

THE MAFEKING MAIL

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No. 32

Wednesday, December 13th, 1899.

NOTICE.

As our stock of paper is running very low we shall be compelled to make various alterations to economise the use of that still on hand. After this number, therefore, we shall use smaller type, reduce the size of the page, and publish on alternate days only; instead of daily. Even with these innovations we shall not be able to bring out a grand

CHRISTMAS DOUBLE NUMBER,

but have to restrict each issue to the exact number of copies ordered.

To show that we are actuated by no motive but those purely philanthropic ones which dominate the breast of all human beings, under which head we include—but of course merely for the purpose of these remarks—editors, we do not propose to make any increase in the charge for the slips. In spite of the large reductions we make in quantity and would be willing to make in quality, if possible, the price will still remain 1s. per week, payable in advance.

The *Mafeking Mail*.

WEDNESDAY, 13TH DECEMBER, 1899.

Mafeking Garrison.

GENERAL ORDERS.

MAFEKING, DECEMBER 12TH, 1899.

Court of Summary Jurisdiction.—The Court of Summary Jurisdiction will meet to-morrow, Wednesday, the 13th instant, at the Court House, at 10-15 a.m., for the examination of such prisoners as may be brought before it. President: H. H. Major Goold-Adams, B.C., C.M.G. Member: C. G. H. Bell, Esq., C.C. & R.M.

Grain.—Storekeepers and others are forbidden to sell Mealies for feeding horses, as it is necessary to preserve the grain until future requirements are ascertained.

By order,
F. W. PANZERA, Major,
Acting C.S.O.

THE BOERS' REPRESENTATIVES.

The offer made by Colonel Baden-Powell in his letter to the Burghers, distinctly excepting the officers, has brought forth a reply from the principal officer, General Snyman. He denies the allegation that the Burghers have been, or are being, misled by either the commanders or their newspapers. The denial from such a source has no value whatever. Had we not learned by other means the manner in which the Boer has been deceived and misled with reference both to his tenure of the Transvaal and the relative positions of the two Governments and more cruelly in connection with this present war, we should still decline accepting at its face value any statement from a Boer leader purporting to be representative of Boer feeling. It is an unfortunate trait in the Boers' nature that from diffidence or moral cowardice he falls into silence before an elder, an office holder, or the blatant, often allowing gabble to pass as an expression of his opinion from sheer slowness of wit and comprehension. In 1881 Sir Geo. Colley, writing to Lord Kimberley, said: "I would most earnestly urge on your lordship that whatever may be decided regard, in the Transvaal you should not commit yourself to any scheme until you have had the opportunity of hearing the wishes and views of the people through other spokesmen than Joubert, Kruger and his party; for no moderate man, and no loyal man, will dare speak so long as they are the accepted representatives of the Transvaal people." And we certainly include Snyman in the Kruger party. Some two years earlier Joubert himself said to Sir Garnet Wolesey, he, Sir G.W., "must not be misled by anything those Boers he had seen, had said or the expression of acquiescence, as they would speak in just the reverse terms as soon as they had left his presence," a statement calculated to throw some light on the character of the man and the people he represented, whether the statement itself were true or not. Furthermore we may read between the lines, and, remembering some of the traits peculiar to the Boer nature, judge from the fact of a letter being sent and its tone, how shaky General Snyman feels. As Joubert, when alone, was courteous, nay, even servile, to Sir Garnet Wolesey, and, when he had 3,000 Boers behind him, offensively insolent to Sir Bartle Frere, so General Snyman would have been offensively demonstrative yesterday and to-day had he been well

backed up by the Boers. From the anger shown in his letter and the silence of his guns we may infer that the circular is working its proper effect on the more prudent of the Burghers.

THE MANIFESTO TO THE BOERS.

General Snyman is cross, very cross. Under the circumstances it is excusable. Even a saint would be cross, and we do not accuse General Snyman of being a saint. We tender our sympathy to General Snyman in his trying position. It must be a difficult one. In charge of a body of dissatisfied Boers who were deluded into taking up arms in a step which doomed their very name as a country, to obliteration, having to keep them in arms for months although they were told it would be for a few days only, and were assured they would return "richer men, free and independent, with more land added to the Republic, and honor to your name, long before it will be needful to begin your farm work." Having to sit down outside the town it was arranged should be taken for the base of operations, is trying to one's temper. Provided with plenty of men, plenty of guns and ammunition, with communication open and every facility, to be unable to take the place or even to make an attempt, is vexatious. Waiting for the impossible to happen, praying for a miracle, helplessly sitting gazing at the place you want but cannot possess, makes one angry, but far worse than all, to be taunted with your incompetence by the enemy, to have it flung at you and advertised amongst all the "ooms" and "neefs," the Piets and Jans who were promised such lavish reward "when Mafeking is taken" and the "jongjes" brought out to be shown the triumph over the "Rooinek." For them to learn that the vaunt and brag was but wind, and the tales they have been taught to believe of the British nation, nothing but lies bred by ignorance and fostered by stupidity. It really is enough to make General Snyman cross, and we commiserate him.

THE "GENERAL" REPLIES.

General Snyman has written with regard to Colonel Baden-Powell's circular addressed to the Burghers. He is very incensed at its having been sent direct to them, and is apparently much annoyed at the remark that "sitting down and looking at a place is not the way to take it." He challenges us to come out and drive him away. He also explains that, far from the Burghers being kept in the dark by their commanders and the newspapers, the opposite is the case.

The hot and angry tone of the letter shows that sending in the circulars has touched a soft place and that it is a matter of some importance to him.

LATEST NEWS.

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

News received to-day (through the kindness of a Boer officer) shows that Lord Methuen's force, advancing from the south to the relief of Kimberley, defeated the Free State Boers at Graspan, near Belmont. After this, advancing north, Lord Methuen found himself opposed, on 29th November, by the Free State Boers and the 3,000 under Cronje, who had gone away from here to join them. The enemy had taken up a strong position on the north bank of the Modder River. The river is about 100 yards wide, fordable at certain points, and lies between steep, bush-grown banks. The battle was a very tough one and continued for thirteen hours.

After some hard fighting our left drove back the enemy's right and crossed the river. The enemy then vacated their position, leaving their dead on the field, and retreated to Jacobsdal, on the road to Bloemfontein. It was the Free State Boers who gave way. The Transvaal Boers, under Cronje, held their position on the enemy's left until compelled to retire by the retreat of the rest. This will not have increased the good fellowship between the allies.

Our losses in officers and men have been very heavy owing to the open nature of the country. Names had not then (7th December) been published.

Modder River is 25 miles south of Kimberley, which was thus relieved.

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