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XVTH YEAR—NO 270. HOUSTON, TEXAS, SATURDAY, DECEMBER 30, 1899. PRICE: 5 CENTS

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WEATHER INFORMATION.

Probabilities.

Washington, December 29.—Forecast for Friday and Sunday:

Texas—Cloudy Saturday; probably rain in northwest portion; Sunday rain; warmer; south winds.

New Mexico—Rain or snow in northern; rain in southern portion Saturday and probably Sunday; variable winds.

Arkansas, Oklahoma and Indian Territory—Cloudy Saturday; Sunday rain; southerly winds.

General Observations.

Observations taken by the United States weather bureau at all stations at 8 p. m., Friday, 75th meridian time:

	Temp.	Rainfall.
Galveston	58	.00
Galveston	58	.00
Corpus Christi	28	.00
Corpus Christi	48	.00
Brownsville	8	.00
Kansas City	24	.00
Kansas City	44	T
Nashville	48	.00
Nashville	42	.00
Oklahoma City	16	T
Oklahoma City	20	.00
Vicksburg	36	.00
Vicksburg	20	.00
Chicago	46	.00
Chicago	14	.01
Cincinnati	34	.00
Cincinnati	14	.00
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Cincinnati	14	.00

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BUBONIC PLAGUE.

Two Cases at Honolulu and Two Deaths.

Washington, December 29.—The following telegram has been received by the supervising surgeon general of the United States marine hospital from Surgeon Carmichael at Honolulu:

Honolulu, December 20, via Victoria, B. C., December 28.—There are two cases reported plague at Honolulu; two deaths December 12. No new cases to December 20. Quarantine against infection raised December 19.

Surgeon General Wyman, in referring to the dispatch, said he did not consider the situation critical in any respect. He said also that Honolulu had a competent board of health. This organization had in times past manifested ability to take good care of the public welfare in the matter of health and he had no doubt it would prove equal to the emergency in the present instance. Dr. Wyman said that Pacific coast ports in the United States had been notified of the reports from Honolulu and that for the present no measures would be resorted to beyond the exercise of extra vigilance on the part of the health authorities.

WASHINGTON NOTES.

Washington, December 29.—Most of the time of the cabinet meeting was taken up by Secretary Wilson is discussing the agricultural possibilities of Alaska.

General Breckinridge wants six additional aides for his department.

Boers Approach Buller.

London, December 30.—The Times publishes the following dispatch from Chieveley camp, dated December 24: Parties of Boers approached today within three miles of Chieveley camp, threatening our watering parties, who are compelled to go some two miles owing to the scarcity of water.

EVENTS IN NATAL

Indicate that Something Important Will Soon Happen.

BOERS HAVE MADE CONNECTION

With the Rail Line to Colenso Around Ladysmith.

GEN[illegible]S PREPARING TO MOVE,

But it [illegible] Make Another.

University of Texas (572K) Paid until 16-Nov-1900 Librarian

AN ENGAGEMENT WITH KAFFIRS REPORTED

And Boers Are Said to Have Routed Them—British Forts on Modder River Captured.

Pretoria, December 25 (Monday).—General Schalkberger reports, under date of December 23, that trains are now running to Colenso, indicating that the Boers have built a connection around Ladysmith. General Cronje reports from Modder River, December 24, that the Boers captured two British forts at Kuruman December 17. It is rumored that General Methuen's big naval gun has exploded.

Pretoria, Tuesday, December 26, by way of Lourenzo Marquez, Thursday, December 28.—Commandant Swart reports from the langer at Alowynskop, near Zeorust, that he had an engagement Friday, December 22, with Kaffirs in the neighborhood of Derdorpoort. The Kaffirs occupied a strongly fortified ridge and were well prepared for emergencies. After heavy fighting the burghers captured the Kaffir position, losing three killed and five wounded.

London, December 30, 5 a. m. — The latest special dispatches from Chieveley camp hint darkly at some important movement as imminent. This is interpreted with some misgivings to mean that General Buller contemplates a renewal of his attempt to relieve Ladysmith.

It is reported by the same dispatches that the Boers have now retired to the north bank of the Tugela, being afraid that the swollen stream may bar their retreat. They are also moving their laagers near Ladysmith, probably with the intention of putting further pressure on the garrison, which now seems to be suffering pretty heavily from bombardment.

