensive line remains intact, and the British attempt to cut off De Wet and scatter the Boer force which is threatening Roberts' flank and rear has been a complete failure so far.

There was heavy fighting yesterday along the Thabanchu-Sannas Post road, the British being beaten slowly back. De Wet, coming from the south and Grobler and Lemmer from the north, on Monday caught the British reinforcements for Thabanchu in the apex of an angle, forcing their withdrawal.

In yesterday's fighting the Boers had the better positions, but the British were superior in numbers. The Boers' attack was begun on Sunday. Under De Wet, Grobler, Lemmer and Botha, they attacked a large British column, near Thabanchu, which was trying to intercept De Wet's retirement from Wepener. The battle raged all day Sunday for several miles along the Bloemfontein road. The general result was indecisive, but the British were evidently retiring in the direction of Bloemfontein. The Boers captured a number of prisoners.

Skirmishing along the Modder river indicates that Lord Roberts' main army is advancing northward.

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CHARLES HEILBORN & SON

NEW ARMY BILL PASSED BY SENATE

Sweeping Changes Made in Present Plan of Organization.

THE ARTILLERY ENLARGED

One Hundred More Cadets to Be Appointed to West Point—President McKinley to Be Allowed to Provide for General Egan.

WASHINGTON, May 4.—Today's session of the senate was rendered especially notable by the passage, after a debate lasting only three hours, of the army re-organization bill.

In military circles this measure is regarded as one of the most important of the present session. It practically revolutionizes the present staff arrangements of the army. It proposes to change the present system of permanent appointments in certain staff corps to one of detail, by a gradual process as the officers in those corps go out of active service. As vacancies occur in the department of the adjutant-general and the commissary-general, they are to be filled by details from the line, the details to be temporary and not to exceed four years.

The new system is not applied to the corps of engineers, the medical department, the pay department or the judge advocate general's department. The bill discontinues the regimental organization of the artillery and establishes an artillery corps of two branches, viz: 126 batteries of coast artillery and 18 batteries of field artillery, with a total of 17,448 men.

It provides for an increase of one hundred in the corps of cadets at West Point, two at large from each state and ten more to the present number of twenty from the United States at large. The rank of the commanding general of the army is raised to that of lieutenant-general, and that of adjutant general to major general, the latter being during the incumbency of the present adjutant general, General Corbin.

The president is empowered to place on the retired list any officer who has been suspended from duty by the sentence of a court martial, or by a legislative order in mitigation of such sentence, for a period extending to or within one year of his compulsory retirement for age.

This is well understood to apply to Commissary General Egan. An amendment creating a veterinary corps for the army, consisting of a colonel and thirty-five other commissioned officers was attached to the bill.

The fortifications appropriation bill, carrying about \$7,500,000, was also passed.

IT IS AT LAST CLOSED.

Coeur d'Alene Investigation Wound Up in the Usual Daily Row Yesterday.

WASHINGTON, May 4.—The hearing in the Coeur d'Alene investigation today was at times quite exciting, owing to personal exchanges between members of the committee.

Representative Hay, of Virginia, asserted at one point that efforts were being made by the majority to suppress testimony. Representative Mondell, of Wyoming, said that this assertion impugned the motives of the members and was due to the failure of the minority to get the answers they desired. Hay hotly retorted, throwing back the insinuation and declaring it was "an absolute falsehood."

The taking of testimony closed tonight, after having continued uninterrupted since February 19, a period of nearly three months. Both sides rested and the committee excused all the witnesses.

On Monday the arguments of counsel will begin, probably concluding that day.

DEATH OF AGUINALDO.

Not Believed by War Department but They Look for Prolongation of the War.

NEW YORK, May 4.—A special to the Herald from Washington says: Whether Aguinaldo be dead or alive, it is evident to officials of the war department that the insurgents are pursuing a policy of warfare best adapted to prolonging the rebellion.

Assistant Secretary of War Melkjohn voiced the sentiment of the department when he expressed the opinion that Aguinaldo was alive. There is a disposition now on the part of the officials to discredit Aguinaldo's abilities, and Mr. Melkjohn said that the capture of Mabini, who was the civic brains of the insurrection, and of Filipino leaders who were its military minds, were greater losses to

their cause than is generally appreciated.

It has been the impression of the officials that the capture or death of Aguinaldo would mean the death knell of the revolt, but it is now apparent to them that whether Aguinaldo be dead or alive the guerrilla fighting will continue and probably continue for some time.

While in some quarters the belief is expressed that the insurgents will attempt to reorganize during the rainy season, Lieutenant-Colonel Barry, who was adjutant-general on General Otis' staff, pointed out that the troops are now well distributed in Luzon and within striking distance of any point where the Filipinos may congregate. Lieutenant-Colonel Barry added that wherever the Filipinos could go the American troops had demonstrated that they could follow.

To prevent the success of the guerrilla tactics of the insurgents it is likely that the military commanders will direct that only detachments be sent on expeditions which are sufficiently strong to cope with any bands of Filipinos that may be met. The last mail from Manila contains a report from General Otis giving the stations of troops in the Philippine Islands. The 62,000 men under General Otis' command are distributed among 250 stations, about 210 of which are in the island of Luzon.

DOLE FOR GOVERNOR.

Nominated as Chief Magistrate of Hawaii by the President Yesterday.

WASHINGTON, May 4.—The president today sent the following nominations to the senate:

E. C. Bellows, of Washington, to be consul-general at Yokohama.

Lieutenant Commander Samuel C. Lemly, U. S. N., of North Carolina, to be judge advocate of the navy, with the rank of captain for a term of four years, from June 1, 1900.

Sanford B. Dole, of Hawaii, to be governor of Hawaii.

Henry E. Cooper, of Hawaii, to be secretary of Hawaii.

