MESSAGE TO OOM PAUL

THE ROUTE OF THE AMERICAN MESSENGER BOY.

Scene At the Departure of James Francis Smith From Philadelphia To Pretoria.

Philadelphia, Pa.—(Special.)—Three fourths of the way across the Atlantic, on the good ship St. Louis, James Francis Smith, 16 years old, is speeding for the Transvaal capital with a message of sympathy from 28,845 schoolboys of this city, New York and Boston, for President Paul Kruger. The dispatches to the dailies have told the purpose of this voyage, but have not described the remarkable scene attending the dispatching of this American lad on a voyage of nearly 25,000 miles on his unique mission. The scene was in the Academy of Music on the night of April 11.

At exactly 10:33 o'clock a Philadelphia schoolboy stepped up to a call box on the stage and pulled the lever. For three minutes more than 5,000 persons listened silently to its buzz. Then a door opened, and an American District Telegraph boy, in full uniform, stepped into view, walked briskly up the little ladder reaching to the stage, and stood there awaiting orders.

The first boy stepped forward with a black box looking like a camera, to which was attached a large strap. Throwing the loop of the strap over the shoulder of the messenger boy until the box rested comfortably at his side, he said:

"You will take this as rapidly as you can to Paul Kruger, president of the Transvaal Republic, at Pretoria, South Africa. It contains the testimonial of the schoolboys of Philadelphia to President Kruger and the struggling South Africans. It is signed by over 28,000 names, and it speaks for itself."

It was from the hands of Herbert Willis of the Central High school, president of the boys' Boer committee, that Messenger Boy Smith received his instructions. Those who heard his words were not only as many of those whose names are on the message as could crowd the Academy of Music, but men of national renown in civic and state affairs, chief citizens of Philadelphia, and mothers and sisters, who had given their encouragement to one of the most significant movements in American history.

Bourke Cockran, America's most eloquent orator, sat by the side of Webster Davis, who resigned his office as assistant secretary of the interior, under President McKinley, so that he might be free to do what he had vainly waited for his superiors in the national government to do—speak a word of hope and encouragement to the struggling republicans of South Africa. A hand's length away was Edwin Markham, America's poet of freedom, whose voice has been lifted for the downtrodden so that its tones rung from sea to sea. Beside him was P. Louter Wessels, a Boer himself, who had come from the Orange Free State to tell the Americans of the justice of his people's cause. Around and with these men sat others of local prominence—orators, lawyers, judges and citizens—but all sat silent as the schoolboy gave his orders to the messenger boy.

Nearly all these men had spoken during the evening, had said brave words for this brave movement, but they were quiet now, when the event had reached its supreme culmination. The great audience that jammed every nook and corner was still too, but when the last word had been uttered and the message was gone, there was such a thunderous burst of applause and cheering that the huge electric lights above, blazing out the meaning of it all: "May Liberty Triumph," seemed to shake from the force of the tumult.

After receiving his instructions the messenger boy touched his hat, tripped down the steps again and disappeared through the door from which he had come. The whole transaction occupied five minutes. Not long afterwards American District Telegraph boy No. 1534 was in a Pennsylvania railroad train speeding for New York, the first stage of his long journey. The message to Kruger was on its way.

This boy will traverse the greater part of the continent of Europe and will touch the borders of the Orient. He will cross strange continents and navigate foreign seas, but he will not pause until he has placed in the hands of "Oom Paul," in his official residence at Pretoria, the words of cheer, sympathy and courage from the liberty-loving youth of America.

Last Wednesday the messenger sailed from New York for Southampton. From Southampton he will go to Havre, France, and thence to Paris. Leaving the French capital on April 17 he will proceed to The Hague, returning to Paris three days later.

The departure from Paris will be made on April 22 for Marseilles, and on the 25th he is due to begin his voyage down the Mediterranean sea, in itself a distance of more than 1,500 miles. He will next pass through the Suez canal, leaving Port Said April 30, and thence down the Red Sea. Aden will be reached on May 6, and stops will be made at Diego Suarez, in Madagascar, Mozambique and Beira, Africa. If all goes well he will reach Lorenzo Marques May 21, and will then begin the last stage of his journey to Pretoria.