It is difficult, however, to conceive that General Buller would make another frontal attack, especially now that the river is rising and an additional indication that this is not his purpose is the fact that he has removed headquarters back to Frere. The Boer movement northward from the Tugela is quite in keeping with the enemy's usual plan of securing a safe line of retreat. It is known that further artillery is due to arrive for General Buller, but the belief here is that his forces even then will be too weak. He may, however, be animated by a desire to accomplish something before the arrival of Lord Roberts and to satisfy the keenness of his men to retrieve their defeat.

The reported engagement with Kaffirs is very vague, and can not be explained pending the arrival of later dispatches.

The earl of Mount Edgecomb, brother-in-law of Lord Lansdowne, says the war office would countenance a scheme to enroll volunteers in a sort of preparatory stage in order to learn drills and the like.

The number of members of the house of commons who have volunteered for the front threaten seriously to reduce the government's majority when parliament reassembles.

The Rothschilds have donated £2000 to the Buckinghamshire volunteer fund. It is estimated that £200,000 will be contributed privately to volunteer funds throughout the country. Already the fund for the relief of the families of soldiers exceeds £500,000.

Impudent and Clumsy Invention.

Berlin, December 29.—The Reichsanzeiger this afternoon publishes the following: "The Local Anzeiger continues, in spite of the contradiction of the Wolff bureau, to advertise itself with communications regarding the alleged contents of the Anglo-German treaty. We are authorized to declare that the statements in question are founded on impudent and clumsy invention."

"I WONDER IF I'D BETTER CLAIM CREDIT FOR THIS?" —Chicago Chronicle.

SALISBURY WANTS TO RETIRE

QUEEN PERSUADED HIM TO REMAIN FOR A TIME.

If Roberts Does Not Have Immediate Success There Will Be a Change in the Ministry.

New York, December 29.—The World's London cable says: It is stated here regarding the rumor of Lord Salisbury's resignation that the premier actually did press the queen to accept on the ground that failing health and private sorrow had caused him to lose heart and that the war crisis demanded a younger and more active counselor.

The queen commanded Arthur Balfour to visit her at Windsor and induced him to persuade his uncle to change his mind.

Salisbury finally assented to the queen's wishes, but said that he would retire on the first available opportunity.

The fact that the Hon. Schomberg McDonnell, the premier's principal political secretary, has volunteered for service and leaves at once for South Africa, indicates that his aged chief can not now mean to carry on the duties of prime minister much longer.

If Field Marshal Roberts fails to turn the tide of victory in South Africa in favor of the British a government of national defense will probably be formed, with the Duke of Devonshire as premier; Lord Rosebery, foreign secretary; Mr. Asquith, colonial secretary, and Sir Henry Fowler, war secretary.

These last are imperialist liberals, pledged to the prosecution of the war to the end.

CONTRABAND OF WAR.

Indentity of Consignees Must Be Shown.

Washington, December 29.—The seizure by British warships of several merchant ships carrying cargoes of American goods to Delagoa Bay on the ground that the goods were destined for the Boers is bringing out that fact that several new contentions on the law of contraband are involved in the case. Thus far the discussion has turned on the point that the consignors were American residents in Philadelphia. But it is contended in some official quarters that the first question in the case is as to the consignee, not the consignor. According to this view, the original shipments have been in good faith, but so long as the consignment was likely to pass into the hands of the Boers it was subject to the rules governing contraband of war and could be seized. It is expected, therefore, that when the inquiry is presented by Ambassador Choate at London and Consul Hollis at Pretoria they will have before them not only the facts as to the original consignment but also all of the evidence relating to the bona fides of the consignees in having no connection with the Boers.

London, December 30.—Lord Rosebery writes as follows this morning to the Times: "There are disquieting intimations which appear to point to our government having treated foodstuffs as contraband of war. As this is a matter of supreme importance I venture to address the line to you in the hope that it may elicit an authorative statement on the subject."

The Times, commenting editorially upon Lord Rosebery's letter, says: Too little is known of the seizures for any valid inference safely to be known. An emergency might arise when certain foodstuffs would be regarded as contraband while others would not, especially if the latter were intended for non-combatants. There might, for instance, be reasonable grounds for treating canned goods as contraband and flour as legitimate.

