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THE LINGERING BOER WAR

LITTLE PROGRESS MADE RECENTLY BY EITHER SIDE.

SIR DAVID BARBOUR'S MISSION TO SOUTH AFRICA—A CLOUD OVER RAPID TRANSIT PROBLEMS.

(Copyright, 1900, by The New-York Tribune.)

London, Dec. 30, 6 a. m.—The Boer operations disclosed in the latest dispatches indicate a deliberate but unsuccessful attempt to break the British lines of communication. The raid across the Orange River has been a failure. The bands of guerrillas have been headed off and are retiring. The Dutch sympathizers in Cape Colony may be ready to offer political assistance, but they will not fight. The Boers, having failed to shift the scene of military operations southward, are resuming their harassing tactics along the railways leading from Natal and through the Orange River Colony. Skirmishing is constant, but no advantage is gained. Brief summaries of these petty fights show that there is a daily casualty list on the British side, and this is enlarged by mortality from fever and various diseases. When the lines are kept by an army of over 200,000 men, the accounts of these operations are gloomy reading for a nation weary of war and anxious for the restoration of peace, but it is inaccurate to represent the British army as acting on the defensive and barely holding its ground. It would be more correct to assert that there is no real progress on either side. Old soldiers who keep watch of what is going on say that Lord Kitchener is doing as well as could be expected; that he is gradually wearing out the Boers; that De Wet will be run down sooner or later, and that the hands will be dispersed when their horses and ammunition give out. They do not expect important results from the establishment of Government laagers for the protection of the burghers and their families who are willing to surrender. The Dutch women are more bitter than the burghers themselves, and are unwilling to live in laagers under the British flag.

Sir David Barbour, who started yesterday for South Africa on a special mission for the investigation of the financial resources of the Dutch territories, has been conferring with Mr. Chamberlain and obtaining his ideas on many questions relating to mines, railways and other properties. While his main work as a financial expert has been done in India, he has studied the resources of other parts of the Empire. He was a member of the commission which recently visited the British West Indies to report on the economic needs of that group of colonies, but rejected Sir Henry Norman's comprehensive proposals for the revival of the cane sugar industry by means of duties equal to foreign bounties, and joined Sir Edward Gray in recommending various peddling devices and petty duties.

Sir Henry Colville has gone into the country from Plymouth to consult with friends over Sunday, and will not visit the War Office for several days.

Lord William Beresford's death is greeted by a large circle of friends in social, military and turf circles. In his prime he was one of the best horsemen in the hunting field or the army, and won the Victoria Cross through his skill and daring as a rider. His career on the turf, although short, had been highly successful, his winnings having been due in a large measure to the employment of American jockeys, trainers and horses. His heir is a boy nearly four years old, with American blood.

The stock market was unusually depressed yesterday, and thirteen defaults were announced on the Stock Exchange. These financial embarrassments were due in large part to the depression of the London and Globe group of stocks. Large advances made for the construction of one of the underground electric railways have been one of the principal causes of the disturbance. The difficulty of raising money for these transit enterprises is increasing, and the Yerkes syndicate may easily enlarge its undertakings by purchasing unfinished lines. The cost of financing as well as constructing these deep-level railways has become a serious obstacle to the development of the transit system, upon which the comfort and prosperity of Londoners are dependent. I. N. F.

BOERS SCORE AGAIN.

KITCHENER REPORTS ANOTHER FIGHT, WITH SEVERE BRITISH LOSS.

London, Dec. 29.—General Kitchener, telegraphing from Pretoria, under date of Friday, December 28, sends a summary of the number of attacks made by the Boers at various points. The only important incident was an attack on a baggage column near Greylingstad. A company with a pompano made a sortie from Greylingstad and drove off the Boers. Captains Radclyffe and Harvest were wounded, eight men were killed, twenty-seven were wounded and twenty were reported missing.

London, Dec. 29.—Last night's cable dispatches from South Africa add little or nothing to the information concerning the situation, though the general trend of events seems to show that the Britishers are regaining the ground recently lost. A special from Nanuport, dated December 28, reports that Colonel De Lisle defeated Hertzog eighteen miles west of De Ar, capturing a number of wagons and releasing the prisoners captured at Philippstown. Lieutenant-Colonel Grenfell forced back Krutinger toward Venterstad. Both commandoes are in a desperate plight and will probably never re-cross the Orange River.

A Standerton dispatch, dated December 28, says it is estimated that 2,000 Boers were engaged in the operations in North Natal hoping to break the British line of communication. This plan failed, and the Boers were driven off in each case with more or less loss, their casualties in the last day or two numbering fifty, while the British casualties were slight.

According to a Johannesburg dispatch of Friday's date, General French occupied Venterdorp that day without opposition. This place being a great telegraphic centre has been much used by the Boers for the dissemination of information. The possession of Venterdorp, Lichtenburg and several of the British a strong hold upon this part of the country.

From Carnarvon, under yesterday's date, comes a dispatch saying that the Boers occupied Venterdorp on December 27 in force, and were reported to be moving on Carnarvon, where martial law has been proclaimed. The loyal field cornets and farmers have assured the authorities that they will remain loyal and will suppress disloyal talk.