EFFECTS OF FIRE DAMP.

One of the Schofield Mine Rescuers Describes Its Deadly Nature.

SALT LAKE, May 4.—The total amount of the relief fund for the sufferers from the mining disaster at Scofield is now \$36,505.

One of the rescue party today said: "A great many people have already asked if the men who were killed from the damp suffered much. I can say that they did not, and know that to be the case, because I have gone through the experience to the stage of unconsciousness during the past ten days. Many of us in the rescue parties were overcome by the damp and were carried back into purer air by the officials of Sandon.

"This damp contains carbon dioxide and is very poisonous. A whiff of it almost paralyzes a man and a good breath of it renders him unconscious. Then he falls as if in a sleep and dies unless instantly carried into purer air.

"What struggles take place after the first breath are struggles that nature puts forth automatically. I have seen our men fall and struggle but they knew nothing of it.

DEWEY AT ST. LOUIS.

The Admiral the Recipient of the Usual Flag Waving and Song Singing Ovation.

ST. LOUIS, May 4.—The principal event of today in honor of the visit of Admiral Dewey took place at the exposition building. When the admiral and his party came into the building 10,000 childish voices started "The Red, White and Blue," the children at the same time waving American flags. The song was at once taken up by nearly every person in the building, even the admiral, standing and holding a small flag in his hand, joining in.

A banquet was tendered the admiral and Mrs. Dewey tonight and a magnificent silver punch bowl, the gift of the citizens of St. Louis, was presented to the admiral.

BRITISH STEAMER WRECKED.

Went Ashore on Diamond Shoal, Cape Henry—Part of the Crew Saved.

CAPE HENRY, Va., May 4.—The British steamer Virginia, Captain Samuel, from Daquiri, Cuba, for Baltimore, with a cargo of iron ore and with a crew of 26 men, stranded on Diamond shoal Wednesday, during the thick, heavy weather.

The crew took to the boats and attempted to leave the ship. One boat with eleven of her crew got away, but was swamped and six men drowned. The other five got back to the steamer, where they remained until this morning when they were rescued. A boat with 15 of the crew when last seen was apparently safe.

DUN'S WEEKLY REVIEW.

NEW YORK, May 4.—Dun's Review says: The failures for the week have been 200 in the United States, against 158 last year, and 27 in Canada, against 23 last year.

MINING TOWN OF SANDON IN RUINS

It Was Completely Wiped Out by Fire Last Night.

HUNDREDS ARE HOMELESS

Loss One Million Dollars, With Small Insurance—The Inhabitants Are Destitute and Relief Is Being Contributed by Neighboring Towns.

SPOKANE, May 4.—A special to the Spokesman-Review from Kaslo, B. C., says:

Sandon, the second mining town in importance in the Slokan district, has been completely destroyed by fire and nearly all its 1,200 people are homeless and ruined. Kaslo is 25 miles from Sandon, but about midnight large clouds of smoke came rolling over this town from Sandon. At once the word went out that Sandon was destroyed, but no news could be had from the desolate town as all the wires had been burned.

At 1 a. m. a train came in from Sandon, bringing a number of those who had lost all their property. They reported that the total loss was between \$500,000 and \$1,000,000, while the insurance could only have been about \$25,000.

The alarm was sounded shortly after midnight and quickly the streets were filled with hundreds of men and women. Two streams seemed to hold the flames in check for a while. Then one stream gave out and the flames spread rapidly. After that it was only a matter of fire burning itself out. The miners hospital and drug store were blown up in the effort to stop the flames. By this time all the lower part of the town was gone. Then the firemen blew up the Echo hotel, one of the finest buildings in the Kootenay country, the C. P. R. station and other buildings.

The officials of Sandon donated \$500 and the mining men there contributed \$3,000, Kaslo raised \$1,800 and sent a special train with large supplies of food, tents and clothing.

ATTEMPTED PORTLAND MURDER.

Roomer in Lodging House Shoots His Landlady and Then Kills Himself.

PORTLAND, May 4.—W. J. Charlton attempted to kill Mrs. May Farrell this evening and then blew out his own brains with a revolver.

Charlton has for some time been a roomer at the lodging house kept by Mrs. Farrell at 223 1/2 Second street and this afternoon he became intoxicated. Going to the room where Mrs. Farrell was he fired twice at her, both shots taking effect. He then placed the pistol to his head and killed himself. Mrs. Farrell is not seriously injured.

Charlton was formerly treasurer of the John Barrett Company and came from a well-known family at Oregon City.

SIMON WILL LEAD.

Oregon National Delegates Organize With Him as Chairman.

PORTLAND, May 4.—The delegates to the national republican convention met tonight in this city and organized with the following result:

Chairman of the delegation, Joseph Simon; secretary, John D. Daly; member of the national committee, George A. Steel; honorary vice-president of the convention, F. S. Stanley; member of the committee to notify nominees, H. E. Ankeny; member of the committee on permanent organization, H. L. Kvick; of a committee on rules, J. D. David, of the committee on credentials, Wallace McCannan; of the committee on resolutions, John D. Daly.

"MYSTERIOUS BILLY" SMITH.

Again Meets the Negro and Gets the Worst of It.

NEW YORK, May 4.—Joe Walcott and "Mysterious Billy" Smith fought 25 rounds at catch weights before the Broadway Athletic Club tonight, and Walcott got the decision.

This was their fourth meeting. They fought two draws, and Smith gained the decision the third time they got together. Smith did not fight with his usual snap tonight, but he put up a very game battle.

ANOTHER LONG TOM POSTED.

LADYSMITH, May 4.—The Boers have shifted their guns on the range of hills facing the British at Elands Laagte, and have posted a "Long Tom" on a hill in the direction of Wesselsnek.