

THE SEMI-WEEKLY TELEGRAPH, ST. JOHN, N. B., MARCH 28, 1900.

Under Shell Fire, with Poor Food and Unhealthful Water the Garrison Stubbornly Refused to Give Up—No One Hinted of Surrender.

The siege of Ladysmith will, perhaps, remain the most remarkable episode of the present war, says the London Daily Mail.

Saving a few far-seeing and better-informed persons, no one expected that the mere suggestion of its probability was ridiculous in the early days of the war, but the danger was looming ahead when, on October 7, Lieut-General Sir George Stewart White, V. C., arrived at Pietermaritzburg to command the forces in Natal.

The usual military strength in Natal had been already somewhat augmented, and reinforcements were on their way from India in case of eventualities. The northernmost garrison of Ladysmith, however, was of opinion that in the event of hostilities the position there was untenable, and he therefore counselled the withdrawal of all troops to Ladysmith. In a subsequent report Sir George White has referred to his conversation with:

The Governor of Natal:

"After full discussion, his excellency recorded his opinion that such a step would involve grave political results and possibilities of so serious a nature that I determined to accept the military risk of holding Ladysmith as the lesser of two evils. I proceeded in person to Ladysmith on October 11, sending on Lieut-General Sir William Buller to take command at Ladysmith."

War broke out on October 10, and on the 12th, the Boers crossed the frontiers of Natal. For the next week they marched southwards in three divisions, under Generals Buller, Buller, and Buller. Skirmishing took place at intervals, and our outlying forces were obliged to retire. The battle of Dundee, the first serious engagement of the war, took place on October 20, and was distinguished for the gallant storming of Talam Hill by the King's Royal Rifles, the Royal Irish Fusiliers and the Buffs. General Buller was mortally wounded, and died soon afterwards. Another important engagement was fought at Elandsfontein, and we again scored a brilliant victory. But the outcome of the war was overwhelming in numbers, and

A General Retreat

seemed to be the only tactical possibility. Generals White and Buller, and the forces, reached Ladysmith on October 25. The enemy quickly encircled the town, and posted guns on the surrounding hills. Five days later General Buller attempted to split up the Boer forces to the north and west, but unable to do so. On this occasion, the 10th Mountain Battery and a battalion of the Gloucesters and the Royal Irish Fusiliers were cut off at Nicholson's Nek and taken prisoners. The investment of Ladysmith became closer, and on November 7 General Buller, who has since that date distinguished himself so valiantly elsewhere, succeeded, in leaving the beleaguered town by the last train that ran through to Durban.

The siege of Ladysmith may be said to have begun on November 1, and a desultory firing took place daily until the first when the first organized attack was made by heavy mounted guns of the enemy on the surrounding heights. On that day, being the Prince of Wales' birthday, the naval brigade fired a royal salute of 21 guns, and volleys of cheering celebrated the loyal occasion.

The bombardment of Ladysmith continued from day to day with undiminished vigor. The Boers brought some of

Their Biggest Guns

hitherto devoted to the armament of the Pretoria forts, to bear upon the town. One of these, which was christened "Long Tom," made its debut on the 11th, and, able through the excellent way in which it was served by German artificers, this gun was knocked out of action on at least one occasion by Captain Percy Smith, ship of the Naval Brigade, but was repaired and readjusted and survived until the end.

The garrison consisted of the following troops: The 1st Liverpool, 2nd Battalion, Natal Borderers, and a detachment of the Natal Mounted Rifles, the Natal Carbineers, Imperial Light Horse, 9th Dragoon Guards, 1st Hussars, 1st Lancers, 10th Hussars, 2nd King's Royal Rifles, 1st Royal Irish Fusiliers, 1st Leicesters, 1st King's Royal Rifles, 6th batteries of the Royal Field Artillery, namely, the 13th, 21st, 42nd, 33rd, 67th, and 68th; a Natal volunteer battery, and the Natal Brigade, which did such signal service; the 2nd Gordon Highlanders, the 1st Manchester and the 1st Devon.

