EXTINCTION OF MAHDISM.

BRITISH OFFICER'S ACCOUNT OF THE KILLING OF THE KHALIFA.

A March of Four Days With Two Battles—1,000 of the Enemy Killed and 10,000 Prisoners Taken—The Khalifa's Last Stand and the Death of His Bodyguard.

LONDON, Dec. 13.—The final destruction of Mahdism is an event of such great importance and it was accomplished under such circumstances of dramatic interest that no one can fail to appreciate the following more complete record of the great tragedy. It is from the pen of the British officer second in command of Gen. Wingate's army, and it has just reached his family in London:

In my last letter I told you I was on my way up to join in the Khalifa hunt; it is all over now, and I am on my way back again. It has been the quickest thing and most complete I have ever taken part in. On the 16th November I left Dongola, and, joining the Sirdar at Wady Halfa, travelling express speed all the way, arrived at Khartoum on the 18th. The Sirdar there appointed Wingate to command the operations. We left Khartoum the same evening and arrived at Fachi Shoya, the point of concentration of the troops, on the evening of the 20th, and Wingate there took over command from Lewis, and my work began. Steamers kept on arriving all night and depositing men and animals; by 8 A. M. all details had arrived. At 10 A. M. all C. O.'s were sent for and Wingate gave out to them his plan of campaign and the orders for the carrying out of the same, together with the distribution of the transport animals—some one thousand—for the carrying of food, water, &c., the water being the difficult point, we having only enough tanks to carry water for our men and animals for two and a half days at the rate of men one gallon, horses six, and mules four, camels none. At 3.30 the same day we started from the river and marched some four and a half or five miles by sunset, and then halted in square till the moon should rise. At 10.45 P. M. we started again and marched till dawn, when we halted, as we were supposed to be near the camp of the Khalifa's advance guard under Ahmed Fedil, of Gedairif fame, and Lewis's opponent at Rosseires, at Mefissa. Our cavalry carefully reconnoitred, and eventually found Mefissa vacated. It was only a spot in a bushy desert where there was a small pool of very dirty water. We arrived there about 8 A. M., having marched twenty-seven miles since leaving the river. We then watered our animals, while our Arab irregular horsemen under a most gallant Egyptian officer followed in the tracks of the retreated force of Ahmed Fedil. Very soon they returned, and to our great joy reported that Fedil's force was only about three miles further on encamped by the water pool of Abo Aardel. Fearing that Fedil might again retreat before our infantry could come up, Wingate most judiciously and promptly sent on our cavalry camel corps, two guns and four maxims, escorted by our black irregular infantry, to try and engage Ahmed Fedil, and hold him until our regular infantry and guns could come up. We had to serve out the water from the tanks, a most lawfully—a long job—so the infantry could not go on till that was done.

Col. Mahon, our A. A. G., a cavalry officer of great experience, commanded the advance guard. He drove in the enemy's cavalry scouting in front of him, and after carefully reconnoitering the position seized a hill close to Fedil's camp which practically commanded the same. He at once shelled the camp with his two guns, and the enemy attacked him, trying to drive him off the hill as our infantry came up and joined his party. They were just in time to repel a most determined attempt to capture the hill and guns. The Dervishes charged with all their old dash and gallantry and were only finally stopped within sixty yards of the guns and Maxims. The two nearest of the slain were tied together at the wrist and lay dead side by side. The prisoners told us afterward that they were two great friends who had always lived together, and finally had decided to die, as they had lived, together.

It was a touching sight, and made one wish that such brave men had fallen in a better cause. That charge being defeated, we made a general advance of the whole line, driving the now defeated enemy through their camp, and many miles on through the bush. The cavalry did not return from the pursuit till late in the afternoon, and we encamped some two miles beyond the place where we had fought. We had very small, one Egyptian officer badly wounded, one man killed and five wounded, while we could count some four hundred of the enemy dead, and had some three hundred prisoners, most of them wounded, and their store of grain, which Ahmed Fedil had been collecting for the Khalifa's force, by raiding and looting the surrounding country.

Thus you see we had begun well. Marching twenty-seven miles by night, we had practically surprised the Khalifa's advance guard and annihilated it and captured his food. The next move was more difficult, because we were uncertain as to the actual position of the Khalifa himself and his main body. Reports were conflicting; some said that he was at the wells of Gedid, others at the water pools of Om Homara, and, again, others at some water place between the two. The Khalifa had three courses open to him, first, to march via Gedid to Sherkeich, where he could be out of reach; secondly, to advance straight against us; or, thirdly, to retire the way he had come, a dangerous move, as he had exhausted all food and water coming. We had two alternatives—first to advance against him at Om Homara, where most people said he was, a distance of twenty-seven miles from us, or to go to Gedid, fight him if we found him there, or go from there to Om Homara, or wherever he might be located.