After placing the message in Kruger's hands he will receive whatever answer the Boer president may care to make, and then return to Philadelphia. When he reaches this city again he will have traveled 23,516 miles. With the testimonial he also carries a book of newspaper clippings containing the history of the boys' movement in behalf of the Boers, in the shape of a handsomely bound souvenir from the North American.

Young Smith is a bright, handsome boy, with big blue eyes and curly blonde hair. He is not the traditional messenger boy by any means. There is activity and alertness in his every move. There is no doubt that he will fulfill his mission.

THE MESSENGER BOY.

On the roster of the American District Telegraph company the boy who is to meet Oom Paul is known as "No. 1534," but there is an individuality about this boy who has been chosen to carry the message to Kruger from the schoolboys of Philadelphia that defies labels and numbers. His name is James Francis Smith, and he is representative of the best type of American boyhood. He will be 16 years old next September; he is straight and lithe as an Indian, is about five feet high, and weighs 109 pounds. He has the bearing of a West Point cadet, and the manners as well.

In waiting for orders he stands at attention—rigid, erect, eyes front and without the visible movement of a muscle. When spoken to he answers quickly, directly and without a superfluous word. At the same time his big, gray-blue eyes look unblinkingly into yours, fearless, firm and honest.

They are really remarkable eyes in their luminous brightness, their wide-open candor, quick intelligence and frank honesty. There is nothing appealing about them, and that is what saves them from being feminine in their beauty. The same thing applies to the large, full-lipped mouth. Its firmness stamps it as masculine, although the lips are cherry red, and when they part they disclose a set of large, strong, white teeth. His complexion is white and velvety and his broad, firm forehead is crowned with a mop of gold-red curly hair.

He was born in Brooklyn September 3, 1884. He attended the public schools of the City of Churches for five years, and acquired a very good education for a boy of his age. Eight months ago he was obliged to leave school and do his share towards the support of a large family. He secured a position as an American District messenger boy. Although Mr. W. W. Rayons, the general superintendent of the American District Telegraph company in New York, declares that any messenger in the service would carry a message to President Kruger as a matter of course and would start without a moment's hesitation, "No. 1534" is the happy selection from nearly 2,000 boys. When Mr. Rayons was asked to "ring up a boy" he sent orders to the district managers to have the pick of their boys report at his office. About forty boys responded, and these were quickly weeded out until only three remained. They were kept under observation for a couple of days, and finally the selection fell on young Smith. He was detailed to special duty under Mr. Rayons, and had no idea of the important mission intended for him.

THE BOER WOMEN.

Aid and Encourage Their Husbands in Peace and War.

From Paul Kruger downward the Boer men are more or less under the influence of their wives. It has always been so with the Dutch. In every political crisis in South Africa the women have had their say and have made their voices heard.

Of the courage and determination of the Boer women many notable instances are recorded. In the year 1814, when Lord Charles Somerset was Governor of Cape Town, there was considerable disaffection among the burghers owing to the action taken by the government in arresting some of the farmers charged with ill treating their Hottentot slaves. One farmer, named Jan Bezuidnhout, refused to surrender to the troops sent to apprehend him. This stubborn Dutchman, with his wife and his little son, held his house gallantly against the troops—the wife fighting as bravely as her husband—till a bullet pierced the good man's brain, then she sullenly surrendered.

When the Matabele, after massacreing one party of emigrants who had trekked from the Cape in 1836, attacked the little band under Hendrik Potgieter in laager, the mothers, wives, and daughters did signal service in the defense, for they kept loading the spare muskets and handing them to the men so that the latter were able to keep up a continuous and deadly fire which mowed down the Matabele in scores till even those fierce and fearless warriors would face the awful hail of bullets no more and fled, leaving the ground strewn with their corpses.

Again, after Dingaan, the great Zulu chief, had treacherously massacred Pieter Retief and his sixty-six companions who had come on a friendly visit to his capital, many of the Boers were for retreating from Natal and abandoning all idea of settling there, but the women cried shame upon them, and declared that they would not budge from the country until the innocent blood shed by the Zulus had been avenged. The men could not stand against the flood of feminine indignation, so they elected to stay; and, after several desperate fights, at last broke the power of Dingaan.

A party of them, armed with rifles, are said to have fired upon a patrol of Lancers from a farmhouse a few days ago. When the women of a country are animated by such a spirit they are a force to be reckoned with.—London Illustrated News.

