

PLEASED WITH INNOVATION

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MAJOR SIEGES OF BOER WAR

Major General Miles Reviews the Campaign in South Africa.

NOTABLE DEFENSES OF OTHER WAR

Military View of the Sieges of Ladysmith, Kimberley, Mafeking and Wepener—British Losses Comparatively Small.

Major General Miles reviews the campaign in South Africa, particularly the sieges of that war. In the current issue of Collier's Weekly, as follows: A siege memorable by reason of its length and the stubborn resistance of the defenders is that of Ladysmith, which finally surrendered September 29, 1894, to the Boers, after a close investment lasting for three years and seventy-seven days. To capture this then dreary handkerchief town a fashionable watering-place, more than 100 miles from the sea, the Boers were reduced to such desperate straits, on account of lack of material with which to construct their defenses, that they are said to have dug up their graveyards and filled in the breastworks with dead bodies.

Siege of Sebastopol

Considering the wars of the nineteenth century, perhaps the most famous siege in English history was that of Sebastopol in the Crimea. The terrible conditions under which the allied French and English forces upheld the honor of their flag in the early part of this conflict are an acknowledged disgrace to the governments responsible for the welfare of their soldiers. The siege commenced on the 18th of September, 1854, and terminated by the evacuation of the town by the Russians on the 8th of September, thus lasting for eleven consecutive months. It is noted for the bloody assaults and counter assaults made by both sides, the construction of the trenches, the employment of 50,000 fascines, 30,000 gabions and 1,000,000 sandbags. One and one-half million shells and shot were fired into the town from the cannon of the besiegers. The Russian forces lost about Sebastopol numbered 150,000. Their losses sustained in the defense amounted, in killed, wounded and missing, to 90,142. The allied armies numbered 30,450 French, 43,000 English and 20,000 Turks in January, 1855. The British troops suffered terribly from disease. The forty-one English infantry battalions which embarked originally numbered 36,923, and were reinforced by 27,884. Their strength at the conclusion of hostilities was 653 less than it was at the beginning. The wastage, due principally to disease, thus amounted to 28,447. It is interesting to note that the English had wanted to know the number of the Boer force, but the Boers refused to disclose it.

Sieges in South Africa

Turn now to South Africa and compare the sieges that have been successfully raised by the English. Ladysmith attracts our first attention. It will be remembered that after the Boer victory at Dundee the English troops fell back in splendid order, and the direction of General Buller, on General Sir George White's force, the combined strength uniting in Ladysmith, which was isolated and communication cut off November 2, 1899. To the surprise of most every one over 2,000 Boer soldiers were completely hemmed in by a body of untrained Dutch farmers. General White's position was peculiar. Ladysmith, although the "Aldershot of South Africa," and the camp of the Natal garrison, where five million dollars' worth of ammunition and stores had been collected, was a badly chosen for defense. It is situated in a saucer-shaped depression, is commanded by all the hills roundabout and was without a single siege gun, though, fortunately for the garrison, Captain Scott of the naval brigade managed to bring into the town before the investment was complete several long range naval guns, which did the work. But their enemies brought artillery into commanding positions and began a persistent bombardment. Assaults were resisted and driven back, but serious were fruitless and only seemed to tighten the lines of investment.

Boers Surprised the World

But let us turn to the stormy events in South Africa. Lord Roberts is vigorously prosecuting the war which began October 11, 1899, and which many Englishmen believed would be over in a month. Up to the present time the history of the war is found mainly in the records of the sieges of Ladysmith, Kimberley, Mafeking and Wepener, and in that of the relief columns sent to rescue these invested towns. The greatest embarrassment to the British forces so far has been the necessity of relieving the garrisons that have been isolated by the sudden bold advance of the Boers into English territory, thus assuming an offensive attitude which, it appears, was not anticipated by the British government. The rapidity of their movements, and the courage and tenacity shown by the Boers in their attacks and assaults, were a surprise to the world, and were worthy of a better result; but owing to the vigilance and fortitude of the British garrisons not a single one of these four that have been besieged has been forced to capitulate. Both sides have made for themselves records for bravery, endurance and sacrifice that will take rank with the greatest in history.

Kimberley and Mafeking

Kimberley was another town besieged by the Boers, but gallantly resisted by a small garrison until General Buller brought relief. The siege lasted 122 days (from October 15 to February 15). A garrison of 2,700 men, under command of Colonel Kekewich, held out against a force of Boer guerrillas, a much superior force of Boer guerrillas, who were in strength from time to time. The defenses were elaborate and made up of earthworks constructed from the rubbish heaps of the mine and many miles of barbed wire. The Boers had been a great prize to the enemy, first, there were the diamond mines and the rich loot of the town, and, lastly, the person of their arch-enemy, Cecil Rhodes. From a military point of view its capture and retention would present a serious problem to the English, a base of operations against the Free State. General Buller's march for the relief of Kimberley deserves to be counted among the finest ever. His cavalry, with horse artillery, covered a distance of ninety miles in two days, fought six minor engagements and finished the relief of the garrison. The losses on both sides were comparatively slight.

Siege of Mafeking

The most memorable sieges of which there is a reliable record, considering the disparity in numbers between the besiegers and besieged, as well as the fortitude of the defense, is that of the island of Malta, where the Knights of the Order of St. John, under the grand master, La Valette, successfully resisted a fleet and an army, sent out by the Sultan Selim II from Constantinople to crush the Christians. It was the great battle of the Christian and Moslem, and was the last of the Order of St. John. The siege lasted from May 15, 1565, to September 8 of the same year, when it was raised by reinforcements gathered by the brethren of the knights from all quarters.

St. John's

The whole force which La Valette could muster amounted to about 6,000 fighting men. The Ottoman army numbered nearly 30,000 men, exclusive of sailors, and lost from death and disease nearly three-fourths of the number. The loss to the small Boer

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Advertisement for Giving June a Royal Welcome. It features a crown illustration and lists various furniture items for sale at reduced prices during a June clearance sale.

Table listing furniture items for sale, including brass beds, dressers, dining room furniture, and mahogany tables. Prices are listed for various items, such as \$26.75 for a brass bed and \$4.90 for a mahogany table.

Advertisement for Orchard & Wilhelm Carpet Co. It lists various types of carpets and rugs for sale at reduced prices, including Ingrain, Brussels, and Art Squares.

Advertisement for Pioneer Kidney Cure. It features a portrait of a man and text describing the benefits of the cure for kidney and bladder diseases. The text states that the cure is effective and has cured thousands of people.

Advertisement for Do You Suffer... It features a portrait of a man and text describing the benefits of the Pioneer Kidney Cure. The text emphasizes that the cure is effective and has cured thousands of people.

Advertisement for Mull's Pioneer Kidney Cure. It features a portrait of a man and text describing the benefits of the cure for kidney and bladder diseases. The text states that the cure is effective and has cured thousands of people.

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