Wingate, with the instinct of a true strategist, decided to go to Gedid; from there he could make sure of stopping the Khalifa going west to Sherkeich out of reach, and it would place him in an advantageous position to strike the Khalifa if he tried to advance north. Leaving by the way Ahmed Fedil had retreated, his original plan of advance. Our only difficulty was the uncertainty of finding water, all we had as yet seen even our animals would not drink; so we sent back all our empty tanks with 200 camels from Abo Aardel to the river, with orders to come out again and meet us at that place in two days' time; we had still one and a half days' water, and we reckoned that we could get to Gedid, twenty-three miles, and, if we found no water there, could always come back next day and meet out water. So at midnight we started again, and got to Gedid about 9 A. M.; it was very hot and the last two hours tried the men very much, the sun was on their backs, after little sleep and less water. At Gedid we found a deserter of the Khalifa (or spy), who told us the Khalifa was at Masaradin, some seven miles southeast, the road to which was through a densely wooded country. Our useful Arab scouts, under the same Egyptian officer, were entrusted with the job of finding out the truth, and off they went, it being deemed inadvisable to let our regular troops be seen until we were near enough to strike—a wise precaution.

Luckily we found at Gedid a large pool of excellent water, which relieved us from any further anxiety on that score. So we watered all our men and horses and camels, filled our tanks, cooked our first meal and generally rested. At 3 P. M. our scouts returned, and the officer reported that he had found no one at Magrasin, but that he had actually located the Khalifa and all his force at Om Debrekat, a little north of the former place and only about six miles from our camp, the road being fairly open and good going except in a few places, where the trees were thick. This was indeed good news, and we then knew that unless the Khalifa retreated in the night we must get a go in at him. At 1 A. M. next morning we started with the moon about a quarter size, well up. Our transport we left behind with orders to follow at 4 A. M. We moved most carefully, covered by cavalry in front and camels on flanks; not a sound was heard except the footsteps of men and horses, and occasionally the crack of a pioneer's axe cutting a way through the thick bush for the column behind him to follow. After three miles we halted, and Col. Mahon went on with a few men, and carefully felt his way, returning to tell us they were still there, and that the highest ground near their camp, a slight ridge with gently sloping ground in front of it toward the camp, was unoccupied and at our disposal; we at once pushed on, and arriving at this ridge one hour before dawn put out pickets along our line, deployed for action, lay down and some of us slept.

While we were doing the last mile we heard the sounds of the dervish drums beating in front of us; it was evident that the Khalifa meant to give us battle. At 5.15 A. M., just as the dawn commenced, our pickets came in, and we saw dimly the advancing dervishes, who were evidently meaning to take the commanding ground we had already occupied. They were late, too late, as usual, and our guns immediately began to play on them, and the fight began. It was hard to distinguish anything in the uncertain light of early dawn; the grass also was high (two feet), and the bushes thick, but we could tell in the occasional lulls of the firing from hearing the enemy's shouts and waving of their banners that some movement was evidently going on, to pass round our left and try to turn that flank. Naturally our fire was concentrated on that point, and the flank further protected by prolonging it with companies from the reserve of the flank battalion of infantry. It soon became evident that they could not press the attack home, and with our right well thrown forward we made a regular advance of the whole force, sweeping the remainder of the enemy before us, and not stopping till we had reached the dervish camp, some one-and-a-half miles in the rear.

There we found all the women and children—some 6,000—and having given the Aman, or quarter, large numbers of the enemy accepted the same, throwing down their arms and the fight was over, the cavalry carrying on for some miles and bringing in the remainder of fugitives, who gave in at once when they heard the Khalifa was killed.

And now for the most touching part of the whole affair. Leaving the troops in the camp, Wingate and his staff rode back to the scene of the fight to identify the body of Khalifa and make quite sure that the rumor of his death was true.

In the centre of what was evidently the main attack on our right we came across a very large number of bodies all huddled together in a very small place; their horses lay dead behind them, the Khalifa lay dead on his furma, or sheepskin, the typical end of the Arab Sheikh who disdains surrender; on his right was the Khalifa Aly Wad Hila, and on his left Ahmed Fedil, his great fighting leader, while all around him lay his faithful Emirs all content to meet their death when he had chosen to meet his. His black Mulamirin, or bodyguard, all lay dead in a straight line about forty yards in front of their master's body with their faces to the foe and faithful to the last. It was truly a touching sight, and one could not but feel that, however great beasts he and they had been in their lifetime, their end was truly grand.

The net result of our four days' work had been 57 miles marching in 63 hours, including two actions, 1,000 enemy actually killed, some 10,000 prisoners, including men, women, and children, large numbers of cattle, arms, &c., and the final extinction of Mahdism. The Sirdar's final words to Wingate were, "Nip the head; don't follow the tail." I think he can fairly claim to have carried out his orders.

I must add that our original force numbered 5,600 and our losses were 31 killed and wounded, 2 horses, 2 mules, and 6 camels killed and wounded.

