

PRETORIA ALMOST IMPREGNABLE.

Nature and Art Have Made It So—In Condition to Withstand a Long Siege—Its Fortifications.

The most important place in South Africa at present is Pretoria, the capital of the Transvaal, where Oom Paul has made the most elaborate preparations to withstand a siege and where the Boers may be relied upon to make a most stubborn resistance. The place is defended by nature and art as few other towns in the world, and has been described by some military writers as being impregnable. On three sides of Pretoria the mountain ranges rise to elevations of 1,000 and 2,000 feet above the streets of the city, which itself is 4,500 feet above sea level, but 1,100 feet lower than the site of Johannesburg, to the south. On the fourth side—the south and facing the approach from Johannesburg—the range flattens away to a vast level plateau, treeless, desolate, exposed at every point to the sweep of any guns that may command it. The town is 1,080 miles from Cape Town, 50 from Johannesburg. On the map it seems as easy of approach as a prairie village in Nebraska. But the map topographer fails to present the lofty, barren hills that face the southern plateau, the precipitous banks of Aapies river, the narrow gorges—so few in number—the innumerable "spion" or lookout kopjes that seem literally to leap from the bosom of the plain and sullenly, silently oppose access to the capital city. The civil engineers who laid out the railway from Johannesburg to Pretoria found such problems of grade and mountain resistance offered them that the road finally was forced to enter the city on a line resembling the curves and twists of a great boa constrictor.

You look up to the mountain fronts as your train struggles to find its way into Pretoria, and wherever the eye rests there appears to be the lines of a fort, a redoubt, the front of masked batteries or the domes of boom-proof rifle and cannon pits. To the north, east, west and south these engirdle the city. They command the few—very few—narrow entrances to Pretoria. They watch like great dogs the dusty, sun-rotted veldt over which any English troops coming from the south must pass. They blink at the one railroad to Johannesburg and the one to Lourenco Marques. Their location has been with purpose. Capt. Schiel, now an English prisoner, constructed the one at Daspoort from plans obtained in Berlin. He brought special assistants from Berlin to aid him in the work. Amsterdam engineers built others of the defenses. After them came French engineers, and then those of Italy, so that the completed structures represent the genius of four nations.

There are seven of these forts, and in external appearance they look alike. They have masonry faces, with earthwork which covers their fronts to a great depth. In this they conform with plans and suggestions to be found in M. Bloch's much-studied work, "The Future of War." Pile upon pile of sand bags are stacked up wherever shells from the enemy might strike. There are many hidden recesses, secret passages, complete telephone connections—not only with each other, but with the government buildings in Pretoria. Searchlights are mounted in each structure so as to command the surrounding country at night. The magazines are underground, and are reported to be mined. Report has it, also, that the near approaches are mined and that the electrical construction is such that considerable portions of an enemy's army might be blown into eternity before surrender came. For food, in the event of siege, enormous quantities of maize have been accumulated—enough, it is said, to feed the army and the population of Pretoria for five years. The supply of ammunition is calculated to be sufficient for two years. How many guns are mounted or will be it is difficult to estimate. The total artillery force of the Boers at present is estimated at 450 guns by the English.

The guns originally placed in the forts were 15-centimeter Creusots, but their number is not definitely known. M. Bloch has estimated that it will require but 500 men to each of these forts, each force supplied with ten modern guns, to keep the English at

bay forever. Right or wrong, he maintains that occupying a besieging position, devoid of sustenance, the English will be in greater danger of starvation than the Boers, and that convoy supplies cannot be brought in with such rapidity and success as to make the siege successful.

