

HAMILTON BOYS WIN THEIR FIRST FIGHT.

Helped Capture a Laager and Forty Prisoners.

CANADIANS DISPLAYED GREAT BRAVERY.

Boers Said to Have Returned to Their Position Again.

THE FIGHTING NOT YET OVER THERE.

The Toronto and Hamilton Men, the Queenslanders, Some Regulars and a Couple of Guns Engaged—Few Casualties on the British Side—None Reported Amongst Canadians—Officers Under Whom Our Men Fought—Details of the Battle—Splendid Conduct of All the Colonial Troops Under Fire—Three Brave Queenslanders Killed—Gen. White Reports That Twenty Deaths Have Occurred From Fever—Tugela Now Fordable—General Buller Expected to Shortly Renew His Attempt to Cross the River—More Officers Reported to Have Been Wounded at Mafeking.

Belmont, Cape Colony, Jan. 2.—A despatch from the Associated Press representative at Dover farm, dated Jan. 1st, says:

A mounted force consisting of 100 Canadians, the Toronto company, and 200 Queenslanders, commanded by Col. Richards, two guns and a horse battery under Major De Rougemont, 40 mounted infantry under Lieut. Ryan, and 200 of the Cornwall Light Infantry, the whole commanded by Col. Picher, left Belmont yesterday at noon on a march westward, covering twenty miles before sunset.

The force encamped at Cook's farm, where the troops were welcomed enthusiastically. At 6 o'clock this morning the force approached a spot where a laager of the Boers was reported. Col. Picher, on approaching the position, which was a line of strong kopjes, detached Major De Rougemont with the guns, Toronto and mounted infantry, to work towards the right, making a turning movement himself with the Queenslanders towards the south position.

The manoeuvre was a complete success. The British shells were the first indication of the presence of the troops. The Boers left their laager and opened fire, but the Queenslanders completing the movement, the laager was captured, with 40 prisoners. The British casualties were two men killed, three wounded and one missing. The whole force worked admirably. The two men killed belonged to the Queensland contingent.

The Official Report.
London, Jan. 2.—The War Office has received the following from Cape Town under to-day's date:

"Colonel Picher reports through the officer commanding at the Orange River: 'I have completely defeated a hostile command at Sunnyside laager this day, Jan. 1st, taking the laager and forty prisoners, besides the killed and wounded. Our casualties are two privates killed and Lieut. Adie wounded. An encampment at Dover Farm, 20 miles northwest of Belmont and 10 miles from Sunnyside.'"

THE COMPANY AND ITS OFFICERS.
The officers of C Co., known as the Toronto Company, Royal Canadian Regiment, are: Capt. R. K. Barker, C. O. R.; Lieut. W. R. Marshall, 13th Battalion; Hamilton; Lieut. C. S. Wilkie, R. G.; Toronto; and Lieut. Temple, Toronto. Most of the men are from the city corps, but the 13th, 31st, 34th, 35th, 38th, 47th, 38th, 44th and 77th Battalions, and the Sault Ste. Marie Company, are also represented.

From private letters received in the city, it is understood that Lieut. Lafferty had been detailed for transport duty, and that Lieut. Temple had taken his place. This has not been officially confirmed, however, there is some doubt as to which of these two officers acted with the company.

The non-commissioned officers of the company are: Col. Sergt. J. Campbell, Sergeants A. Beasly, H. J. Middleton, A. McGregor, J. Ramsay; Corporal H. Dixon, O. Freemantle, F. Rutherford, R. W. Hoskin, G. McGee; Lance Corporals J. F. Ramsay, E. W. Hodgkiss, W. H. Grant, I. H. Rorke, M. Stewart.

Brevet Lieut. Col. Thomas D. Picher, 5th Northumberland Fusiliers, who commanded the British force in the engagement, has served with the West African force since 1897, but had seen no previous war service until the present campaign began. He was then holding the rank of Major in the Fusiliers, but was promoted on special service in Cape Colony.

Major Cecil H. De Rougemont, R. A., in charge of the artillery in the engagement, served in the Dongola campaign of 1896, and was mentioned in despatches; and in the Nile expedition last year, receiving the medal and clasp and the Khedive's star.