Directly the moon rose on the night after the fight, after having made all arrangements for marching back the force to the river by detachments in the most comfortable manner, and the same for the bringing in of the large number of prisoners, the watering of whom en route would be somewhat difficult, and having seen that the Dervish leaders were decently buried in respect for their great gallantry, Wingate and myself rode off to the river, doing the 50 miles in 11 hours. The same night we started south, and next day in steamer managed to finish all official reports necessary to give to the Sirdar on arrival at Khartoum. We only stopped there a few hours, and are now, as you see by the above address, one on his way back to his office stool in Cairo, and the other to his ordinary work in Dongola.

DISCONTENT IN CANADA.

Growing French-Canadian Opposition to Sending Troops to Africa.

QUEBEC, Dec. 23.—The feeling of discontent against England and the Canadian Government engendered among the French-Canadian population, by the sending of a Canadian regiment to Great Britain's assistance in South Africa has been aggravated by the acceptance of a second military contingent, formally offered many weeks ago when it was expected that it would be refused. Comparatively few of Sir Wilfrid Laurier's French-Canadian political friends support his action in sending Canadian troops to England's assistance, and those who do so are openly referred to by the mass of their fellow countrymen as enemies of their race. Some of the French-Canadian newspapers declare that Laurier is sending his fellow countrymen to Africa to become food for cannon.

Popular indignation has been very materially increased just now by the discovery and publication of an election pamphlet distributed by the Liberals among their friends during the federal elections of 1896. The distribution of this pamphlet was carefully confined to French-Canadian districts, and so escaped the notice of English-speaking journalists. In the session preceding the last elections, the Conservatives asked for a special vote of Parliament for furnishing new guns to the Canadian troops and this was vigorously opposed by several of the French-Canadian Liberals in the House of Commons. The pamphlet is entitled "Do you want war" and has for its sub title: "Three million dollars for guns, cannon and bayonets; an imminent danger for you, farmers."

Starting out with the statement that the Conservative leader, Sir Charles Tupper, had declared himself in favor of Imperial federation, which signified a closer alliance between England and her colonies, and more especially with Canada, the writer asks: "One of the conditions of this alliance will be that in times of war, Canada will be called to pay its cost in money and in men. And as England is always in war with somebody, we shall have to tax ourselves continually to find the money and to draw lots to furnish the men. In return England will create those droll baronets, knights of this and commanders of that. But the people will remain food for the cannon."

After discussing the cost of the new guns, the writer continues: "Why all these armaments, if we are not to have war? And why fight for England? The electors should remember that these great chiefs who are always anxious to show themselves more loyal and patriotic than others and ready to throw us into war to benefit others, will not be the ones to bear the burden of it. It is the electors who will have to use these guns and these cannons. We are considered good enough to be food for cannon. The Ministers will remain in their offices, whence they will send us off for the war, with joy in their hearts and a glass of champagne in their hands. Our children will be sent to Africa and Asia, whence they will never return. If you vote for the Conservative candidates you will approve all these preparations for war. Vote then for Laurier and his candidates if you wish to see your country enjoy tranquillity and do not expose yourselves to have to leave, one of these fine days, for foreign shores, leaving behind you your wife and children and all that you hold dear."

This pamphlet no doubt gained Sir Wilfrid Laurier votes. The French-Canadian electors assumed his promises to be those of the Premier, and are naturally indignant to find that after having been invited to vote for Mr. Laurier to prevent his opponents from remaining in power and from sending Canadians to fight England's battles in exchange for knighthoods and other baubles, the same Mr. Laurier is sending Canadians to Africa to become food for the cannon of Great Britain's foes and has accepted at the hands of England the very knightly honors that the French-Canadian electors were led to believe he so much despised.

The bitterness of the French-Canadian element against both the English and the Canadian Government is aggravated by the present demands of Gen. Hutton, the officer appointed by Great Britain to the command of the Canadian troops, for an increase of the active militia by 7,000 men, in order that it may be brought up to a peace footing of 50,000 men and a war strength of 100,000. The repeated yielding of Laurier to the Imperial authorities in military affairs is now pretty certain to be bitterly resented by the French-Canadian voters in the approaching elections.

TELEGRAPH ON THE CONGO.

It Is Now in Operation for More Than 800 Miles up the River.

A cablegram from the Congo the other day said the telegraph had been stretched along the river as far as Equatorville, the station on the left bank of the river where the equator crosses the Congo. There is now telegraphic communication from Banana, at the mouth of the river, to every station of the Free State for 830 miles inland. In other words, the line now in operation is only about one hundred miles shorter than any of our lines connecting New York city with Chicago. The line is to be pushed right up the river until it places all the white stations on its banks in communication with one another.

We can scarcely imagine how steam and electricity have revolutionized business affairs on the lower and middle Congo in the past two years. When a package of freight arrived at the mouth of the river for Equatorville in 1897 it had to be carried for about three weeks on the back of a porter before it was placed on a steamer going to Equatorville. It was at least twenty-four days on the way from the mouth of the river. To-day the package is carried by steam all the way, and though neither trains nor steamboats run at night and their rate of speed is low, it takes only five days to move the freight to Equatorville. In other words, nearly four-fifths of the time required two years ago is now saved, and the instant it reaches its destination the news of its arrival may be flashed to the point where it entered Africa.