When a man tells a woman a joke he usually has to follow it up with an explanation.

CRONJE'S LAST FIGHT.

STORY OF THE BATTLE AS TOLD BY A BRITON.

The Brave Boer Soldiers Cooked As Well As Fought in Their Trenches.

London.—(Special.)—Many stories of Cronje's last battle and surrender have been told, but the following from a British prisoner in Cronje's camp describes the scenes of the most picturesque incident of the war from a new view point. The story is told by Trooper Hassock of Kitchener's Horse. Hassock was captured before the action of February 18, and detained in the Boer laager. He says:

I was sent on Saturday evening, February 17, by Lieutenant Buchanan to work my way up the Modder river along which we had been scouting. I was to look for the rest of the troop, from whom we had been separated. I suddenly found myself in the middle of a party of Boers, who were lying hidden amongst the bushes, and tried to retire. A volley was fired at me. My horse was killed, and, falling upon me, we rolled together into the river. Luckily, at that spot it was very deep. The Boers came down and extricated me, then took my bandolier and equipment, and made me a prisoner. We then went to the drift and waded across to the north side, where their laager was.

I was taken before Commandant Cronje, who asked me our stength and movements. On my reply that I was only a trooper and did not know, he said: 'O, never mind, if you don't want to tell me, I shall not try to make you.' A guard was placed over me, and we stayed the night in the laager. I should say there were about 6,000 Dutchmen all told, and forty women and children. A great many among them were Irishmen, a few Scotchmen, in short, almost every nation was more or less numerously represented. All that night they were busy entrenching themselves, employing a great deal of native labor to help them.

Next morning the English attack began. The shelling was so heavy that about 10 o'clock the laager could not be lived in, so my guard and I were sent across the drift and into the trenches.

The Boers did not in the least mind our attack and laughed amongst themselves as they saw the men advancing. They allowed them to come up to about 600 yards from the trenches, and then opened a tremendous fire from their rifles. It did not seem to be aimed at any particular man, but more at a certain fixed distance. At that they fired as fast as they could.

The range was obtained by a few picked shots, who fired, watched the dust caused by the strike of the bullet, and then gave out the range. Our men came up to within 150 yards and then retired. They fired volleys at the longer distances, but all their fire seemed to me to be short. I do not think that more than thirty Boers were killed and wounded that day. Our (British) wounded were well treated by the Dutch, but a lot of them were left lying outside the trenches owing to the refusal of the Boer request for an armistice.

All the week the English shells fell constantly. The naval guns damaged us very little, for we could hear the report and whistle of the coming shells, and had time to get under cover. (N. B.—Clearly an error, for the velocity of naval shells exceeds that of sound.) The howitzers were different, the shell and report being almost simultaneous owing to their firing from a shorter range. (An error.) On Thursday a howitzer—lyddite—shell dropped upon a Maxim-Nordenfeldt (Vickers-Maxim) and wrecked it, killing eight men. They were all buried on the spot where they fell. This was the course followed all through the week. Any men killed were at once buried where they lay.

The shelling on Monday night destroyed several wagons, two of which were on either side of Cronje's own. No one could have been braver than he was. He stood upon the wagon step, field-glass in hand, and did not seem to care in the least how thickly the shells and bullets fell. Many of the Free Staters, however, were quite the reverse, and were in a great state of terror when the bombardment began. The ammunition wagons blew up and several of the provision wagons were burned.

The shrapnel killed the majority of the horses and cattle, which had no shelter but the banks of the river. Beyond that the fire did little real damage. The trenches were quite bombproof, being constructed something like a bottle—narrow at the top and opening out below, say, 2 feet at top to 4 feet and 5 feet at the bottom.

They were not in one long line, but in a succession of pits, from 6 feet to 18 feet long, and about 4 feet 6 inches in depth. Many of the trenches were long underground tunnels, with but a small square opening on the shaft at either end. The extracted soil was heaped in front, leveled off to about one foot high. No one lived in the laager after Saturday night—all, even the women and children, were in the trenches.