The naval 4.7 guns worked excellently, and replied persistently to the Boer bombardment. They had been only arrived in Ladysmith a few hours before the communication with the outside world closed, and, mounted upon the special field carriages devised by Captain Percy Smith, they proved themselves to be of the greatest possible use.

The garrison seems to have been settled down to the most regular military routine of life in a besieged camp.

Amusements were Organized

sports, races and cricket matches varied the monotony, and the greatest possible need of praise is due to the officers, from the general in command downwards, for their untiring efforts to keep up the spirits of those under their command, both soldiers and civilians.

St. Andrew's day was notably celebrated by a Scotch banquet. An improvised boat race took place in uncouth craft for the championship of the Klin River, a small stream that encircled the camp. Humorous news newspapers were published to amuse the troops. Pleasantries were even exchanged at Christmas with the besiegers. A neutral camp was established at the Intombi Spring, in close proximity to the town, where an excellent hospital was organized.

From time to time the garrison made plucky sorties, and those on December 8 and 10, wherein three of the enemy's guns were destroyed, were conspicuous for the gallantry shown by all engaged. Perhaps the Imperial Light Horse, a regiment recruited in Durban principally from Johannesburg Uitlanders, and hence earning the nickname of the Brigade of Victimization, especially distinguished itself. They lost very many men, including Major Doreton, Lieut. Adams and other brave fighters. The mortality through wounds and dis-

ease became very high. It is not known yet precisely how many men died, but

The Periodical Lists

which were photographed to Colenso, and then transmitted to Durban, made painful reading.

Cases of enteric fever were prevalent, and at one time seemed almost epidemic. The death of Mr. George W. Stevens was universally lamented by the whole garrison, and the tributes to his memory were sincere and touching.

There does not appear to have been any very great scarcity of food, and although at one time the besieged inhabitants were compelled to subsist on reduced rations, this was probably only as a precautionary measure. The same remark applies to the ammunition, which was not reported to be running low, although it is always possible that this was purposely kept secret for the same reason.

This is not the place to refer to General Buller's attempts to relieve Ladysmith, but it must suffice to indicate briefly that the siege was protracted from week to week, and from month to month, the besiegers closely investing all the heights and roads, and the besieged valiantly replying to a continuous, if irregular, bombardment.

On January 6, the Boers made a determined attack on the town in the neighborhood of Cactus Camp, but they were repulsed at all points with heavy loss, though it cost many lives, among them Lieut-Col. Dick Cunningham and the Earl of Ava. It was during this engagement, and particularly on an eminence called Waggon Hill, that our men displayed such conspicuous gallantry.

About the British in the trenches, a Boer forming one of the attacking party wrote as follows, and it throws much light on the condition of the garrison about the middle of their hard struggle:

"All guns, haggard figures, with their uniforms in rags, some with long, ragged, unkempt beards, they seemed as they stood at bay, and we caught, almost through the flash of the rifles and the lifting smoke of the fusillade, like dream imaginations of devils from hell."

Every one, too, will recollect that it was during this fight that a terrible wave of suspense swept over the country, it being due to the failure of the sun, whereby by heliograph communication with Ladysmith ceased at the words of General White, "Very hard pressed."

Not until 24 hours later did reassuring intelligence arrive.

The enemy seemed to have been disheartened at their defeat, and for some time afterwards relaxed the vigor of their bombardment.

Towards the end of the month of January, the attempt of General Buller to take Spion Kop was eagerly watched by Ladysmith, and hopes were high that relief was at hand.

These were, however, doomed to failure, and another long period of enforced expectancy ensued. Gradually, however, and despite his frequent failures, General Buller, crept closer and closer to the town, and the spirits of the Gloucesters and the Royal Irish Fusiliers were cut off at Nicholson's Nek and taken prisoners.

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OPPOSITION OBSTRUCTION AND ILL TEMPER.

Ottawa, March 28.—Last evening furnished another illustration of the utter insincerity of the opposition, even when they pretend to be most in earnest, and of the manner in which grievances against the government are manufactured. Mr. Martin, of Prince Edward Island, had brought up a resolution calling for papers in regard to negotiations for union with Newfoundland.