Details of the Fight.
Belmont, Cape Colony, Jan. 1.—A despatch from Dover Farm dated Jan. 1st, says:

The colonial troops, who have been longed to be allowed to meet the Boers, have at last been given an opportunity to do so, and scored a brilliant success. The raid conducted by Col. Picher was very difficult, owing to the fact that the movements of the troops were immediately communicated to the Boers by natives. In order to prevent this Col. Picher, in making his forced march from Belmont, sent a trooper of the British to every farmhouse, with instructions not to allow the natives to leave their huts, the patrols calling the names of the natives hourly in order to prevent their escape.

In the manoeuvre at Cook's Farm Col. Picher sent mounted patrols east. One of these, consisting of four men, commanded by Lieut. Adie, suddenly encountered fourteen Boers, who opened fire. The lieutenant was severely wounded, and Private Butler gave up his horse in order to carry him out of range.

Another private, whose horse had bolted, pluckily returned to render as-

other, engaged in arguing a point with a refractory male, was described as nearly a millionaire.

"Two days after the Canadians pitched camp the order came for half of the battalion to move forward to join the Australians in the general line at Belmont. As I write a volley of cheers came from my tent into the rain in order to see the second half streaming out. They are standing up in open trucks and cheering the Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry, who had just arrived."

West India Regiment.
Kingston, Jamaica, Jan. 2.—A detachment of the West India Regiment (colored) embarked to-day to reinforce the Bermuda garrison. It is expected that the British Empire troops go to South Africa. Canadian militia will be sent here for garrison duty.

Strength of the Enemy.

The Times' correspondent reports the enemy's strength as from 5,000 to 7,000, but the figures are probably too large. Major-General French has cut off the retreat to the road bridge over the Orange River, but the enemy was in line for the railway bridge at Norval's Point which was a more important crossing.

General Methuen's line is secure against raiding, when scouting is so well done that the presence of an enemy thirty miles away is known, and the troops are mobile enough to strike the encampment at a long distance from the line which they are guarding. Colonel Picher's detachment, the famous "Fighting Fifth" (the Northumberland Fusiliers), which was caught in ambush under Major-General Gatacre. He is a veteran in African service, and is on special service. His casualties were confined to the Australian troops, three being killed and one officer dangerously wounded.

COLONIALS WERE ENGAGED.

The Queensland Mounted Infantry have the distinction of being the first body of colonial troops coming over the sea to be credited with a gallant exploit, unless Reuters' agency is right in stating that the Canadians were also engaged. The Canadian contingent of 1,000 men will certainly give a fine account of themselves, for they are a picked body of riflemen. Why the military authorities have been so slow about taking full advantage of the colonial offers is one of the deepest mysteries of red tape.

Boers Claim a Victory.

Pretoria, Jan. 1.—Last night (Sunday) the British in great force attacked the Boers. The Boers, however, tried to storm the position. The repeated attack this morning, but were forced to retreat, the Boers holding the position. The loss of the British is not known, but it is expected to be heavy. The Boers consider it a great compliment to the Transvaal that Lord Roberts should have been selected to the supreme command of the British forces.

Boers Becoming Aggressive.

London, Jan. 3, 6 a.m.—An unexpected development of the situation is reported to have occurred at Colenso. The Central News correspondent reports that the Boers returned with reinforcements, during the night, and occupied the position from which they were driven by Major-General French on Monday. Further particulars of the Boers' return and action show how much it was due to the colonial troops.

CAPT. BARKER LED THEM.

Reuters' correspondent says he was privileged to enter the order to the Toronto company to double into action. When he arrived and delivered the order there was great satisfaction along the line, and exclamations of "at last" heard. The company, under Captain Barker, rushed forward to within a thousand yards of the laager, and then opened a hot fire on the kopjes with complete success. The Queensland contingent also behaved splendidly, laughing and chatting while under fire. Col. Picher has since occupied the centres of Barkley and Douglas with out opposition. The whole district of Dordrecht is reported demoralized by the occupation of the town.

SKIRMISHES NEAR DORDRECHT.
Major-General Gatacre has given an official account of the spirited contest of the 24th and 25th inst. in the recent skirmishes near Dordrecht. All these episodes point with cumulative force to the same moral, that the only effective method of fighting the Boers is by a mobile force, which is not bound by the rules of conventional warfare, and which is not bound by the rules of conventional warfare.

The Standard says: "The Canadians and Australians have been spoiling for a fight. Now they have had the opportunity, and they have greatly distinguished themselves by their coolness and discipline. From the viewpoint of Imperial unity, the little fight may fairly be described as one of the most gratifying events recorded in the recent history of the British race."