If this telegraph line and the cable connecting it with Europe had been in operation about twenty-two years ago we might have read in our morning paper of a wonderfully interesting event that occurred the day before a few miles above Equatorville. The despatch would have told of hundreds of war canoes of the fierce Bangala cannibals giving hot chase to two white men and a handful of blacks who were paddling for their lives down the river. It would have described the showers of arrows that were sent after the fugitives, and the savage howls of the pursuers, who cried "Meat! Meat!" and "You will fill our cooking pots!" as they bent to their paddles. It would have told of the moment when the fellows in front seemed doomed as the Bangala canoes drew nearer and nearer, till all of a sudden there was a blaze of musketry, and another and another, while the hills reverberated with the noise, and many a black pursuer tumbled out of his canoe, struck down in some mysterious way, and the last paragraph would have told of the retreat of the savages, who cried "Go and die down the river!" as they turned homeward, wanting no more fight that day with men who used thunder and lightning as weapons.

In short, the wires would have flashed the news of Stanley's hardest fight as he descended the river. It was months before he reached its mouth, and his party nearly perished of hunger in the cataract region. South Africa is moving more rapidly than any other part of the world, for, like an infant, it has had all growth to attain and everything to learn.

BOER WAR'S SIDE LIGHTS.

SCOUTING WITH ARMORED TRAINS IN THE NATAL COUNTRY.

It Is Easy When There Are No Neighboring Hills—Winston Churchill's Devotion to the Wounded—Julian Ralph's Description of South African Dust.

LONDON, Dec. 13.—Bennet Burleigh, writing from Estcourt, agrees with many critics at home and abroad that Natal is "the least suitable of countries for armored trains," and proceeds to say:

"Besides, those we have are poorly extemporized affairs, though the best, perhaps, that could be done in a hurry. Imagine a few big boiler-plates placed round the engine, and flat bogie trucks boxed round seven feet high with similar sheets of iron or steel, and roughly loop-holed—the whole painted khaki—and you have the armored train. There being no doorways, to get inside one of those oblong iron boxes, which are quite uncovered at the top, you have to clamper up as best you can, gripping the loop-holes and exterior fastenings. Egress has to be made in the same manner. They are all right against rifle fire, except when in a cutting or passing under a hill, when an enemy might have you at his mercy by firing down into the open-topped trucks. It is a well known lesson, also, that an armored train, except in an absolutely flat country, is unsuited for scouting or attack, unless backed and flanked by a friendly force of cavalry and guns. Our armored trains here are unprovided with Maxims or cannon."

In this letter he writes a full account of the armored train affair in which Winston Churchill distinguished himself. After describing how Churchill and the others worked with might and main, and how the young correspondent accompanied the wounded in the train back to Frere, he says that from there the train went on to Estcourt but "Mr. Churchill, after handing in his revolver and field glasses, said he was going back to the scene to assist the wounded, and stand by the men. The last seen of him was as he trudged alone away down into the arena of battle, where the shot and shell were still screaming, splintering rock and ploughing the ground. A few of the luckier fugitives passed him on the way, but failed to turn him back from his purpose."

Mr. Burleigh concludes his letter thus:

"By way of finale, is it not a little odd that the War Office has forgotten to provide the officers with a supply of military maps of Natal? It so happens at the moment that even Colonels are unable to procure trustworthy maps, either military or ordinary, for the good reason there are none left on stock anywhere."

There seems to be good ground for this complaint about maps. Early last Monday morning we got the meagre war office despatch announcing Gatacre's reverse. In this the General said he had been "misled" by guides. "Treachery" was at once the comment, and there generally followed an expression of wonder that any such confidence should be placed in local guides when it is well known that the whole of the country is thoroughly disaffected. One also wondered, to use the words of the *Standard's* military critic, whether "the General's staff officers had been idle since they reached this part of South Africa. We know that at least one battalion, the Second Royal Berkshire, spent the month of October at Stormberg Junction, which they had placed in a state of defence, when a sudden order reached them to dismantle their works and return to Queenstown. Were no surveys, no reconnoissances made of the range which lies to the east of Stormberg Junction? These hills dominate not only the railway, but the coach roads leading to Queenstown from the Orange River and are of obvious importance in the plans for the defence of the Colony. The Cape Colony is being lost in possession. Are there no large scale maps of the district in which our troops were operating? Were our Generals like those of the French Army, who possessed elaborate maps of the enemy's country, but none of their own?"

Julian Ralph, writing from Orange River on Nov. 16, recurs to the subject of khaki color. When one thinks of the news received here these last three days, his opening paragraph sounds sinister ominous. "It sounds grewsome," he writes. "To allen the sending out of an army to the return of dust to dust, and yet if there could be seen an army or any number of soldiers in khaki out on the veldt he would at once think of the simile. South Africa looks now as if it were the dust bin of creation. Its ground is loose dust. Its sky is flying dust. Its vegetation, animals and insects are nearly all of different shades of dust color.