The motion was one which no one objected to; it might have passed in less than a minute, but Mr. Martin had a speech which he wished to inflict on the house, and for an hour and a half he harangued the dozen or less of people who thought it necessary to remain in their seats. He was followed by Dr. Sproule, who may always be counted on to make the house, and after a few remarks from Mr. Kaulbach, of Lunenburg, Sir Charles Tupper rose and began attacking the government because they had not annexed Newfoundland during the three years and a half that they had been in power, and also because they took so little interest in the subject that few of the ministers were in attendance. Now, no one expected any debate on the motion, which it was expected would pass as a matter of course, and would have so passed but for the desire of Mr. Martin to make a great speech. Four ministers, Sir Louis Davies, Sir Henry Joly, Mr. Fielding and Mr. Fisher were present, and not a single one of the Conservative ex-ministers, with the exception of Sir Charles Tupper, who did not arrive in the house until the debate had been on for some two hours. Yet he did not think it inconsistent with decency and fair play to berate the government for taking no interest in a matter which is a single leading man in the opposition ranks seemed to care anything about. Sir Louis Davies, who is rightly pointed out as the absurdity and inconsistency of Sir Charles' criticisms and at the same time gave a most able and statesmanlike exposition of the relations between Canada and Newfoundland. He showed very clearly that it was impossible for Canada to make any attempt to annex Newfoundland, and that the only way to secure union with Newfoundland was to wait until the people of that island expressed a desire to resume negotiations with us.

Mr. Foster gave another exhibition of his bad temper yesterday by attacking Mr. Fielding "small" because in answer to a question in regard to the expenditure of "Can" for a number of years he included 1895, which had not been called for. A reference to Sir John Bourinot's able work on parliamentary law showed that Mr. Foster was quite right in his criticism, but Mr. Foster refused either to withdraw his unparliamentary expression or to apologize for its use. His conduct was the most unbecomingly unparliamentary and never indulges in personal allusions. These forms the stock in trade of the opposition; indeed they are the only kind of political ammunition that they are using at the present time.

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American Losses in the Philippines.

Washington, March 27.—War department officials deny recently published statements that General Otis campaign is costing upward of 1,000 men every month. According to the official records, since the American occupation of the Philippines, June 1, 1898, up to February 17, 1900, the date of the last official compilation, the actual mortality in the army in the Philippines was 46 officers and 1,400 men, a total of 1,446, or at the rate of 74 deaths a month.

More details are contained in the report of Col. Woodhull, chief surgeon of the Philippine army. His report, however, does not extend beyond the end of the last calendar year. It shows that from the time American troops landed in Manila on December 1, 1898, the total number of deaths were 28 officers and 1,266 men. Of this number 42 officers and 570 men died of disease, and 16 officers and 483 men died of battle. Most of the deaths by violence occurred in battle. There were, however, 137 deaths from violence outside of actual hostilities.

More than one half of the latter class of deaths were caused by drowning. The total number of wounded without fatal results during the period covered by the report was 1,767.

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The Conservative Senators are Lords of the Land.

Ottawa, March 27.—(Special)—The senate had the redistribution bill up today for second reading, which was moved by Hon. Mr. Mills. The bill, he said, was based on the principle enunciated by Sir John Macdonald in 1872. Both political parties then agreed with that principle. The whole question now was had a wrong been done and should it be remedied. Senator Mills quoted constitutional authorities to show that the course of the government pursued was a correct one.

The senate would be derelict to its constitutional duty if it rejected the bill. He hoped the senate would not stand in the way of the will of the people being carried out.

Sir Mackenzie Bowell said that the senate had the constitutional power to reject it. The reason which he gave last year for rejecting the bill was intensified this year. The bill should be left until after the census. He concluded by moving a six months' adjournment.

Senator Miller followed and Senator Ferguson moved the adjournment of the debate.

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SMALL WILLIE'S BIG ENTERPRISE.

Illustrating a Boston Boy's Capacity for Business.