Great Praise.

London, Jan. 3.—The morning papers are unanimous in praising the gallantry of the colonial troops. The Times says: "The mother country will share with the Canadians and Australians in the pride and gratification they must feel at the fine qualities displayed by their troops in this dashy little engagement."

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They are Disloyal British.

Modder River, Jan. 2.—Yesterday's cavalry expedition under Babington, commanding the 9th Cavalry, proved to have been in cooperation with a similar movement from Belmont. This, directed by Major-General Wood, consisted of a flying column and force, under Col. Picher, from Belmont. This force moved into the territory between the Orange and Riet Rivers. At Sunnyside, northwest of Douglas, it encountered a considerable commando, believed to be wholly composed of disloyal British soldiers. Gen. Babington's force proceeded in the same direction, but on the north side of the Riet River. The result of this reconnaissance has not yet been recorded.

THEY ARE FINE MEN.

London News Praises the Canadian Contingent.

The London Daily News' correspondent, in a letter dated Orange River, Dec. 11th, describes the arrival of the Canadians on the morning of the Australians' departure. He says: "They were swearing mightily in two languages when they discovered that they were to detain at the river, instead of proceeding directly to the front. They are a fine body of men, big and alert, perhaps drilled so well as the Australians, but none of the Australians. They have not the distinctive uniform of the Australians, being garbed in khaki, which makes it somewhat difficult to distinguish them from the regular infantry, but for the canvas bandolier, the most sensible portion of their equipment, and their brown leather pouches and waist belt."

"They continued the good work of patrolling and picket duty begun by the Australians, to the discomfort of the pass-les and the terror of the suspect. Sidings grew apace, new platforms were made, and rails and sleepers were laid."

"The Canadians were pleased that a share of the manual work was given them, and worked with a will."

"One Canadian on fatigue duty was pointed out to me as part-owner of a large line of Atlantic steamers. An-

Times Editorial View.

London, Jan. 3.—In its editorial leader to-day the Times says:

It would be absurd and childish to pretend that the trifling successes, such as those at Dordrecht, Colenso and Sunnyside, are likely to have any direct bearing on the general situation upon the military situation. That depends on other factors which remain unchanged. Gen. White is still locked up at Ladysmith, where, we regret to say, dysentery and fever are increasing. General Buller is still on the south side of Tugela, Kimberley is unrelieved, and General Methuen is unable to advance. Until this position is completely altered we can hardly hope to deal such blows to the republicans on their own soil as are probably requisite to bring the struggle to the only end which the British Empire can accept. Successes like those we report to-day are not, however, without their uses. They show the spirit of our people, whether they come from the old home, from beyond the Atlantic, or from the great island continent of the Pacific. The whole Empire has sprung to arms, and the men who are now mustering from the Guild Hall to Sydney and Vancouver seem to be just the class to practice the tactics which have succeeded within the last few days.

Harsh Treatment of British.

London, Jan. 3.—The Times has the following special to-day:

Lorenzo Marquez, Jan. 2.—Twenty-five northern Natal residents arrived here from Pretoria, where they were treated scandalously, like common convicts. The military prisoners belonging to the regulars, they said, are treated with every consideration, but those belonging to the South African irregular forces are lodged in the ordinary jail and placed on ordinary criminals' diet. A considerable number of expelled British are expected from the Transvaal this week. Among the released prisoners are George Lynch, the correspondent of the Morning Herald, who was captured at Ladysmith. Information has been received that Major Daly and 41 men of the Royal Army Medical Corps, who were left at Dundee at the time of its evacuation, are on the way from Pretoria to Delagoa Bay.

Rebels are Demoralized.

London, Jan. 3.—A Cape Town despatch reports that "The rebels in the district are demoralized by the British occupation of Dordrecht." Should it turn out that the Dutch rebellion is thus being diminished, it will be a matter of great relief for the British campaign. The Standard, however, remarks: "Until the Tugela has been crossed and Ladysmith relieved it will be idle to think that the position in Cape Colony is one of very great danger."

For New Artillery.

London, Jan. 3.—The London Daily Mail makes the following statement this morning: "We understand that the Defence Committee of the Cabinet after careful consideration of the question of the defence of the empire, particularly with regard to artillery, will shortly call for the expenditure of £5,000,000 to make good deficiencies and to place the nation on a par with other great powers."

Eight Large Transports.