"As I write, the men are dissolving mud in their pails and dipping brushes in it to paint their white straps mud color. Every pouch and strap and cloth-cover and water bottle that would show white or dark is undergoing this treatment. And the drummers are doing the same with their drums—painting the white tightening cords with mud, muddying over the golden lions and unicorns and grandy regimental mottoes, so that everything shall look like the veldt—so that we shall be as dusty as the country.

"While Tommy is wholly and solely earthlike in tone, his officers differ from him in wearing shiny helmets, crowns, and swords hilts, and pipeclayed belts and straps, on this difference has lain the danger of all in battle in this campaign, and front it has come the death of far too many. All alike recognize this, yet how differently they discuss the proposal to have the officers dress like the men.

"The Tommies are all in favor of the change, though it would greatly increase their own danger and losses. They are enthusiastic for having the officers doff swords, carry light carbines, and do away with their ornaments. They discuss the mortality among the ranks with bated breath as a thing altogether awful, and after one skirmish, where one officer was killed and two were wounded, I did not hear a private speak of the two Tommies who died at the same time. With the officers the subject is differently treated. Some discuss the prospect of disguising themselves as if it were a thing to be considered only for the sake of receiving an unfair foe, and gaining a point that way. Others indignantly spurn the idea as undignified and unworthy.

"Since this was written we know that Lord Methuen settled the question in the commonsense way, and now his officers are no longer glittering targets for the Boer, even their swords being replaced by carbines.

An afternoon newspaper from time to time publishes a collection of what it calls "Battle Axioms." Baden-Powell's laconic despatch, "All well, enemy fled," is one of the first to touch the public mind, and the cheer of "Damned of the Gordons' boy bugler when the Boers sounded a British "Retreat" at Elandslaagte, was very popular. Some others are:

"We expected to meet boys, but we are vanquished by men."—Boer prisoner to the *Telegraph* correspondent.

"The Boers can stick bullets, but they don't like British steel."—Private Sumner of the K. R. R., in a letter home.

"This is campaigning with a vengeance"—The same private after the retreat from Dundee.

"Forward, men; never mind me."—Major Plumbe's dying words at Gras Pan.

"With C. Rhodes's compliments."—Inscribed on a shell fired from Kimberley.

"Cullingworth all night thought he had stomach ache through drinking beer, but in the morning when he undressed to wash he found his clothes soaked with blood, and the doctor told him he was shot."—The Rev. A. A. Andrews, the day after Elandslaagte.

"Too late, old chap."—The Highlander who bayonetted Col. Schiel.

"He sent four Boers to 'kingdom come' with the bayonet before he fell dead in my arms."—K. R. R. private's letter from Ladysmith.

Magicians Generally Poor Poker Players.

From the New Orleans Times-Democrat.

A group of old-time sports were telling poker stories a few nights ago and somebody remarked that the elder Herrmann, the magician, might easily have made a fortune had he turned his attention to gambling.

"I've heard that before," said one of the party, chuckling, "and it always amused me. Why, my dear sir, Alexander Herrmann was one of the poorest poker players that ever drew to a bobtail. He liked a social game and plugged away at it all his life, but he was never anything but a raw amateur. Good poker players are born, and it simply wasn't in him. As far as being able to manipulate the cards was concerned, he couldn't do it, even had he been so disposed, which of course he wasn't. He could perform wonderful tricks, but that class of work is something entirely different from what is called advantage playing. I have known four or five fine sleight-of-hand performers, and not one of them could do a thing with the deck in an ordinary game. To do successful crooked work in short cards requires not only great dexterity of a kind entirely distinct from stage tricks, but also a peculiar temperament. All the men who became famous for that sort of thing in the old days were of the same general type, and when I come to think about it, those I knew looked more or less alike. They could perform extraordinary feats, but it required years of practice and setting everything else aside; no professional juggler could spare the time to learn.

"The best proof that Herrmann was unfamiliar with the tricks of the card table is that he was continually being made the victim. He made no secret of the fact that he had been fleeced time and again, and I happen to know personally that he was once swindled out of a considerable amount by one of the oldest and stalest devices known to the fraternity. When the thing was explained to him afterward he was deeply disgusted, but he had never suspected it at the time."

TREASURY DEFICITS ABROAD.

The Lack of a Surplus in Their Finances Doesn't Bother European Statesmen.