The fountains, or water supply, of Pretoria is within the radius of forts. The westernmost fort is on the range of hills behind Pretoria, and lies at a distance of 31,000 feet from the city's center. There is a powerful redoubt to the southwest on the range of hills through which the transport road to Johannesburg passes. This completes,

has been that. The Cleveland book breaks the record in size, or lack of size, for printed books. There are rare little volumes engraved on ivory fastened together like a book, but they are not really books in the estimation of collectors of miniature volumes. The Bijou Almanac is a real book, printed on real paper, and bound in stiff little blue covers. It was made in London in 1836 by Schloss. It has sixty pages, a calendar for each month, and some wonderfully delicate little steel engravings. It is half an inch wide and five-eighths long, and not much thicker than the cover of an ordinary book. The owner of this little



CITY OF PRETORIA, SHOWING DEFENSES.

with various earth batteries, the circle of the larger works defending the Boer capital. Behind the great redoubt mentioned are the principal magazines, one excavated out of the solid rock, with a bombproof roof, and the other built into the kloop, also bombproof. Communication between the redoubt and the last-mentioned magazine is by means of a covered way. Roads connect all these forts with the capital, and they have pipes laid for water, as well as electric lights for the searchlights.

An English view of what can be done with the Pretoria fortifications is found in the following description of the liege train en route from England. This is the second train of its kind sent out from England during the last forty-six years. The last occasion was when sixty-five heavy guns and mortars were sent from Woolwich for the siege of Sebastopol, where, with fifty ship guns, they took part in the bombardment of that city in connection with the French siege train. The train now on its way out from England comprises thirty howitzers, fourteen of 8-inch caliber, eight of 5-inch and eight of 4-inch. It is calculated that the investment of Pretoria will require 42,000 British troops, leaving the remainder of the army to guard the fortifications, occupy certain strategic points and operate against that part of the Boer army not required for the defense of Pretoria. This part of the Boer army is expected to fall back into the north in the Zoutpansberg mountains, which the Boers are reported to intend to make their stronghold, and where they expect to carry on the war against England indefinitely.

WORLD'S SMALLEST BOOK.

It is Less Than Half an Inch Square and Contains Thirteen Pages.

The smallest book in the world has just been printed in Cleveland, says the Leader of that city. But ten of them were printed, and none of them is for sale. In all the catalogues of the rare book dealers, what is called the Bijou Almanac is named as the smallest book in the world, and until now

lungs, and with a last little whistle gave way to the clergyman. They sang the closing hymn sans organ, for they did not want to take any more chances.

ALL DUE TO APPETITE.

Will the Girls of the Future Be a Race of Gigantes?

Why are almost all girls tall nowadays? Or, perhaps, one should rather say, how is it that modern maidens are so much more developed than those of a generation or two back? We have been assured that it is because they take so much more outdoor exercise, and because they go in for physical training, that they have literally grown up in this extraordinary fashion. It pleased a great many people to have this theory deduced. But we are never suffered to hold any theories long nowadays. Thus, one of those deplorably unromantic persons who revel in horrid prosaic facts that knock down all our prettiest and most poetical theo-

CASUALTIES.

A woman took a leading part in a labor riot at the Merchants' Loan and Trust building, Chicago, in which many were injured.

Landslip buries half the houses in the village of Klappal, Bohemia, the occupants barely escaping with their lives.

Anderson-McKelvy Lead and Oil company's big building in Pittsburg collapsed, killing four persons.

CRIME.

Two Fort Dodge girls sent to reform school because they attended theatrical performances twice a day.

Berlin society women fought a duel. Man arrested in New York accused of complicity in theft of \$16,000 worth of beer stamps.

Melba's husband, Charles N. F. Armstrong of Texas, secured divorce on ground of desertion.

Porch climbers entered the house of O. W. Potter, Chicago, and stole \$20,000 worth of jewelry and other valuables.

MISCELLANEOUS.

Duke d'Arcos, Spanish minister to the United States, refuses to attend the Dewey celebration at Chicago.

A stranger startled worshipers in Trinity Episcopal church, Chicago, by striding up to the chancel and shouting, "I am the Resurrection and the Life."

Col. Bacon of New York has issued a publication accusing Theodore Roosevelt of "quitting" at the battle of Santiago.

Robbers beat Kate Sullivan to death and her sister Joanna until she became insane in an Ohio farmhouse, where the two women, who were reputed to be wealthy, lived alone.