After admitting that it "would be unadvisable to create a precedent which might some day be invoked against us" the article concludes as follows: "While we fully share the view that no serious change of policy should occur without cogent reasons and ample consideration we can not but ask ourselves whether, in the event of Great Britain being engaged in a war, the action, either of the enemy or even of neutral powers, in a matter upon which so much great divergence of opinion still exists, is likely to be governed by any precedent we or any one else may have set in the past, rather than by the immediate interests of the amount."

London, December 30.—Sir Charles Dilke, in the Daily Chronicle this morning, discusses Great Britain's relation to Delagoa Bay with regard to the food question. He says: "It would be one of the greatest follies the country could commit to disregard the possibility of a war some day against a powerful naval coalition, in which event it would be to the interests of the United States to feed Great Britain. Great Britain must indorse the conditions, possibly doing something by pressure on the Portuguese officials, and strengthening the British consular staff at Delagoa Bay."

The Daily Chronicle, in an editorial dealing with the dependence of Great Britain upon the United States for food in time of war, expresses the opinion that many British ships would be transferred to the United States flag.

TRANSVAAL GOLD TAX.

It Varies from Thirty to Fifty Per Cent.

Pretoria, December 25 (Monday). The transvaal government has promulgated a new gold tax law by which individuals and companies working their own mines are taxed 30 per cent of the output while mines worked by the government will pay 50 per cent. Suspended mines will pay 30 per cent on their probable output calculated on three months workings. Reducing works will pay 30 per cent of their net profits. The law is retroactive to October 11.

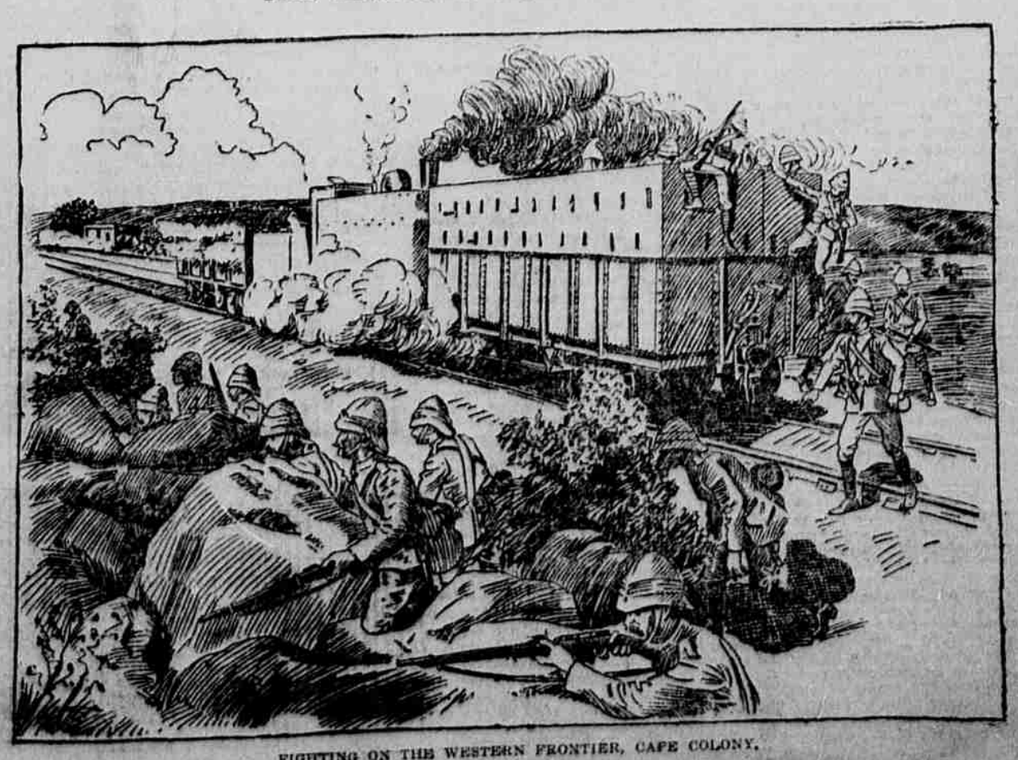
BOERS ARE READY.

Guns Are Trained on Kimberley and Reinforcements Close.