It has been announced that there is a deficit of $49,000,000 in the Russian Government's income this year, the equivalent in Russian money of this sum being 100,000,000 roubles. The Russian system of finance is somewhat vague in reference to actual results, there being every year a formal estimate of the prospective Government receipts and expenses, and a subsequent discovery that the receipts have fallen below the estimate made of them or that the expenses have gone above the estimate, the accounts showing a deficit, which is carried over to the year succeeding. Thus in 1894 the deficit was 700,000 roubles; in 1895, 72,000,000; in 1896, 69,000,000; in 1897, 50,000,000; in 1898, 50,000,000. This year the shortage will be 100,000,000 roubles, but the circumstance is not a disquieting one to the Russian financiers, who appear to take it as a matter of course. Russia imposes direct taxes on land, licenses and capital invested in business, and obtains further revenue from indirect taxes on liquors (the chief item), tobacco, sugar, matches and naphtha sold at retail within the empire, from customs duties, stamp duties, and from the sale of spirits by the State—what would be colloquially called in this country a bar annex. The railroads are run by the Government, and the profits of the Post Office and the telegraph service go into the Government revenues. The expenditures include two items which would probably be regarded with disfavor by American financiers; one of these is "unpaid arrears," and the other is "unforeseen expenses."

Russia is not the only European country in which this indefinite method of government financiering prevails, and in which an annual deficit is regarded as a suggestion of what is euphonously called "a readjustment of the finances." Portugal, a country having a smaller population than the State of Pennsylvania, has an outstanding national debt of $600,000,000, exclusive of a floating debt of about $100,000,000 more. The expenditures of the Portuguese Government exceed the receipts, not occasionally, but always, and during the last eight years there has not been one in which the disbursements have not been in excess of the revenues.

Another country in which there is a considerable amount of wild government financiering, judged from the American or English standard, is Greece, whose total population by the census of 1896 was 2,400,000, or about the same as the population of Indiana. The national debt of Greece is 825,000,000 drachmas, the equivalent of about $165,000,000, and the Greek revenues usually fall short of the necessary expenditures. A few years ago the total receipts figured up 95,000,000 drachmas, and the total expenses 160,000,000. A few years before that the receipts were 60,000,000 and the expenses 120,000,000. These items include, of course, merely the ordinary government operations, and are entirely exclusive of the revenues derived from loans or the sums applied to their payment.

The intricacies of Turkish and Spanish finances have long been a source of wonder to financiers, and Turkey exceeds Spain in the variety of novel methods in government business. The present debt of Turkey is $650,000,000, and the Turkish practice of mortgaging the most desirable items of revenue explains, to some extent at least, the difficulty experienced in collecting the various items of income, one of which is a tax on sheep, another a tax on fishermen, and other items collectable from the profits on the sale of tobacco and payments for exemption from military service. In many European countries the danger of a surplus to embarrass the government financiers is not a source of any recurring embarrassment. They come to be better used to an annual deficit. The ordinary method of providing for the shortage is to issue bonds, and when the interest on these cannot be met the rate of interest is arbitrarily reduced.

DIVISION OF ERIE COUNTY.

A Project Nearer Attainment Now Than Ever Before—Its Supporters' Arguments.

Erie county, of which Buffalo is the chief city, was established as a political division of New York State in April, 1821, Erie being cut off from Niagara county of which Lockport is the chief town which was established in 1808. Before the opening of the Erie Canal in 1825, Buffalo was "a city of no importance," but after that event its growth was rapid, increasing from 8,000 population in 1830 to 18,000 in 1840, 42,000 in 1850, 81,000 in 1860 and 118,000 in 1870. The present population of Buffalo is generally put at 550,000. By the last Federal census it was 255,000.

Erie county is made up now of Buffalo, in which there are twenty-five wards, and of twenty-five county towns, among them Cheektowaga, Sardinia, Aurora, Alden, Wales, Collins, Boston, Eden, Matilda, North Collins, Elma, Evans, Colden, Holland, Hamburg and Amherst. These towns have grown little in population, while the city of Buffalo has been taking rapid strides, and as a consequence the continued union of Buffalo with some semi-rural regions has appeared to many persons of progressive notions as unpopular and undesirable, especially since the adoption of the amended State Constitution of 1894 which put Buffalo on terms of equality with New York as a "city of the first class," enjoying certain important political exemptions and advantages.

Since that time the demand for a separation of Buffalo from the county towns of Erie has been even more active than previously, and it has recently come up in a way which gives the greatest hope of the project of separation encouragement. The Board of Supervisors of Erie recently by a vote of 25 to 22, adopted a resolution providing for the division of Erie county and the county property on equitable terms, the new county to be known as Buffalo county and to include the city of Buffalo, to the city line and such other towns as may desire to become part of said new county."

The county members opposed the resolution, and the inequality of the present division is reflected in the vote cast, 25 to 22, the total vote of Erie being 70,000, of which 55,000 is cast in the present Buffalo, and 15,000 in the county towns collectively. Under the form of county division which now exists these rural towns have a disproportioned share of political representation, the towns of Boston, for instance, with a total voting population of 250, having the same voice in the Board of Supervisors as a Buffalo ward with a voting population of nearly 4,000.