Prince Ferdinand will not attend the wedding of Prince Louis of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha and Princess Mathilda of Bavaria because Prince Regent Luitpold doesn't like Ferdinand's proposed change of religion.

Danger of famine in Persia. Professional base ball season opens this week.

Russian military experts surveying railroads through the south and in Caucasus.

Dr. Leyds joined Boer peace commissioners and they held formal meeting in Milan.

Viceroy Curzon told Baluchistan it would be protected, thus giving Russia a hint.

France exerting pressure on Turkey to obtain railroad concessions in Syria.

Pope sent king of Spain his miniature and an autograph letter. Czar's envoy has completed his mission in Abyssinia.

Italy disabused with her position in the drebbund. Diamonds discovered in British Guiana.

Edmond Rostand is dangerously ill. Gates of Karnak found in Egypt.

Silas B. Cobb's estate, Chicago, estimate at \$3,500,000; will filed, bequeathing \$87,500 to charity.

Paris thronged with visitors to attend opening of exposition. Many buildings incomplete, some still unroofed, and no exhibits ready. Will not be complete for six weeks.

Relatives of the wife of William H. Parlin will fight his suit for divorce brought in Seattle on the ground of incurable insanity.

The steel stocks are weak on manipulation; the railway shares strong.

The Burlington road is preparing plans for an extension of its line to Yellowstone park.

Lady Schorr won the Ardelle stakes at Memphis.

The committee in charge has announced the program of athletic sports for the Paris exposition.

Gov. Roosevelt has positively refused to be a candidate for vice-president.

Paris hears that an entente has been concluded between Russia and Bulgaria.

Franz Josef washed feet of twelve oldest men in Vienna.

London Mail praised Viceroy Curzon.

Destructive floods in Austria.

Naval board of construction decided against double turrets for new battleships.

Schley may get pay as rear admiral from date when his promotion was first proposed.

Miles' friends believe his promotion to rank of lieutenant-general is certain.

Suggested that fund be raised to pay for cablegrams for sick soldiers.

Contractors will not have guns for coast defense ready on time.

Bank presidents and capitalists interviewed at Chicago all say they vote at every election.

Clerical leader in Bavarian house of delegates opposes indirect election.

Physicians in Cracow hospital threaten to strike for increased pay.

Czar's demands on Corea for Masampo said to have been renewed.

Australia seems in no mood to accept British supremacy in the federation scheme. It is probable a republic will be formed unless the desired independence can be otherwise obtained.

Ex-Gov. Altgeld is opposed to nomination of Patison for vice-president by democrats.

Trainloads of people from all quarters of the globe are rushing to Paris. The city is being decorated and the exposition is nearing completion.

Announcement is made of the engagement of John D. Rockefeller's daughter Alta to E. Parmelee Prentice of Chicago.

Nebraska university regents elected E. Benjamin Andrews of Chicago chancellor by a partisan vote. He may not accept.

OUR CALENDAR.



MINOR EVENTS OF THE WEEK.

Items of General Interest Told in Paragraphs.

COMPLETE NEWS SUMMARY.

Record of Happenings of Much or Little Importance from All Parts of the Civilized World—Prices of Farm Produce in Western Markets.

Marquis de Gallifet, French minister of war, believed to be dying of pneumonia.

Rome fearful that meeting of emperors threatens Italy's interests in drebbund.

German Colonial society may experiment with cotton in Africa.

Two French merchant vessels to be built in Germany.

More Russian troops sent to Port Arthur.

Pugilist Terry McGovern will become an actor with a "speaking part."

Gov. Taylor of Kentucky is in Washington looking over his case before Supreme court.

Too much pressure exploded a defective gas pipe near Logansport, killing two men.

Troops sent to prevent rioting by strikers at the Croton dam.

Automobiles to be used on the La Parra ranch in Texas.

New York's Easter parade larger than usual.