Cronje and the commandants had frequent discussions as to what was to be done. Cronje himself was in favor of the whole gradually dribbling away in small bodies. Commandant de Beers, with 200 men on the best horses, did get off Thursday night, February 22. The great reliance was on General Joubert and 7,000 expected from Ladysmith, and another 2,000 supposed to be coming down the Modder. When Sunday, February 25 came and there was no news of reinforcements coming Cronje assembled all the commandants and burghers and they discussed the situation. Cronje himself tried to urge them to try and cut themselves out, but they would have none of it, and it was finally decided that unless help came on the following day they would surrender. No help did come, and so Cronje surrendered on Tuesday, February 27, at daybreak.

Throughout I was well treated. What rations they got I had, and I was allowed to go about with my guard pretty much where I wished. Their men and commandants talked freely to me. They discussed the war, and any other subject I liked to talk of. Their chief anxiety was as to whether Lord Roberts would march on Bloemfontein or on Kimberley. I have myself no doubt that, could they have kept their laager out of fire, they would never have surrendered. The loss of the provision wagons was what caused them to give in. They had only four days' food left. Their ammunition was still plentiful. After the explosion of the ammunition wagons by shell fire on February 19, all the remaining cartridges were distributed throughout the trenches, and on the south side every trench was still full of unused ammunition. The majority seemed to mind the surrender but little. The Free Staters seemed particularly sick of the war, and the Transvaalers were but little more keen.

The effect of the shell fire was very different to what I expected. Shrapnel and lyddite alike did little harm to the men in the trenches. The majority of men and horses killed were killed by shrapnel, while the lyddite fired the wagons. A lyddite shell burst within thirty yards of me, but beyond covering me with a yellow powder did no har mwhatever. No one minded this lyddite at all, but all got under cover when shrapnel was firing. Cooking was done in the trenches. Each man had a box with him taken from the wagons. These were sunk into the ground near the trenches. No one went to the laager by day. Everything was fetched by night, when it was safe to leave the trenches.

IN AN OPEN BOAT.

Forty-thsee Days Spent By a Crew On the Pacific.

Reading Mark Twain's story in the Century of the wreck of the Hornet, Lieutenant Lyman Root, commander of the Second division, naval battalion, became deeply interested in the experiences of the survivors, and noticed that one of them was Prof. Henry Ferguson of Trinity college. Lieutenant Root induced Prof. Ferguson to consent to speak to the naval division about his experiences.

Prof. Ferguson's talk took the place of the regular drill. Prof. Ferguson and his brother interrupted their studies while in college to take a trip on the Hornet, a clipper-built merchant ship, from New York to San Francisco. They sailed around the Horn, and while in the Pacific ocean near the equator the ship caught fire where the stores were kept. The ship was burned to the water's edge, and the crew and the two passengers escaped in three boats.

Prof. Ferguson and his brother were in the captain's boat, which contained fourteen men. The three boats kept together for some time, and then it was believed if they separated there would be better chance of securing help. They started out with rations for ten days. They were sparing with the rations and the water, and toward the close each man had about a gill of water a day. Prof. Ferguson gave a thrilling description of the sufferings of the men from hunger and thirst.

He said the sufferings of the men at night while they tried to sleep were terrible. Once he dreamed that he was home and was telling his folks about the wreck. The home scene appeared clear to him, and there was everything that he wanted to eat on the table. He was having a fine time, and as he came to the point where he was rescued he woke up and was not long in realizing the desperate position which he was in.

The rations gradually grew less, and the last four days the men had absolutely nothing in the way of food. Some chewed upon their bootlegs and others filled their mouths with bullets. Prof. Ferguson said he found that bullets were excellent to keep the mouth moist. When the men were nearly dead and some were partly crazd, a double rainbow was seen in the sky, and this cheered the men. Soon afterward it was expected that the boat would be dashed to pieces upon coral reefs. The men were so exhausted that they did not care much what became of them. They were prepared to die, and were surprised to see two big Kanakas swimming in the surf. The men were muscular giants and handsome to look upon. The Kanakas insisted upon shaking hands with all in the boat, but they were finally made to understand that the men were famishing and if taken ashore they would shake hands afterward.

With several strong strokes the Kanakas took the boat to a place of safety and the men were given nourishment. Prof. Ferguson's brother died from the effects of the exposure. The two other boatloads were lost. The ship was forty-three days at sea and sailed about 4,000 miles. It was off the coast of Hawaii that the men were saved. Small sails had been rigged on the boat, and the speaker said that he believed the crew sailed more miles than any shipwrecked crew ever did before or since.—Hartford Courant.