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ODELL SEES THE LEADERS.

POLICE LEGISLATION DISCUSSED WITH UP-STATE SENATORS.

The final conference of Republican leaders for the year took place at the Fifth Avenue Hotel yesterday, when Governor-elect Odell, State Chairman, Dunn, Senator Platt, Senator Ellisworth, leader of the Republicans in the Senate, and Senator Stranahan, chairman of the Cities Committee, and Senator Brown, of Watertown, met in Mr. Platt's room to talk over the many things which will take place next week at the State Capitol. The Senate committees and the proposed police bill for this city were the fruitful topics of discussion for an hour or two, and the up-State Senators went into the merits of the bill thoroughly. The provisions of the measure have been too often referred to in these columns to require further explanation. Governor-elect Odell's admission on Friday night that he intended to recommend a single headed police bill indicates clearly that the bill which ex-Justice Cohen drew a few weeks ago will have the practically solid support of the Republican organization, and become a law at an early date. It will be introduced early in the session and hurried through both houses. As both houses will adjourn on Wednesday for a week, the bill is not likely to reach Mayor Van Wyck before the middle of January. The Mayor will have fifteen days in which to consider it, and, if he vetoes it, it will have to be re-passed by both houses. There is reason to believe that Mayor Van Wyck will keep the bill in his possession as long as the law allows. It is understood that the bill will carry an amendment doing away with the existing Commission and Chief Devery.

COLVILLE STRIKES BACK.

THE ACCUSED GENERAL DENIES RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE LINDLEY DISASTER.

London, Dec. 29.—Major-General Sir Henry Colville, whose resignation has been demanded by the War Office, but who refused to resign, and came to England from Gibraltar, arriving at Plymouth to-day, to demand a trial by court martial to establish the responsibility for the Yeomanry disaster at Lindley last May, has made a counter strike at the War Office in a three thousand word statement which he has given to the press. He says he has come home to demand a free inquiry, and does not intend to be made a scapegoat for the sake of the staff. He avers that the Lindley disaster could never have happened had he been informed of Lord Roberts' intentions. The primary cause of the disaster, he says, was the insufficient information given by the Headquarters Staff to Colonel Sprague and himself, and he declines to accept the blame. He lays out the facts and blames others.

General Colville and his influential friends in and out of the army are thus beginning a campaign against the new Secretary of State for War, William St. John Brodrick; Lord Roberts and General Kitchener. It is expected to be fought out with some ferocity in Parliament.

When he returned from South Africa, General Colville says, he fully acquainted the War Office with the facts. After some time he was informed by General Sir Evelyn Wood, the Adjutant-General, that Lord Lansdowne, then Secretary of State for War, had directed him to say that General Lord Wolsey, the Commander-in-Chief, approved of General Colville's resuming his Gibraltar command. He learned unofficially that an Army Board of five of the highest officials of the War Office had considered his statements and Lord Roberts's dispatches on the subject. His reappearance was the result of the inquiry. To his intense surprise, Adjutant-General Wood on December 21 gave him notice that Mr. Brodrick, the newly appointed Secretary of State for War, held him responsible for the loss of the yeomanry and ordered him to quit his command immediately and hand over his resignation.

General Colville, going into official details, says he was ordered to concentrate his division at Helibron on May 29, and names the various dispositions of the other divisions, which extended across the Orange Free State. He assumed that Lord Roberts intended to advance, sweeping all before him. His orders were absolute, and he had to carry them out. Hence he could not go to the relief of the five hundred yeomanry without risking the success of the grand operation. Under any circumstances, he says, he considered it his duty to push on, even if he were sure it would entail the loss of the yeomanry. Besides, he had only food enough for two days. He pushed on, and the yeomanry surrendered. Lord Roberts broke up General Colville's division and expressed his dissatisfaction.

"On my pointing out that I had obeyed his orders to the letter," declares General Colville, "he said his orders were only intended as a guide."

General Colville alludes to some of the yeomanry being millionaires, and quotes Lord Roberts as saying it was his duty to sacrifice his force for the yeomanry. "It will be remembered," General Colville says, "that the corps d'élite numbered five hundred, and my force nearly eight times that number."

General Colville cites two examples of what he considers Lord Kitchener's defective staff work.

KIMBERLEY ALMOST ISOLATED.

SIEGE CONDITIONS AGAIN PREVAIL IN THE DIAMOND CITY.

Craddock, Cape Colony, Dec. 28.—Kimberley is almost isolated by Boer raiders. No mails reached there from December 19 to December 25. Provisions are at famine prices. The military took charge of all the foodstuffs December 22.

The Leinster regiment, commanded by Major Barry, had a skirmish, lasting four hours, with the Boers at Kilmishin, December 27, suffering slight losses.

The Boers got up captured a convoy of twenty-five wagons on Christmas Eve.

BURLEIGH SENT BACK TO AFRICA.

London, Dec. 29.—In view of the prolongation of the war, "The London Daily Telegraph" has again dispatched Bennett Burleigh, its well known war correspondent, to South Africa.

