

GEN. GATACRE HEARD FROM AGAIN

The Boers Retreat When Shells Burst Among Them.

REINFORCEMENTS FOR FRENCH FROM DeAAR.

Departure of the Seventh Division—The Situation in Natal—Relief of Ladysmith is Expected Shortly.

SPECIAL DESPATCH TO THE EXAMINER.

IMPROVED TACTICS.

LONDON, Jan'y. 5.—While Colenso remains the centre of interest, operations have proceeded elsewhere, which, serve to indicate the increased mobility and improved tactics on the British side.

The Dutch forces have made a belated effort to follow up their victory at Stormberg by an advance upon Molteno and Cyphergate. But General Gatacre sent infantry and a battery of artillery to relieve the Cape Police, and they reoccupied both villages after a brisk artillery fire.

Two Dutch commandos which had skirmished with the outposts of the advanced British camp, retreated when the shells began to burst among them.

General Gatacre's official report shows that the police have retired from Dordrecht and taken a position on Indoe Lunelo, and that a company of mounted infantry had reconnoitered Pruska.

While the skirmishing is on a small scale there is evidence that General Gatacre is all right and vigilant, and that the scouting work is well done.

Reinforcements have been sent from DeAar to General French who is still hovering about Colesburg and apparently manoeuvring to cut off the retreat of the Boers to the railway bridge, having already blocked their passage by the road bridge over the Orange River.

A heavy artillery fire is reported, but the result of the fighting is indecisive as General French avoids a frontal attack and is content to hold a strong position and continue to bother and embarrass the enemy without striking with his mounted force.

THE SEVENTH DIVISION.

LONDON, Jan. 5.—The departure of the seventh division of the British army for South Africa commenced today.

SITUATION SUMMERIZED.

LONDON, Jan. 5.—The following is a summary of the situation at Natal, as published by the Daily Telegraph.

Frere Camp, Sunday: The following is what I may term an end year review of the situation as it now stands.

Despite many drawbacks and various unsatisfactory matters, which might and could be remedied, the military situation

is better, more secure, and more hopeful for us than since the outbreak of hostilities. This is the case elsewhere, but particularly so in the Natal. The invasion of this colony is now slowly—perhaps many will say too slowly—but surely, being rolled back. To-day the country is secure from the foe practically from Colenso south.

A few raiders may for a short time, venture along the hills as far as Estcourt. But I doubt if even they will water their horses again in the Mooi River. Ladysmith is holding out well. Ladysmith, although on account of its situation, the place is difficult to defend, continues easily to hold out, and is repelling the Boers attacks; for the enemy have never relished coming to close quarters, nor have they shown any capacity for assaulting British positions. Their one method is to catch our troops in the open from cover and over whelm them with fire.

For not many more days will Ladysmith's gallant garrison be required to lie low behind their works. The relief column will surely free their hands from guarding towns and camps, and enable them to cut in upon the retreating commandos.

To-day, General Buller has within hail a force of all arms equal to that of the Boers, eagerly demanding to be led against Joubert's men and the Free Staters who are before Colenso and Ladysmith.

I take it that the enemy between Colenso and Ladysmith all told, number between 20 and 30 thousand. What with renegades and colonial Boers recruiting, their total strength in the field must be near sixty thousand.

Joubert and Botha have made the most of their advantage of position by emplacing many cannon, some of large calibre up to 15 centimeters and by constructing numberless trenches and works. Their positions, I assume, will be judiciously flanked and the enemy rolled back.

War is even more uncertain than cricket. But the soldiers will not fail the country. If they are given a fair chance to engage upon anything like equal terms, I plump for a complete British victory.

It is given further to forecast that if the punishment meted out and the pressure brought to bear upon the discomfited Boers be vigorous and persistent, many prisoners and guns and much spoil should fall into General Buller's hands, the invasion by the republics forces be terminated, and the end of the war certainly be brought within few months distance.

Help for the Boers

PHILADELPHIA, Jan. 4.—The movement in this city to send assistance to the Boers received renewed impetus last night, when the association known as the Knights of the Red Branch held an adjourned meeting here and decided to extend all possible aid to President Kruger. Resolutions of sympathy for the Boers were adopted. The Knights of the Red Branch claim a membership of 100,000, made up principally of Irish and Germans. There were 250 delegates at last night's meeting. Grand Chief John A. Ryan of this city presided. A meeting of the local branches of the Clan-na-Gael was also held last night for drill. Fully 400 young men have been formed into companies and will, it is said, be sent to South Africa.

Curious Coincidence.

LONDON, Jan. 3.—By a curious coincidence the engine that drew the train by which the late Duke of Westminster's body was conveyed to Woking for cremation, was named the Flying Fox, the same name as that of the Duke's horse, which won the last Derby. His estate, by the way, is estimated to amount to £12,000,000, the greatest ever submitted to probate in this country.

Old Man Gone.

LONDON, Jan. 4.—Thomas Kite, the old parish clerk of Shakespeare's church, has quickly followed the custodian of Aone Hathaway's cottage to the grave. He was 91 years of age, and succeeded his father and grandfather half a century ago, and was well known to all dramatic celebrities. Among those whom he conducted to Shakespeare's tomb were Sir Walter Scott, Washington Irving, Dickens, Emerson, Booth, Keen and Nathaniel Hawthorne.

Senior Wranglership.

LONDON, January 4.—Senior wrangler bids fair to become a thing of the past at Cambridge, the board of mathematics having recommended the abolition of this coveted distinction in future. If the senate agrees, as is probable, the wranglers will all be classed alphabetically, and none will know who is the cleverest mathematician of the year. For this honor men have worked themselves crazy, and it has been secured by some of the most prominent figures in English history.

To go to the Boers.

WASHINGTON, Jan. 4.—Captain Carl Reichmann, of the 17th infantry, and assistant adjutant general of volunteers, has been detailed by the secretary of war to accompany the Boer army in South Africa.

Military Minister Needed.

LONDON, Dec. 30.—Mr. Henry Spencer Wilkinson, the Morning Post Military expert, in his review of the situation, says: The time has apparently arrived for the nation to insist, if not upon a military dictatorship, at least upon the admission into the Cabinet of a military Minister, empowered to veto any proposals detrimental to the successful prosecution of the war, and also that the administration of the army should be placed wholly in the hands of a tried military administration.

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