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Editors and Proprietors

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"REMEMBER THE MAINE."

This seems to be the rallying cry of the United States navy in their engagements. It was shouted by the American sailors in the distant Philippines, and will be the battle cry, when the United States and Spanish navies meet in western waters. The Americans at all events, have convinced themselves that the Maine was blown up, with the connivance of the Spanish Government. There is considerable doubt, elsewhere, and by those who do not conjure doubts, but are, in matters of such nature, influenced by reason. Horrible as the destruction of the Maine was, it is even more horrible to think that the war may have been begun on a mistaken theory. Since the American Court of Enquiry announced its finding, experts have expressed opinions pro and con, from an examination of the evidence.

In a recent number of the Railway and Engineering Review, the question is dealt with by the editor and by correspondents. We have all heard of the point raised by those who think the explosion, accidental, viz. that no dead fish were found after the explosion, and that little if any water was thrown into the air. A letter in the Review signed a Civil Engineer and an expert in explosives explains the absence of these signs of exterior explosions, as follows:—

"The water was very shallow where the ship lay at anchor. Her bottom was only about 2ft. or 3 ft. from the mud. Suppose now that a large and powerful torpedo containing about 400 lb. or 500 lb. of explosives was placed between the bottom of the ship and the mud and exploded. What would have happened? It would have blown the bottom of the ship inwards and upwards and at the same time made a hole in the mud; and this is exactly what did occur, as a hole was blown in the mud 7ft. deep and 15 ft. in diameter, and the strong heavy keel of the ship was blown upwards 34 ft. above its normal position. The fact that no water was blown into the air and no fish killed shows most conclusively that the torpedo must have been in direct contact with the bottom of the ship, and that the gases finding vent in the direction of least resistance, viz., through the bottom of the ship, produced very little jar upon the water and threw very little water into the air, because there was no water above the charge. It will be remembered that with high explosives the inertia of the mass counts for more than the strength of the material, consequently the gases would discharge through the bottom of the ship."

Continuing this writer says:—
"To pretend that the explosion from the inside of the ship could suck the keel upwards 34 ft., and pull the sides in, is altogether too foolish to be discussed. Is it probable or possible that any evil-minded person, not connected with the Government, would have been able to obtain the high explosives, construct a large torpedo, and place it under the battleship? On the contrary, does not appear that this calamity was brought about by experienced engineers having at their disposal high explosive torpedoes with all the paraphernalia necessary to produce the explosion. I feel convinced that all Americans conscientiously believe that the ship was destroyed by the treachery of the Spanish officials, and it is for this wickedness that the Spaniards have to answer; and it is for this that the Americans are fighting and not for the purpose of liberating the turbulent inhabitants of Cuba who, from all accounts, seem to be quite as barbarous as the Spaniards themselves."

It will be noticed that he lets the cat out of the bag. The destruction of the Maine, not the oppression of Cuba, is in his opinion the cause of the war. Another writer in the same issue claims that "every possible theory falls to the ground, other than treachery." He says further, "If it is possible that a splendid ship with every precaution taken, with no untried elements on board in the shape of new explosives, with, indeed, extraordinary precautions taken, and if it is possible that she can develop within herself explosive elements to wreck her as that ship was wrecked, then going to sea in the Navy is indeed a perilous business, and all navies had better get to work and investigate the possibilities of each individual ship."

It is worthy of note that in Engineering (London) in a resume of evidence bearing on the destruction of the Maine, the conclusion is reached that the cause was treachery. Of this article the Review says:—"Reviewing, point by point, the evidence for and against the theory of manifold assassination; giving weight to every material fact and every theory which would tend to disprove the presence of an assassin; ignoring none of the evidence which points to the presence of an exterior agent of destruction, yet there is about the article, entire, a tone which conveys the idea that, even against his most charitable instincts, the writer is impelled to the belief that a crime was committed. In premises so grave, it may be thought unwise to attempt to delve deeper into the inmost thought of this writer than his words would directly lead, but, nevertheless, there is present with the article a virile atmosphere, even though nothing tangible as words may appear, which leads unwaveringly to the belief that, had a like fate to that of the Maine befallen a British man-of-war under exactly similar conditions, Morro Castle would, in all human probability, have been speedily and rudely lifted, piecemeal, from its pedestal above the harbor of Havana."

Railway Building in South Africa.
Lieutenant Frank Esmonde White recently returned from Bechuanaland, and now the guest of friends in the United States, speaks interestingly of the progress of railway construction in South Africa. In a recent interview Lieutenant White gave the following concise resume of the work, and a statement of its present stage of development and its probable extension.

It was a picturesque revenge on the part of Cecil Rhodes, the builder of the new railroad, to erect his station upon the very spot whence a few short years ago the savage king hurled defiance at Great Britain and the chartered company. The last trip I made in South Africa, before sailing for England, was from Buluwayo to Capetown—all the way by rail. The journey was a mighty curious one in many respects. To begin with, let us take Buluwayo itself. The name signifies "the place of slaughter," and it was, just four years ago, Lobengula's pet locality for executing his enemies and subjects. Now-a-days the town is a thriving specimen of the frontier settlement. It has a population of 3000 or 4000, and since the railroad has arrived the citizens need have little fear of a repetition of the recent savage attack. The journey by rail from Buluwayo to the coast may be made in three days, where formerly it took weeks and even months.