LORD ROBERTS NEARING HOME.

Gibraltar, Dec. 29.—The steamer Canada, with General Lord Roberts on board, which arrived here from South Africa yesterday, sailed for home this afternoon.

TALK OF BRINGING KRUEGER HERE.

Colonel Arthur Lynch said to HAVE SAILED ON LA NORMANDIE. An effort is being made by Boer sympathizers in this country to bring President Kruger here. Colonel Arthur Lynch, who organized the Second Irish Brigade in the Boer army, was to have sailed for Europe yesterday on the French Line steamer La Normandie as a representative of these people to pave the way for Kruger's coming. He could not be found on the steamer, but it is believed that he sailed.

Charles D. Pierce, the representative of the Orange Free State in this city, said last evening that he was not acquainted with Colonel Lynch, but that there was a possibility that President Kruger might come to the United States. "I receive weekly dispatches from The Hague," he said, "and can say that he will not come within a month, and the question of his coming to this country is not decided yet. He may come within two months."

In regard to the talk among some Irish Boer sympathizers in this city of preferring charges against United States Consul-General J. G. Stowe, of Cape Town, who arrived here a week ago, Mr. Pierce said that he had heard nothing about it. It is charged that Mr. Stowe was not neutral and had a leaning toward the British.

PARENTS SEE BOY CRUSHED.

HE IS RUN OVER BY A TRAIN AT VALLEY STREAM, LONG ISLAND.

Charles Cornell, six years old, the son of Mr. and Mrs. James Cornell, of Valley Stream, was ground to pieces last evening within a few feet of where his parents were standing by a west-bound train on the Long Island Railroad. The boy had been playing with his father, awaiting the arrival of a train. He ran across the tracks some distance in front of an eastbound train and remained across the street until that had passed. He then started to return and was half way across the track when he was struck by the westbound train from Long Island City.

QUICKEST TO GEORGIA, FLORIDA, CUBA

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EVANS ALE SUBROUNDS YOU with an atmosphere of good-will and peace.—Adv.

TO BUY DANISH ISLANDS

PRACTICAL CONCLUSION OF NEGOTIATIONS.

CONGRESS FAVORABLE TO THE LODGE BILL AND ALL THE PRELIMINARIES ARRANGED.

(BY TELEGRAPH TO THE TRIBUNE.)

Washington, Dec. 29.—The practical conclusion of the negotiations for the purchase of the Danish West Indies is virtually confirmed at the State Department in the announcement that an appropriation by Congress is all that remains to provide for the acquisition of St. Thomas and the other small islands owned by Denmark, immediately to the eastward of Porto Rico, and it is the impression of officials that the money will be voted next month. The greatest difficulty encountered in the negotiations has been the reluctance of Denmark to agree in advance to a sale while the United States was not prepared to guarantee to buy, fearing a repetition of the embarrassing situation that arose thirty years ago, when the Senate refused to ratify Secretary Seward's treaty of purchase when Denmark believed a sale had actually been consummated.

It is the understanding that a canvass of Congress shows that Senator Lodge's bill carrying \$5,000,000 for the acquisition of the islands and for establishing American sovereignty is assured of speedy and favorable consideration, and on this assurance all the preliminaries to the treaty and transfer have been perfected, and the signing of the instruments only awaits the readiness of the United States to pay the purchase price.

AN OFFER MADE TO DENMARK.

THE UNITED STATES WILLING TO PAY \$3,400,000 FOR WEST INDIAN ISLANDS.

Copenhagen, Dec. 29.—The United States Minister, L. S. Swenson, has informed the Danish Government that the United States offers \$2,000,000 kroner for the Danish Antilles, and will not give more.

HISTORY OF THE NEGOTIATIONS.

Washington, Dec. 29.—The negotiations between the Government of the United States and the Government of Denmark have been in progress, although intermittently, for the last two years. In the earlier stages something was attempted here through the resident Minister of Denmark, Constantin Brun, and one Captain Christmas Dirckfeld, but while these efforts laid the foundation for what followed in Europe, they could not be regarded as successful, and after mature consideration the State Department decided that Mr. Swenson, the United States minister to Denmark, was the best person to deal with the case in the interests of this country. Therefore, full instructions and some measure of authority were given to him. He had nearly succeeded in his object last spring when, through an internal change in Denmark, the Minister of Foreign Affairs was displaced. The new Minister was opposed to the transfer of the islands to the United States, and a wave of patriotic feeling swept over the country before which the Government was obliged to yield, and the negotiations were suspended for a time. Now, however, a change has taken place in public opinion in Denmark, and the present Minister of Foreign Affairs has it is believed here, selected as the best person to deal with the case in the interests of this country. Therefore, full instructions and some measure of authority were given to him. He had nearly succeeded in his object last spring when, through an internal change in Denmark, the Minister of Foreign Affairs was displaced. The new Minister was opposed to the transfer of the islands to the United States, and a wave of patriotic feeling swept over the country before which the Government was obliged to yield, and the negotiations were suspended for a time. 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