For some time before the establishment of "the Greater New York," the separate county form of government as distinct from the municipal administration prevailed in New York, but under circumstances very different from those which the Buffalonians complain of. In Kings county, there were "outlying towns" entitled to political representation but to an extent so small as to be no menace whatever to the control exercised by the city. In Erie county, however, these towns, though casting only 18 per cent. of the vote, have nearly 50 per cent. of the representation, with great disparity in wealth and in the burdens of taxation. Of $20,000,000 of personal property assessed, about $16,500,000 This was the idea. American artillery officers had in mind in the spring of 1898, when they let the public know how strong our coast defense was. The general impression abroad was that all of our seacoast towns were at the mercy of any hostile fleet which might raid the Atlantic coast. The newspapers at the time were allowed to get detailed information of the number and strength of the guns at Sandy Hook, Fort Hamilton, Fort Wadsworth and the other coast fortifications, in order to let Spain know that our coast was impregnable. On the other hand, artillery officers say that, try as you will, you cannot keep military information secret. It leaks out somehow. The foreign military attaches in Washington keep their home offices in touch with everything that goes on here, while American Army officers abroad are not slow to find out what military progress is being made in England, France, Germany and Russia.

The Navy Department freely publishes what goes on at Indian Head, the proving ground for the navy. News of the tests of new battleship armor, new guns, new explosives and the like reaches the newspapers very regularly.

Col. Lee and His New York Fiancees.

From the Chicago Record, Washington Despatch

Col. Arthur H. Lee of her Majesty's artillery, the military attache of the British Embassy, is hourly expecting orders to join the British forces in South Africa. He is a brilliant and a brave soldier, as was demonstrated in the battles around Santiago, when he accompanied the Rough Riders in their charge up San Juan Hill and rode by the side of Gen. Chaffe at the battle of El Caney; but there are particular reasons why Col. Lee regrets that the war with the Boers should have occurred just at this time. For several years he has been seeking an Anglo-American matrimonial alliance with one of the most beautiful girls in New York, and the wedding was to have taken place some time next spring. He has rented a handsome house in this city, where he expected to be on duty for several years, and was making preparations to occupy it immediately after his marriage.

Last Sunday Col. Lee went to New York to notify the young woman that he was expecting orders to join the army in South Africa, and to suggest that the wedding would have to be postponed; but she is not that kind of a soldier's bride, and insisted upon being married before his departure. Saturday is set for the wedding, but she told him that if his orders came before that date she would be ready any hour he called for her. Of course there is no time for preparation, and the loyal girl does not see why this should be necessary. She says she is ready to be married at any moment—in a railroad train, or on a steamer, or in a street car, or even in an elevated—and intends to follow her husband wherever his duty leads him.

SECRECY IN GUN TRIALS.

NO NEWS TO DIVULGE TO FOREIGN ARMIES, SAYS MR. ROOT.

That's Why the Public Doesn't Hear More About the Work at Sandy Hook—A New Rule, Now That We Have Some Secrets About Guns Worth Having.

Nowadays very little news reaches the public about the War Department's work at the Sandy Hook proving grounds, less news, in fact, than during the war with Spain, when all visitors were barred out of the coast fortifications. The reason for this is that the new Secretary of War believes that foreign military experts have been profiting too much by the information they have gained of our ordnance trials through the reports in the newspapers and scientific journals, and so he has instructed officers of the army not to discuss publicly matters connected with the development of our guns, shells and explosives. The work at Sandy Hook goes on every day and some highly interesting tests of new ordnance are made, but the officers of the proving grounds keep their discoveries a secret between themselves and the Ordnance Department, and the only public announcements of proving-ground work are made in Washington by the War Department. What little news is given out at Washington is already so well known by everybody who can profit by it that it amounts to no news at all.

The rule of secrecy was made by Secretary Root after he had read in the papers the reports of a trial at the proving ground of a new form of high explosive shell. One of the illustrated weeklies printed an illustrated story of the trial of this shell, over the signature of a member of the family of a prominent officer of the Ordnance Department. Before Mr. Root entered the War Department such a thing would have passed unnoticed, as the illustrated journals frequently printed articles about new ordnance written by officers of the army. But the new Secretary said this must stop. What information the War Department had about discoveries in guns and explosives was too difficult to learn to go tell all the world about it. A short while after this Mr. Root made a visit to Sandy Hook to witness another trial of the high explosive shell. He then personally asked Major Heath, the commanding officer at the proving grounds, to see that all ordnance news was kept secret until given out directly by the War Department.

Since that day not an item of information has reached the public about the proving ground tests. Major Heath, who was always glad to talk over with newspaper men the general results of the important work going on at the Hook, now has to refuse all information. Since the secrecy rule was made the most important thing that has been done at the Hook is the making of the new high explosive, thorite, for the army in the Philippines. This explosive as was recently announced in Washington, has proved so powerful and at the same time so safe to handle that the War Department has adopted it for field service as a bursting charge for shell. It is like the English lyddite which is being used in the war in South Africa. Thorite was adopted and Dr. Tuttle, its inventor, with an officer of the artillery, was under orders to go to the Philippines to make thorite in Manila, weeks before the public knew anything about it. The fact no news of the adoption of thorite was published until long after the Manila orders had been released and the manufacture of the explosive had begun at Sandy Hook.