London, Jan. 3.—Yesterday the Admiralty chartered eight more large transports. With all the troops destined for South Africa and those already there, Lord Roberts will be in command of about 200,000 men. Thirty thousand are now afloat or ready to embark.

Can be Forded.

London, Jan. 3.—The Daily Telegraph has received the following, dated Jan. 2nd, from Free Camp: "The weather is fine. The Tugela River is now fordable. Gen. Buller's army is in fine form, ready and confident for the work before it."

The Boers inquired by helicopter to-day: "Why is Roberts coming? What has Buller done?" The British replied: "How did you like our liddie in the late battle?"

Militia Will Serve.

London, Jan. 3.—The Queen has accepted the services of twelve battalions of militia for foreign stations. Seven of these are assigned to South Africa.

The Earl of Albemarle will command the City of London Infantry Division, instead of Col. Sir Charles Howard Vincent.

Sir Charles Howard Vincent, Colonel of the Westminster Volunteers, has failed to pass the medical examination necessary to qualify him to command the City of London Infantry Division bound for South Africa. The command of this corps must, therefore, be given to another.

Mr. Harry McCalmont, the well-known sportsman, has been ordered to South Africa with the Warwickshire militia.

Another Vessel Seized.

Hamburg, Jan. 2.—The Hamburger Correspondence announces that the German bark Hans Wagner, of Hamburg, was seized by the British at Delagoa Bay on Dec. 31st, and that her owners have lodged a complaint with the British Foreign Office.

That Mafeking Sortie.

Pretoria, Jan. 1.—Three British prisoners, who were taken at Molopo, say that Captain Gordon Cherry Wilson, husband of Lady Sarah Wilson, and five other officers, whose names they refuse to give, were wounded in a recent sortie from Mafeking.

For the Yeomanry.

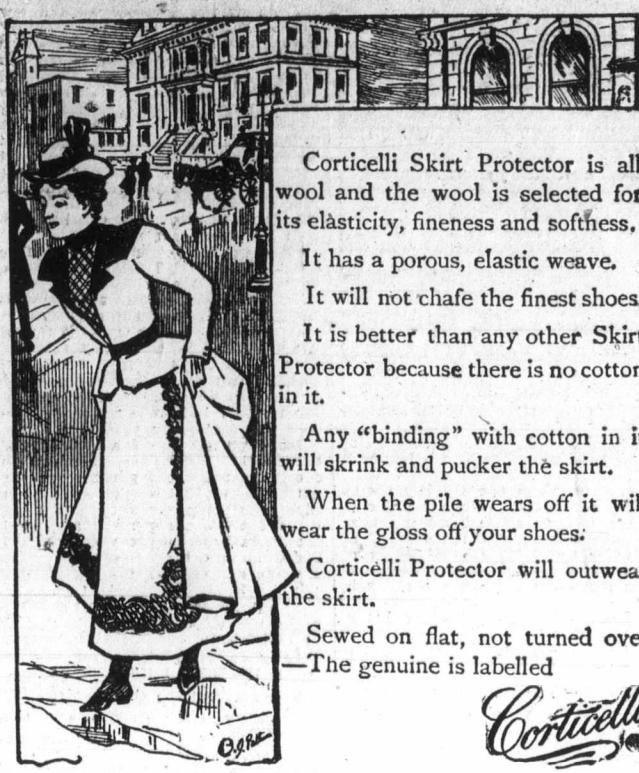
London, Jan. 3.—At a meeting held at the London residence of Viscount Curzon yesterday a committee of ladies was formed to equip a hospital unit for the yeomanry. The Princess of Wales accepted the Presidency of the committee. The Duchess of Connaught and the Duchess of York agreed to serve as Vice-Presidents. The members of the committee include most of the leading women of the British aristocracy.

Precautions at Dublin.

Dublin, Jan. 3.—Extra precautions have been adopted by the military authorities here. The constabulary has been fully armed. The sentries from sundown to morning have been increased at the principal points. Patrols march around, and all leaves of absence are suspended.

Treachery in French's Camp.

Renburg, Cape Colony, Jan. 2.—A train containing supplies, to which no engine was attached, started moving within the British lines to-day, and ran down an incline towards the Boer lines. It was found that the train could not be stopped, and the British gunners were therefore ordered to destroy it to prevent the supplies from falling into the hands of the Boers. Their aim was accurate, and the cars and their contents were soon worthless. What started the train is unknown, but treachery is suspected. One man has been arrested in connection with the matter.



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