When some men get up in the world everybody appears small to them—and they appear small to everybody.

PRIESTS WERE HEROES

TWO PRIETS WHO WERE LOYAL TO THE SOUTH.

Joy Over Their Return From the Army and Sorrow When At Last They Died.

New Orleans, La.—(Special.)—The death of Rev. Father Smulders in St. Louis removes another of the confederate army chaplains who entered the service in this city and remained in it till the close of the war.

Of the six Redemptorists stationed at New Orleans when the civil war began all volunteered to their superiors at once to go out as chaplains of Louisiana regiments. Two of this number were chosen, Father Smulders and Father Sheeran. Both followed their regiments as chaplains, Father Smulders enlisting with the Eighth Louisiana volunteers. Both remained in the confederate army for four years, and were with General Lee when he laid down his arms at Appamattox court house. Then they returned, footsore and weary, to the mission house in New Orleans, stronger than ever in their devotion to the South, to duty and to God.

It is told in the annals of the order how dring the trying period of the war the mission house, in Constance, near Josephine street, was ever a refuge where the poor, the miserable and the afflicted cold go for help and comfort. The faithful fathers were ever ready to share their last crusts of bread with the stricken people, and many were the boxes that found their way to Father Smulders and Father Sheeran for the Louisana soldiers.

It is told, too, how one evening when the news had already come for some time that General Lee had surrendered, now the fathers were seated around their superior talking of the changing tide of events in the South, and tears were in the eyes of all; how a knock came at the door and the aged sacristan, Brother Lois, opened it, and at once his cry rang through the house:

"Father Smulders! Father Sheeran! Our boys have come home at last!"

And such a home-coming as the old sacristan goes on to relate in that pathetic diary that was never intended for the outside world:

"We looked into the faces of our two fathers; oh, how changed, how pale and sad; they sat down as we gathered around them and the tears flowed down their cheeks; as they told the story that we already knew, 'All is lost; General Lee has surrendered; our regiment is scattered; we made our way home as best we could—on foot.' Their clothes were faded and torn and they looked more like beggars than members of a great and noble order of religion; their shoes were torn off their feet, and their feet were blistered with walking, their hands torn from briars. We got them a warm supper, but they could not eat for the choking tears, and we all sat till far into the night, forgetful of rules, as we listened to their story of hardships too great for words to tell, and how our brave confederate boys bore themselves like true heroes in the hour of defeat and crushing sorrow, as they had done in the hours of triumph and victory. Indeed, Father Smulder said that they were greater heroes in trial than they had ever been on victorious battlefields. And so said Fatner Sheeran."

And the old sacristan goes on to reprised at Father Smulders and Father cord a few days after: "We are all sur- Sheeran. We thought that perhaps the for years of freedom from the strict rules of a religious life would have somewhat changed their characters, and they would not be ready to yield that quick, implicit obedience, that entire giving up of their own will, so necessary in a religious life; but no; they are the admiration of the order. They arose the next morning and went about their duties just as though there had been no intermittance, instead of a long respite of four years from obedienec to superiors. I saw Father Sheeran sweeping the kitchen and later he was busy at his desk teaching in St. Alphonsus' School. And so with Father Smulders. The community is in admiration. The war did them no harm. Army life has done them no harm. They are the most obedient and humble men in the house."

NOTES OF THE DAY.

Some of the English clergy in the diocese of Natal and Pretoria have been reduced to the humblest poverty, owing to lack of funds from England and the multitude of war appeals for money for other purposes.

Microbes of typhoid, cholera, diphtheria and other diseases of similar nature sourvive the temperature of liquid air and come out lively and chipper after twenty hours' freezing, according to a paper recently read before the Royal society of London.

Los Angeles has the reputation of being almost tropical, but it is not a warm city either in summer or winter. The temperature is seldom above 78 at any season, and that is about equal to 68 in New York. May and June seem to be the coldest months in the year.

In the laundry of an insane asylum at Pontiac, Mich., electric irons instead of gas irons have proved to be peculiarly adapted for insane asylum patients. There is no chance of their setting anythihng on fire with the irons.