One need only to look back over the reports of the Chief of Ordnance and the Board of Ordnance and Fortification to see how little care was formerly taken to keep ordnance information secret. The early reports of the Ordnance Fortification Board were filled with detailed reports of the tests of new shells and new explosives, and copies of these reports were sent to Europe as a matter of course. But these reports were not of much value to investigators abroad, for our artillerists were not learning much of value then. They were only going over the work that had already been done in the armies of Europe. About all we learned then was that the new devices we had were failures. We burst gun after gun trying to devise a safe way of throwing nitroglycerine and other highly sensitive destroyers. Chemists brought forward various explosives for testing, and some of them gave promise of being of value, but nearly all of them failed at critical moments.

Now it is different. Last summer Major Heath's experiments with high explosives came to something. The compound prepared by Dr. Tuttle of Tacoma did remarkable things—went through battleship armor without exploding when it wasn't intended that it should explode, and then tore things all to smithereens when it was fired in a fused shell. It always did what was wanted of it. That's the kind of high explosive the Government has been looking for all these years, and now that it appears that one has been found the Secretary of War doesn't want the powder makers abroad to find out how it is made. And so it is with the Isham shell. All the high explosive shells fired at Sandy Hook heretofore have been about as dangerous to the men behind the guns as the imaginary shell we read of in fiction. But this invention of the Burlington engineer has been as safe to handle as an ordinary shell, although it carries enough nitroglycerine to send a battleship to kingdom come if it should hit the target. So far as we know, no foreign army has such a weapon as this invention, and Secretary Root wants to keep the invention in this country. Naturally, when our ordnance experts are reaching results of real value, it's no time to tell our neighbors across the ocean all about it.

While we are keeping our new knowledge about artillery to ourselves we are finding out what they are doing abroad. For years the Ordnance Department has been pottering around with old field guns for several years trying to make a field gun that will do as well as the French gun. The Boers are using a quite English guns that have been shipped to the Transvaal for England's use and to the Philippines for our own army. In this matter of modern artillery our army is woefully behind the times. Before the English made mountain guns were shipped to Manila they fell we hadn't a respectable piece of field artillery in the Philippines for the reason that the Ordnance Department refused to send. Secretary Root, when he found out the wretched condition of our field artillery, ordered guns from England at once, somewhat to the chagrin of the officers in the Ordnance Department. Within a few days the department has received from abroad confidential information regarding the making of modern field guns abroad. The information has been collected by American officers at the Krupp Works in Germany, the French gun factory at Canet and from the English gunmakers. This matter of supplying our artillery with guns equal to those used abroad has been thoroughly stirred up by the new War Secretary and it will not be long before American gunmakers will be turning out rapid-fire, high-power field guns as good as, if not better than, the foreign guns.

Officers of the army, it may be said, do not all agree with the Secretary of War that any good is done by preserving secrecy about the general results of the tests of new ordnance. Some officers hold that the more foreign governments know about the strength of our own army the more reluctant will they be to enter into conflict with us. This was the idea. American artillery officers had in mind in the spring of 1898, when they let the public know how strong our coast defense was. The general impression abroad was that all of our seacoast towns were at the mercy of any hostile fleet which might raid the Atlantic coast. The newspapers at the time were allowed to get detailed information of the number and strength of the guns at Sandy Hook, Fort Hamilton, Fort Wadsworth and the other coast fortifications, in order to let Spain know that our coast was impregnable. On the other hand, artillery officers say that, try as you will, you cannot keep military information secret. It leaks out somehow. The foreign military attaches in Washington keep their home offices in touch with everything that goes on here, while American Army officers abroad are not slow to find out what military progress is being made in England, France, Germany and Russia.

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Police Interfered

To Prevent Deaf People from Killing Each Other in the Effort to Obtain Admission to Dr. Wilson's Free Lecture and Free Treatment Last Thursday Evening at 240 Fifth Avenue.

The simplest announcement in the daily papers that Dr. Wilson, the world's greatest aurist, is to lecture and give free treatment to the deaf is sufficient to fill to overflowing the largest auditorium in this or any other country, but when the quarters where the lecture is to be given are more circumscribed there is almost a life and death struggle among those who desire to gain admission. The office of the National Association of Pysicians and Surgeons, over which Dr. Wilson presides, consists during the day of elegantly furnished and equipped parlors at 240 Fifth Avenue, up one flight, but on Thursday evening of each week these parlors are by an almost magical change transformed into a large and commodious lecture hall, and here it is that on each Thursday evening Dr. Wilson delivers his free illustrated lecture, gives a marvellous exhibition and demonstrates to the public the efficacy of his more than wonderful treatment for the cure of all kinds of deafness.

A week ago last Thursday evening the crowd was so dense that much injury was done to the furniture, to say nothing of the personal damage and discomfort to many who were jammed into all available portions of the auditorium. The Doctor, fearing similar results last evening