The story of Rhodes' railroad is simple enough. Sanctioned by the imperial government, Rhodes began the work in 1889. An extension of the railroad was then started from Kimberly, through what was then British Bechuanaland, to Vryburg. This accomplished the cape government was prevailed upon to push the line still further. The twin steel rails pushing northward persistently, eventually reached Mafeking. But Rhodes was not satisfied. He resolved to cover the entire distance to Buluwayo with a railway. The survey was begun in 1895, and, despite rebellion and the terrible rinderpest (or cattle disease), was completed in the early spring of 1896.

In March, 1896, the first rails were laid out of Mafeking. The distance to Buluwayo was 587 miles; but this the railroad engineers have cut down to about 490. Difficulties in the way of the work were stupendous. For instance, the rinderpest destroyed the cattle—then the sole motive power of Bechuanaland—by hundreds, and the work of transportation was clogged for this reason. But in November last the Bechuanaland extension to Buluwayo was formally opened. Eighteen months sufficed the engineers to do the work in—surely a record performance, in view of the cattle plague and the unexampled lack of water.

The railroad is a good enough one of the frontier kind. Its gauge is 3 ft. 6 in. and the bridges are of unusually solid construction. Between Mochudo and Palapye two large iron bridges have been erected; one over the Mahalapsi river with two spans of 100 feet and two of 78 feet; the other at Lotsani, with two 100-foot spans. The average number of men employed in the construction was 3000 natives for the most part.

The mortality from fever and other causes was terrible. Altogether over 700 lives, including those of several engineers and other white men were sacrificed in the interest of progress and civilization. During 1896 the government, finding that the African natives were dying off at a tremendous rate, imported 500 Afghans. Inside of two months 350 of these had died of fever and dysentery, while the balance had run away.

Rhodes is not going to let even Buluwayo long remain the northern terminus of his road. Before the winter of 1898 he expects to push on as far as Salisbury. Where he finally expects to stop it is hard to say; but there are sensational whispers about Khartoum and Cairo.

My journey from Buluwayo to Capetown took just 95 hours. The station is a commodious shed, and boasts of "refreshment rooms," in which are genuine barmaids brought out, or perhaps strayed out, from London. Out of the town we rattled and away across the veldt where Lobengula led his impis four years ago. Just twenty-three miles across the plain came our first stop. Sidings have been erected at various places between Mafeking and Buluwayo, and this was one of them. It is called Chamberlain. We crossed the Tati river at Tati, and then sped on to Palapye, which is Khama's capital.

The country would have been disappointing to a sight-seer, though it must surely have impressed any intelligent man with its possibilities. In the north, near Buluwayo, there was a plenty of timber, although the trees were not of any great commercial value. Further south there were few trees, but plenty of grass stretched everywhere. It was odd to catch sight of game, large and small, as we passed along. Antelope, springbok and considerable quantities of gemsbok, hartbeest, eland and koodoo I saw at intervals, although the rinderpest had been thinning out the herds badly.

It is quite customary for travelers to take pot shots at the game as they go whirling by in the Mafeking express. A few lions have been seen along the line, and in November

last several donkeys were killed by them close to the construction sheds.

In the southern stretches we passed over long tracks of heavy sand, broken by tufts of sparse undergrowth and badly provided with water. You can imagine how difficult it was to carry the railroad over a desert such as this. The bridge over the Mahalapsi river was a remarkably fine structure, and the scenery at this section of the road struck me as very beautiful. Small towns are springing up around the entrances to this and the other bridges, in the hope of good times to come. Minerals are reported plentiful all along the line, and Cecil Rhodes has even reported that there is an excellent chance of getting coal.

If the latter promise turns out to be a fact the extension of the railroad to Cairo would be only a question of a few years.

From Palapye, after crossing the Mahalapsi river, we reached Mochudi, where we retired to rest for the night. The cars were not as comfortable as yours over here and there were no pullman coaches, but none the less we managed to sleep pretty soundly. From Mochudi the road lay by Molopolole to Kauya, and thence into Mafeking. Here we joined the "main road" to Vryburg, the capital of British Bechuanaland.

From Vryburg to the Cape nothing of interest occurred, and I accomplished my journey in 95 hours without mishap or fatigue. When I go back in the autumn I hope to find the railway already well on its way to Salisbury.—Railway Review.

HAPPY RELEASE

From a Trio of Afflictions.

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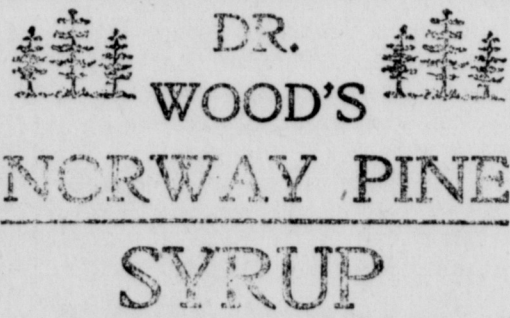
I was happily advised to use Paine's Celery Compound, and after use of six bottles the rheumatism and neuralgia are banished, and I now eat, rest and sleep well. My present improved state of health is due entirely to the health-giving virtues of Paine's Celery Compound, which has done wonders for me. My husband is now using it for dyspepsia, and it is doing wonders for him. My neighbors to whom I have recommended Paine's Celery Compound have been greatly blessed.

Yours truly,
MRS. ANNIE R. COBB,
Seamo, Man.

Mary's Lamb
[From the Chicago News.]

Mary had a little lamb,
It grew and grew and grew;
She sold it when 'twas 8 years old,
To a butcher man she knew.

The butcher got his cleaver out,
And slaughtered it one day,
And folks who came to buy spring lamb,
Took Mary's pet away.



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Opposite Small & Fisher Co.,
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