In the south of Italy the first artistic wigs were made for the Gapinens, who lived in Apulia, and were known for the luxuries of their toilet. These people were, they say, the first who painted their faces; this they did with the juice of strawberries.

NEW YORK'S RATS.

Ceaseless Warfare Waged With Ferrets and Traps.

The rat census of the city will never be taken, but if it could be obtained just now the population of black, brown and tawny rodents would be found large. There has been an unusual influx of rats into the warehouses and stores along the river fronts this year, and about every ferret in the city is in daily demand. There are more than a score of ferret rat catchers who make it a business to clean buildings of rats, and this is best accomplished in winter, when the cold weather drives the rodents into the houses and stores. It is not always possible for the ferrets to capture them in warm weather, for along the river front every rat hole leads ultimately to the water, and if hard pressed by a ferret the rats will plunge into the river and swim for the next nearest dock or floating raft. The ferrets will not follow their prey into the water, and in this way they are frequently billed. In the winter months, especially on cold days, the rats cuddle up in the warm buildings, and they can hardly be induced to take a plunge into the ice-cold river. The ferrets consequently make rich hauls in winter, and the slaughter of a single ferret will some days amount to a round dozen or more.

Another cause of the death rate among the city rats in winter is the unusually high tides which prevail at times. The water backs up from the sea and swells the river so high that thousands of rats are drowned. The water floods the wharves and warehouse basements before the rats can escape, and they soon expire in the cold water. In water of a moderate temperature the rodents can swim about for a long time, but the low temperature of the river water chills them through and soon robs them of all power to fight for existence.

It is estimated by rat catchers that there are several million rats in the city and probably half as many mice. The rats predominate along the river fronts and in the large stores and warehoses. Their numbers are constantly added to by the ordinary means of multiplication and by the whole regiments from the ships that come into port. Every vessel brings with it a large complement of rats, and when the ship toches dock there is an exchange of courtesies between the ship rats and dock rats.

Some come ashore to stay and remain with us, and others of the wharf rats decide to take a voyage in the ships in the place of the deserters. In this way rats have been carried to every port of the globe, and their spread over the world has been by this method. Originally the brown and black rats had certain limited and well defined locations in northern Europe and in the tropical countries, but today they are omnipresent, and wherever the ships of civilized nations touch you will find the modern rats of Europe and America. The worst ships for bringing rats to this port are the wooden vessels from the tropical ports. They sometimes come into the city so heavily laden with rats that the sailors dare not go down into the dark hold of the ship until port is touched. Then the animals swarm off the ship in companies of a score at a time. Thousands of rats are added to our city population in this way every year, and the number we lose by leaving on ships is small in comparison. For some reason the rats seem to like New York, except in winter, and they are so well fed that they seem to spread the news to others.—New York Times.

LATE INVENTIONS.

Some Late Inventions That Are of General Interest.

For preserving timber from decay an Australian has patented a new treatment, consisting of immersing the timber in a solution of arsenous acid and an alkali until thoroughly impregnated, after which a coating of sulphate of copper is applied.

Clothes are automatically cleaned in a new wash boiler, which has a false bottom into which the water falls from the main boiler, with a series of tubes extending vertically to the top of the boiler, through which the water is driven by the increased heat and steam in the false bottonm.

Leaves can be rapidly and cleanly picked up from lawns by an Ohoio woman's invention, which has a large hopper mounted on wheels, with fan blades set in the mouth of the hopper close to the ground, to be rapidly revolved by gearing inside the wheels, thus fanning the leaves into the hopper.

In Germany a man has patented a reading or writing desk which will be found convenient for use when standing, having a flat tablet formed of several sections hinged together, with braces and straps to hold the tablet in a convenient position for use, the whole folding in small compass to be carried in the pocket.

In a new boat-driving gear a short propeller shaft is set in the rear of the boat, intermeshing into a large gear wheel, mounted on a horizontal shaft with pivoted levers connected to the shaft by cranks to rotate the propeller and drive the boat.

An adjustable spring for baby carriages has been patented by a Canadian, which can be increased in stiffness as the baby grows, having a duplex hinge joining the outer ends of the springs, running from the frame and the body of the carriage, with means for adjusting the movement of the hinge.

Atchison Globe: Seven doctors have been unable to find out what ails a certain Atchison man, but they suspect his wifes' apple dumplings.