

# THE MAFEKING MAIL

## SPECIAL SIEGE SLIP.

ISSUED DAILY, SHELLS PERMITTING.

TERMS: ONE SHILLING PER WEEK, PAYABLE IN ADVANCE.

No. 40

Thursday, December 28th, 1899.

The Mafeking Mail

THURSDAY, 28TH DECEMBER, 1899.

### FESTINALENTE.

"The English are slow but we know they will come," said a Native to one of our most prominent officials. The idea which penetrated the Baralong's mind was akin to the faith which has buoyed us up during the whole of this protracted Siege and the welcome news received this morning shews that our confidence was well founded. The receipt of the intelligence that Lord Methuen's column is steadily and surely approaching, ought to drive from all hearts every shadow of pessimism, just as sunrise dispels the depressing shades of night. We hope to-day will see our force at Vryburg, outside or inside is immaterial, the difference would only be a matter of hours. Between that place and this, except at a few spots such as Kraaipan, the country is open. If the Boers attempt to make a stand where there is cover, the artillery will have but little trouble in shelling them out. It is possible that Cronje's sprinters have already made sufficient acquaintance with our shelling to prevent them feeling an intense desire to review the experience. In any case we may now look with confidence for an advance to be made into the Transvaal from here, which will be some little off-set of our indebtedness to the Boers.

### LATEST NEWS.

By the courtesy of the Colonel Commanding we are enabled to print the following:—

Reliable reports arrived to-day to the effect that troops had a big fight on Vaal River on 18th, and (according to the Boers) lost heavily. But they won the battle and had another one at Phokwani soon after, breaking up the Boer forces all over the veld and killing numbers of them. Many Boers are begging horses from Natives to get away to the Transvaal.

Our troops expected to reach Taungs on the 23rd. The main road and line are now clear of Boers.

A letter addressed to Miss Simpson was found near Setlagoli with contents intact, and is being kept there in safety for the present.

Taungs is 150 miles from here, about a fortnight's march for a big force.

### NOTICE.

IT is published for general information that in future Traders, Merchants, Shopkeepers are prohibited from selling Meal or Flour to any private customers, in either large or small quantities. Meal or Flour can only be obtained on medical certificate or by personal application to Captain Ryan; such persons who may by the publication of this notice be prevented from making their own bread, and are not in receipt of Bread Rations, are requested

to communicate with the above named Officer, when arrangements will be made to enable them to purchase a limited quantity of Bread for their daily and personal consumption only.

Mafeking, 28th Dec., 1899.

### THE JOURNEY TO KIMBERLEY.

#### Details of the Modder River Fight.

#### Extracts from the Bulawayo Chronicle.

#### Still comes Tales of their Treachery.

At Modder River the Boers were on a hill on one side of the stream which commanded the plain on the other side for a tremendous distance and had constructed sandbag trenches and all kinds of breast-works for five miles with cannon posted at all advantageous points. All the houses were also filled with Boers. When our column marched up they found both sides of the river were alive with Boers. The Guards were on the right and the 9th Brigade on the left, while artillery occupied a position on either side. The Scots Guards on the extreme right marched through the old reservoir. Directly they emerged from cover a desperate volley was poured into them, while the enemy's Hotchkiss knocked out our Maxim, killed the sergeant in charge, and wounded an officer. The infantry then lay down and extended all along the front of the enemy's posts. The Boer cannon opened fire from all directions but our cavalry and mounted infantry on the extreme right got into action and drove the Boers from house to house, while the 75th Battery razed to the ground a farm house where the enemy's cannon had been posted. There was one continuous rattle of artillery for five hours. The Boers had no cannon on the extreme left and the 18th Battery made them evacuate position after position. Lord Methuen was struck on the thigh and Major General Colville took over the command. Time after time the ambulance wagons were driven back, no notice being taken of the red cross flag prominently displayed upon them. The Boers disregarded every recognised law of civilised warfare. Colonel Codrington and Captain Fielding, of the 1st Coldstreams, with Captain Salheim, of the Queensland permanent Force and twenty-four men attempted to cross the river. When they reached the other bank a Hotchkiss was turned on them, and they had to retire. The Northumberland and Argyles made a similar effort, about 300 of them reaching the opposite side and turned the enemy's flank, but could not dislodge them from their trenches. The 62nd Battery arrived from Orange River in the afternoon, doing the journey in 28 hours, and got to work at once. Very soon the Boers were seen carrying the wounded and dead from the trenches. Twenty-two pieces of artillery were engaged and fired an average of 200 rounds each. At sundown our men retired and

camped near by. In the night the enemy cleared. Our cavalry crossed the river in the morning and the Argyles marched over. None of the enemy was in sight, but when the first company passed a house they were fired upon. The second company surrounded the house and found it full of Boers; who got their deserts for the treachery. The stores and houses which the Boers had been using for shelter were found riddled by our shrapnel, in some of them were dead Boers deserted by their comrades. Their trenches were impenetrable to rifle fire. The Boers had retreated.

### VERY LIKELY.

Pretoria, although acknowledging that they were defeated at Modder River, says the Boers only lost about a dozen but killed 2,000 of the British.

### KIMBERLEY.

Bulawayo received word from Delagoa Bay, through Beira, that Lord Methuen was then (December 2nd) actually in touch with Kimberley.

### Our Thermometer of Hope.

Miles from here.		
0.	Mafeking.	
11.	Madibi.	
24.	Maritzani.	
38.	Kraaipan.	
50.	Maribogo.	
65.	Doornbult.	
80.	Devondale.	
96.	Vryburg.	To-day.
139.	Taungs.	Decr. 23rd.
153.	Phokwani.	Decr. 21st?
179.	Vaal River	Decr. 18th.
223.	Kimberley.	Decr. 3rd.
247.	Modder Rvr.	Nov. 29th.
279.	Belmont.	Nov. 23rd.
300.	Orange Rvr.	October.

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