The New England small boy generally shows business capabilities at a tender age, if he is ever going to have them. I have heard of a certain small Boston boy who got into the habit of teasing his mother for pennies, until at last she gave to him a large green bill. He was very proud of it, and he showed it to his friends. "Now, Willie, I don't like to give you pennies; if you want money, you should go to work and earn it." The boy remained thoughtful for some time. Then, within a few days, the mother perceived that Willie had plenty of money. She asked him where he got it, but he did not tell her. One summer day he noticed that some sort of a bullabuloo was going on in the back yard. Looking on, he saw Willie surrounded by a mob of boys, who were yelling with delight. She went down into the yard to see what was going on, and as she passed out, she saw, stuck up on the back wall of the house, this notice, quite neatly "printed" out with a pencil:

WILLIE JONES WILL EAT

1 small green worm, for..... 1 cent
1 large green worm, for..... 2 cents
1 small fuzzy worm, for..... 3 cents
1 large fuzzy worm, for..... 5 cents
1 small green caterpillar, for..... 1 cent
Willie was apparently doing a thriving business. His mother interrupted it—at any rate in her own back yard. I don't know what Willie's business was, but he wasn't stalling carrying it on somewhere else. [Boston Transcript.]

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THE "ABSINTHE"-MINDED BEGGAR.

(WITH APOLOGUES TO RUDYARD KIPLING.)

When you've shouted "Mort aux traitres!" And you've sung out "Vive l'Armee!" And have got back Alsace-Lorraine, in your mind, And have washed the stains that Dreyfus left behind.

Then you absinthie-minded beggar, in your muddled-headed state, Turn about for something fresh to kick and hit at.

But we'll give you timely warning, which we hope won't come too late, That the British Lion's not the chap to spit at.

King's son, duke's son, son of a hundred cooks, Hundred and fifty thousand men, at Mets gave up the day:

The enemy far smaller, yet they struck you off the books.

But did you laugh and jeer at you then? Now say, say?

Though we've visited your country in a friendly sort of way, Though we've freely spent our cash in every town, Yet now you dourly murmur "Ev'ry dog must have his day!"

Let us try and bite the lion when he's down.

You're an absinthie-minded beggar or by now you're a realist.

That the British Lion's far from flurried; You surely will regret it, if when Leo sleeping lies With impunity you think he can be worried.

Cad's voice, sneaky's voice, voice of a snivelling cur, True enough the adage runs, "Each dog must have his day!"

But till you down, wear asses' skins, Sink back into your kennel, quick, and stay, stay, stay!

When you lay besieged in Paris by the woman's iron grip, When starvation grim-acing you in the face, Who was it sent you vittles, gave you food, Who was it sent you vittles, gave you food, Why the British, whom you're striving to disgrace.

But of course it's all forgotten, now the danger's past and gone.

For an absinthie-minded beggar all will find.

For you go too far, we must put the And, by George, we'll take the trouble to remind you.

Cook's son, duke's son, son of an aristocrat, Son of a sea cook, son of a gun, old or young or gay;

Each of 'em hangs about for himself, In search of a sewer rat.

Want it this, I'll send you help? Now, say, say?

If you're anxious to revile us, why then do so on our face.

It's a method that we very much prefer, But for God's sake, keep your insults from the head of all our race.

For we can't stand much of that applied to Her.

You're an absinthie-minded beggar, and you must be so.

But in case it happens again, we will remind you.

That you left from Trafalgar, not to mention Waterloo.

In a hurry with the Britishers behind you.

Cook's son, duke's son, son of a cuisinier, Though you make your countenance rue, With empty boasts of "Vive l'Armee," In spite of your martial air,

Keep a civil tongue in your hands, or you'll pay, pay!

TO CURE A COLD IN ONE DAY.

Take Laxative Bromo Quinine Tablets. All Druggists refund the money if it fails to cure a cold, cough or croup in one day. E. W. Crook's signature is on each box.

Smallpox Leaving Campbellton.

The smallpox epidemic in Campbellton appears to be rapidly yielding to the energetic action of the board of health. There are now only 28 cases in the town, all of which are in the hospital. Only four isolated houses, the inmates of which show no symptoms whatever of having contracted the disease. The business of the town has resumed its wonted brisk appearance and in a very short time all traces of the late trouble will have passed away.

The board of health have certainly shown a most commendable energy in the rapid and effectual treatment of what at one time promised to be rather a formidable epidemic