Senator Hanna ill with the grip. Real estate in Fifth avenue, New York, is held at \$7,000 a front foot.

Women in a Cleveland church abstained from new Easter millinery and gave the money to raise church debt.

Dr. Parkhurst wants a revision of the Westminster confession, declaring it an incubus that prevents Presbyterian progress.

President Harper will invite Count Tolstai to visit Chicago.

Secretary Root asked congress to establish six additional brigadier generalships as reward for officers.

Secretary Root favors sending staff men back into the line every now and then.

Navy department agreed to pay \$150,000 for the Holland submarine boat.

Dr. D. K. Pearsons of Illinois will give away \$500,000 to celebrate his eightieth birthday.

German paper is stirred to anger by the election of American trade promoters to membership in a Lusitanian chamber of commerce.

Miss Helen Gould is besieged by thousands of applicants asking millions in charity. In one week the requests aggregated \$1,548,502.

Plot to dynamite the jail at Watseka, Ill., and free James Dunlap, held for bank robbery, is discovered.

Miss Nellie Lewis is awarded damages in \$50,000 for breach of promise against Millionaire Sam Strong of Cripple Creek, Colo.

Commodity prices show no sign of a reaction.

The largest and most powerful locomotive in the world is being built in Pittsburg and will be exhibited in Paris.

Dr. E. Benjamin Andrews, Dr. Henry Wade Rogers, and other prominent educators lost money by fostering a scheme to take 3,000 teachers to Paris for study and to see the exposition.

Wall street men are elated over the showing of the weekly bank statement.

Colorado college built a \$60,000 laboratory and will get \$50,000 from Dr. Pearsons.

Two New York magistrates favor whipping post for wife beaters.

French ministry sustained, after attack led by Castellane and based on failure to protest against landing of British at Blera, on Millerand's influence, and on measures against political monks.

Russian minister of war will inspect every post in central Asia.

Men defeated women in Beattie, Kan.

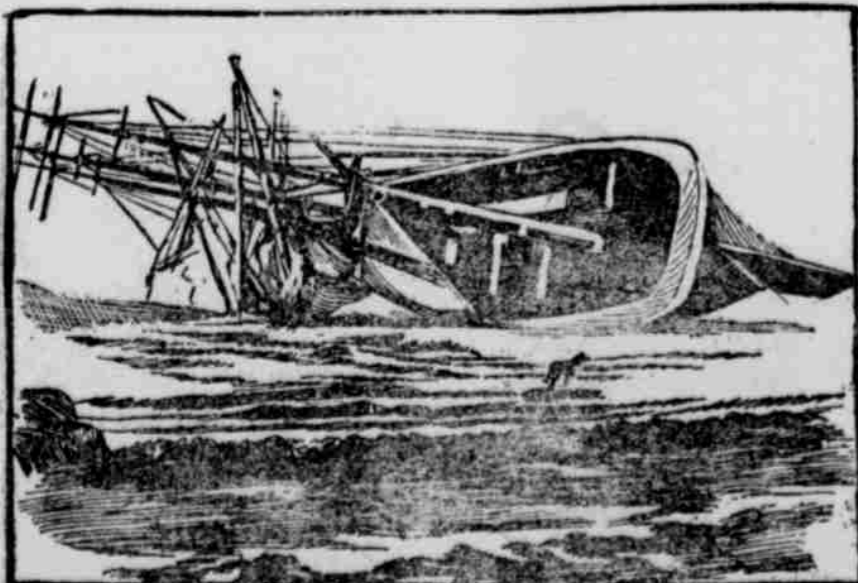
Constant weeping over death of husband and daughter made New York woman blind.

Dr. Taylor in Utica presbytery urged elimination of election and reprobation doctrines.

New York Methodists voted against criticizing the Rev. Mr. Sheldon's paper.

Spiritualists' national convention opened at Chicago.

A REMARKABLE WRECK.



A full-rigged ship was left lying in this queer position on the beach near Southampton three weeks ago, after a terrible storm. The crew escaped in boats.