

Christmas at Ladysmith

Greeting From the Boers—Shells Inscribed "Compliments of the Season."

Correspondent of the Morning Leader Tells How the Day Was Spent.

Our Christmas Day was heralded by the Gordon awakener from "Puffing Bluffs." This was fired at 5 o'clock, about an hour after sunrise. The enemy's monster on Imbulwana sent in six more shots in rapid succession, whilst his satellites sped in a few more on their own account. It did not amount to very much, but was sufficient to let us know that the Boers did not intend to respect the great Christian festival.

The brilliant sunshine, that only gives us brief respites at night and during the meeting thunderstorms, which leaves us as quickly as they come, flooded the town with a brightness that struck me as being quite unseasonable.

Quite unseasonable to the wishes for a merry Christmas which passed around the camps. But we soon found that the brightness of the day was in keeping with the lightness of our spirits. The only saddening thought in our minds was the one that in ten thousand British homes there would be anxiety and trembling on the count of our safety and of our welfare.

When the children had been sent happy away, as heavily laden with stories of how Santa Claus got through the Boer lines as they were with toys and presents, the older folk danced till midnight. A contentious device, "May the new century dawn with peace and happiness for all" which found a place amidst the many purely seasonal greetings, has stirred up such a discussion in town to the date of the commencement of the twentieth century that the war and Buller's relief column are scarcely likely to be spoken of again between now and New Year's Day, 1900.

THE MARKET. (Revised every Wednesday.)

There is very little change in the market prices this week, meat and vegetables being plentiful. There is no variation in the prices of grain, and the retail quotations this week are summarized as follows:

Table listing market prices for various goods including Flour, Grain, Meat, and other commodities with their respective prices.

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To the Editor: Three times three cheers for Canada! For "Bobs," who gave us the chance! For the Royal Canadian Regiment who took it! And again for Buller who relieved Ladysmith! For White who kept it! And for all the British troops in South Africa! Hurrah! Again and again! Please pardon all this day long if I am a bit of a far cry from here to B. C. via Victoria and there are no Canadians known to me with whom I can shout. Verily it is a proud thing to say that one comes from Canada! Like all of the best of things it is tinged with sadness, however, and several among the killed to me have appeared among the brave fellow countrymen—their names have done what all good Canadians thought it would do, its duty, and has done it so well that the world rings with its performance. In Rome the English community were full of its praises, and drank to the Canadians when we celebrated together at dinner on the evening of the arrival of the news of Cronje's surrender. The Union Jack was conspicuous on that day, but it is to be seen wherever one goes.

And you may take on the wings of the news. And you may take on the wings of the news. And you may take on the wings of the news.

Not that my wings have grown, neither am I on the fly, or round the world, but the fact nevertheless remains that what Kipling has said, as far as I have learned literally true. Such has been my experience, and in Rome, where the flag was in such evidence, Canadians had something to do, both directly and indirectly, with bringing it there. You may have noticed that the first lord of the admiralty wound up his speech on the very night of the other day with the remark that he was not going to wave the flag, "but," said he, "it is there." It is everywhere. It is here.

We all saw it arrive yesterday on a huge battleship. Surely there are not many more beautiful sights on this earth than the magnificent bay of Naples with Vesuvius actively smoking away in the background and a great stately ship steaming slowly in firing a salute, with the good old flag fluttering in the breeze, and the crowd of active volcanoes, what is this one ready to erupt? One day it appears a government is dismissed, the next that an almost unanimous vote of want of confidence in the new premier is passed, and the Lieut. Governor reads his speech on proroguing the House to empty benches and a boisterous gallery. Truly, some of the best American administrations have lately rivals in those of British Columbia! But away with politics. It may be mentioned here, not for the first time perhaps, that the unsettled state of politics in the province is far from prejudicing a good effect in London. It doesn't need a good perception to become aware of that fact.

Possibly it may interest your readers to hear of the feeling with which Great Britain and the war are regarded here on the continent. In France, as a question as to the anti-British spirit prevailing, thought I would not go so far as to say that it was universal. Incidents are not wanting to indicate it. For instance, in Nice, not so very long ago, sixty English visitors at one of the hotels departed in a body for the Italian Riviera. They said they would spend another centime in France if they could help it. Presumably the French press were the cause of this. In the same place we were amused to see some Frinchen who had been much tickled by a cartoon in Le Rire, representing Her Majesty as a football, being kicked by Kruger, turn to the bulletins in the Credit Lyonnaise, a few yards further on, containing in large scroll the views of Lord Roberts's successful movement and General French's then probable relief of Kimberley. To say that the faces experienced a lightning change putting it mild. Much the same was repeated at Monte Carlo, where the war bulletins are posted up in the Casino. What is the cause of it, you ask? "Fashoda and jealousy," as the traveller expressed it. In Germany we are not in much better favor, according to the press and the people one meets who have been travelling there. Here it is different. True it is that one of its papers did compare the position of the British Empire at the moment of its reverses with the ancient Roman Empire just before its decline, but on the whole the easy-going successors of that mighty Empire are with us. However it doesn't seem to "cut very much of a figure" whether the press are with us or not, and in any case Great Britain's circle of friends in Europe was never very large.

Poor old Italy, for she is both particularly the former. Here in her largest city there are certainly more signs of progress. If one asks why it is that there is so much poverty and idleness and want of push, he is invariably met with the reply that it is the climate—ways the climate. But the ancient Romans, how did they do so well? It is climate again—it must have changed climate again. W. E. LANGLEY.

Work on the extension of the Bellinsea Bay & British Columbia railroad will begin in the month of June. The line is to be a branch from the main line at the junction of the boundary line, and runs eastward to the American side twenty-four miles. Boulder Creek, where the Cornell mine are situated. This, says the Seattle Times, will extend the road from its present terminus at Sumas to the Mount Baker mining district. The cost of constructing the extension is estimated at \$900,000.

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