Kimberley, Friday, December 22.—Via Modder River, Wednesday, December 27.—Before dawn today a detachment of the mounted forces with artillery and light infantry moved out in a westerly direction. Boer artillery from Kamperdam opened fire at Otto's kopje, Kimberley fort replying with twenty shells. The British force reconnoitered outposts along Lazaretto ridge, the Boer patrols retreating. Having accomplished this and having discovered Boer reinforcements approaching from Wimbledon ridge, Colonel Chamier with the Royal artillery exchanged a dozen shells as soon as the guns could be limbered up. Some 500 Boers poured in a heavy fire from their earthworks, the British finally retiring with the loss of one horse.

The movement showed that the Boers were still keeping their guns in the vicinity of Kimberley and are able to summon reinforcements rapidly. It also showed their proneness to vacate a position immediately when weaker than the opposing force.

THE ARMORED TRAIN IN ACTION.



FIGHTING ON THE WESTERN FRONTIER, CAPE COLONY.

WHITE HAD FEVER,

But He Is Reported to Be Better Now.

THE BOER SHELLS FELL THICK,

The General Being Forced to Move His Headquarters.

FIRE HAS BEEN VERY DAMAGING,

General Joubert Making It Rather Warm for the Beleaguered Garrison.

AN ADVANCE WAS MADE FROM MAFEKING

And Boers Defended Their Forts, Holding the Positions Against British with Close Fighting.

Ladysmith, December 24, via Pietermaritzburg.—General White has had a slight attack of fever, but he is now convalescent.

The Boer shell fire has been very damaging recently. Friday one shell killed six men and wounded nine. The same missile killed four horses. Another just missed the Fifth Lancers' lines, slightly wounding six officers. Several shells have fallen close to General White's house, compelling the removal of headquarters to another point. It is reported that General Joubert is again in command of the Boers here. The military authorities appear confident, but are very reticent. Boers have been observed moving northward and westward in large numbers.

Pretoria, Tuesday, December 26, by way of Lourenzo Marquez, December 28.—Commandant Snyman reports as follows from Molopo: "On Monday morning the enemy from Mafeking attacked one of our forts in force with cannon, Maxims and an armored train, and so persistently that there was fighting right on the walls of the fort. But we have retained our forts. The British loss is reported as fifty-five."

The other commanders report "all quiet," with the exception of the usual bombardment of Ladysmith. General Lucas Meyer has recovered and gone to the front.

DUTCH DISAFFECTION.

It Is Said the Reports Are Much Overdrawn.

London, December 29.—Dispatches from all parts of South Africa emphasize great enthusiasm among the troops and the public occasioned by the appointments of Generals Roberts and Kitchener.

Advices from Capetown, dated December 24, say an investigation shows the reported disaffection among the Dutch of the Victoria west district is overdrawn. The farmers, it is pointed out, are mostly land owners and will not risk a loss of their farms by rising.

A dispatch from Lourenzo Marquez, dated December 25, says a curious story is current, emanating from Boer sources, that Matt Steyn, brother of the president of Orange Free State, and 800 Free Staters have definitely refused to continue the war.

London, December 30.—The Capetown correspondent of the Daily News says: A leading resident of Vryburg, who was released by the Boers, saw 2000 colonists from Griqualand west. He says they are to be seen everywhere in the Boer ranks.

FIGHTING UNDER JOUBERT.

Russians Are Enlisted in the Boer Army.

London, December 30.—The Marseilles correspondent of the Daily Mail, telegraphing the substance of an interview with the Russian general, Gourko, eldest son of the famous Gourko, who is now about to start for Pretoria, says that the Russian officer made the following statement: "I have been offered the command of a Boer army corps. In my own mind, I am absolutely confident of the success of the Boers. You may take my word for it that thousands of Russians are now fighting under General Joubert."

LADYSMITH SUPPLIED.

The Garrison Claims to Have Plenty of Provisions.

Pietermaritzburg, Wednesday, December 27.—A dispatch from Ladysmith dated December 22 says: The Boers have another howitzer on Surprise hill, replacing the gun captured in the sortie of the rifle brigade. While they watch us nightly with a searchlight, and bombard the place daily, they show no signs of assaulting the town. They probably think they can starve us out, but we have plenty of provisions. The total casualties since the siege began are seventy men killed and 238 wounded.

News from Mafeking.

London, December 29.—A war office dispatch from Colonel Baden-Powell, dated December 12, after announcing that Lady Sarah Wilson had arrived safe and well at Mafeking, adds that the bombardment and musketry fire continued daily on all sides and that the health and spirits of the garrison are very satisfactory.

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