

THE MAFEKING MAIL

SPECIAL SIEGE SLIP.

ISSUED DAILY, SNELLS PERMITTING

TERMS: ONE SNILLING PER WEEK, PAYABLE IN ADVANCE.

No. 45

Thursday, January 4th, 1900.

The Mafeking Mail.

THURSDAY, 4TH JANUARY, 1900.

WANTED, NEWS.

We have started on the thirteenth week of our besiegement. We are as firm as ever, we are more fit to repel on attack now than ever we were three months ago. We know that if it be necessary we can hold Mafeking for another three months or even two similar periods, but we want NEWS. We want to know what is being done by White, Clery, Gatacre, Methuen, we want to know where the forces are, and what they are doing. Whether bad or good the news—no matter—we want it. The Boers outside must know what is going on, their lines of communication are kept open therefore the publication here of what has taken place would not convey any more information to them than they already possessed of. The Dutch disloyalists are, almost nightly, risking their lives in carrying messages backwards and forwards between our enemies outside and our enemies inside the garrison, but none of our people, if we except the man who came in Reuter's interests in the middle of November, has sent us a single word. The British force cannot be far away now. It is impossible that many Boers remain between us. A deviation on the journey of two miles to right or left would avoid contact with them. We have scouts and money, yet the two combined cannot get us what we now desire more than anything else. News, regular and reliable, whether victories or defeats, let us have the News without counting cost. It is particularly exasperating that we, with money and men, who know every foot of the country, are unable to get a single word through.

"GENTLE ANNIE" TO THE RESCUE.

Last evening our pups set on to the enemy's boar hound and worried it considerably. No sooner had the brute began its usual afternoon barking than our seven-pound terriers yelped. One of them bit it. "Gentle Annie" sprang at it, at first too far, then getting the distance better, took a piece out of the Boers' front works. The whole crowd were so alarmed, they evidently thought our men were coming at them again, for they swarmed up to reinforce the big gun fort. Impossible as it might have appeared our small artillery stopped the noise of their one-pound maxim and Greitje was quiet last night and all this morning. We hear, but do not vouch for its truth, that there was a funeral by the big gun fort this morning. Whether or not, much credit is due to Major Panzera and his men for the manner in which they manipulated their guns. They have evidently given the enemy a shock.

ASSESSMENT OF PROPERTY.

List of names of owners whose property will probably be assessed on Sunday next, 7th instant:—

Messrs. J. Weil, Mahomed Dada, R. F. Appelbe, H. Noach, G. Riesle, E. C. Wright, D. E. McConnell, O. Fodisch, Rev. Hudson, Messrs. J. W. de Kock, R. H. Martin, and Mafeking Club.

FROM THE "NATAL MERCURY."

"Nothing takes courage out of men more easily than failure. The news that the late fights with the Boers have disheartened the enemy, and caused many of them to bitterly regret their absence from their farms, and to wish themselves back again, does not come as a surprise. They have had a taste of British metal, and British mettle, too, which has come as a great surprise to them. Doubtless the Boers have all along imagined that fighting British troops was child's play. They have learnt, to their great calamity, that this has been a grave error. Then, their crops are all rotting, and their season's work is waiting to be done. The "picnic" on which they set out has resolved itself into something farthest from their expectation."

POET'S CORNER.

THE ARMOURD TRAIN.

There's risk on the ballasted roadway,
There's death on the girdered bridge,
Red ruin from sleeper to sleeper,
And wreck on the bouldered ridge,
No signal to herald my coming,
No whistle to waken the plain;
Stand clear—I am warned for patrolling!
Make way for the Armoured Train!

I run not to time, nor to table,
I'm neither an "up" nor a "down";
But "Full speed ahead" is my order,
When skirting the enemy's town,
My miles have a backing of cordite,
My luggage is powder and shell,
With smoke-stack ablazing I thunder
A traveller's sample of hell!

They have laid me a mine by a culvert,
They have loosened a bolt by a curve,
But thrice tested still is my muscle,
And thrice tested brass is my nerve.

A curse for their bungling folly,
A laugh for the death-trap that fails,
A hang for the enemy's miner
So long as I keep to the rails.

A cheer—and I pull from the township
To spy out the enemy's line;
A plunge—and I rush into darkness
As reckless of wreckage as mine.

And what if a rail had been lifted?
And what if a river's unspanned?
I fail, but I know in the failing
I strove at the Empire's command.

They were men who at Badajos conquered,
They were men who for Wellington struck
And a man is the man at the throttle,
And a man is the man on the truck.

Undismayed I may go to destruction,
For I know at the end I may feel
I die with the men on the footplate,
I pass with my brothers in steel.

—EDGAR WALLACE.

Sunday, January 7th, 1900.

The Grand

Siege Driving Competition.

One Prize for the most unique and original turn out.

One Prize for the lady passenger in the vehicle that wins the race.

The race consists of driving your vehicle round a circular course while the band plays. When the halt sounds the vehicle that is nearest up to the winning post wins the race. Drivers choose their own pace, but may not stop till the halt sounds.

Any kind of vehicle, any kind of animal or team, any kind of dress is permissible, but each vehicle must be provided with some form of alarm, such as horn, or whistle, etc., which must be kept sounding during the race.

Each vehicle must carry a lady passenger, to whom the prize goes in the case of the winning vehicle.

Sundays, 7th and 14th.

VARIETY

Entertainment Competition.

A prize will be given to the Corps producing the best Variety Entertainment.

Amount of prize will depend on number of members of the troupe; at least £1 for every performer, 10s. each bandsman or accompanist.

Corps being:—Protectorate Regiment, B.S.A. Police, Cape Police, Town Guard, Bechuanaland Rifles, Railway Division.

Each competing team will have to provide an entertainment of 6 items on Sunday next, and 6 (different) items the following Sunday.

They will have to give a performance at the following places during the day, either Hospital and Hidden Hollow, or Cannon Koppie and Ellitson's Kraal.

Trolleys for conveyance of troupes will be provided, also a stage at each point.

A committee will be formed in each audience to award marks. The aggregate of these marks, after the performance, will determine which team is winners.

"Variety Entertainment" may include songs, minstrels, acrobat, conjurers, boxing, theatricals, etc., etc.

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