

**THE SEMI-WEEKLY TELEGRAPH.**  
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#### Semi-Weekly Telegraph

ST. JOHN, N. B., JULY 28, 1900.

#### THE WAR IN SOUTH AFRICA.

The British people are naturally becoming somewhat impatient at the long delay in bringing the war in South Africa to a close. As the Boers are not thought to have more than fifteen thousand men in the field it seems remarkable that they should be able to resist the British advance, and even to strike counter blows of some severity, such as the capture of a convoy train and a hundred soldiers on the line of railway between Kromstad and Pretoria. This last affair seems to have taken place about thirty miles north of Kromstad in the vicinity of the Rietfontein River, and as a result of it the British line of communication with Pretoria was cut off at the same time the western line between Potchefstroom and Pretoria was also cut. As the British have large forces both in the north, the east, and the south, these riders which are said to have been under De Wet ought not to be allowed to escape. What is very remarkable is the fact that the Boer forces seem to move about as they please without any regard to lines of communication or of supplies. In what way do they sustain themselves? If it is by leaving upon the country way to a large extent, seeing that they have the means for paying liberally for whatever they may take from the farmers. A good many minor operations are going on to the westward of Pretoria and some successes have been gained there, but we hear nothing of movements to the eastward, although it was repeated the other day that Middleburg was being attacked in force by the British. It may be that General Roberts is meditating some masterly movement with a view to the capture of the Boer forces, but the ease with which they seem to be able to work up to hope that it will be entirely successful. No doubt the difficulties of advancing in that country are great and the question of supplies is one that must always be foremost in the mind of the commanding general, yet it really seems as if greater haste might be made in bringing the war to a conclusion.

We observe that it has been stated by the governor of Cape Colony that some 10,000 inhabitants of the Cape Colony, British subjects, enjoying the protection of the British flag, joined the Boers. The question of punishing these rebels is one which is now engaging the attention of the Cape Colony legislature, and it is to be hoped that no weakness will be displayed in dealing with them. As these men had lived under the British flag and enjoyed every right that appertains to a citizen of the empire, their rebellion is wholly without excuse. They were suffering no injuries or wrongs, they were free to remain on their own farms and to keep the peace, yet they engaged in a quarrel with the British, and so it is to be hoped that they will not be too much lenient towards these people to deprive them wholly of their property and drive

them out as outcasts, but perhaps a more prudent course would be to leave half of their property to them and give the other half to be occupied by some loyal British subject, who would serve as a check upon the rebellious tendencies of his Dutch neighbors. It would be worse than madness to let these men escape without punishment after they had done their best to pull down the British flag which had so long protected them.

#### THE CHINESE SITUATION.

In view of the assurances in regard to the safety of the foreign ministers at Peking, which have been given by the representative of the Chinese government at Washington, it is difficult to doubt that those men have been guarded through all the troubles by the authorities of Peking and that they will be restored to their countrymen without having received any serious injury. It seemed incredible that a nation even so badly governed as China should surrender the representatives of foreign nations to the fury of a mob, or that in its own capital it should be unable to protect those people whom it was bound by every tie of honor to preserve in safety. Of course until the foreign ministers are actually heard from direct there will be many who will doubt that they are still alive, but it seems to us that the probabilities are in favor of the truth of the statements made by the Chinese minister at Washington.

If it should turn out that the foreign ministers are safe, it would greatly simplify the Chinese situation, and make it very much easier to bring about a condition of peace. It will be shown that whatever may have been the actions of the Boers or the conduct of the mob in the cities of China, the Chinese government has not been at war with civilization, therefore an advance against Peking would become unnecessary and the existing Chinese difficulties might be easily patched up and matters go on as before without it being necessary to engage in any of those drastic schemes, which seem to be favored by Russia and in part by Germany. No doubt the death of the German minister will make that nation hard to conciliate, but the act of a mob which for the time had overcome the authority of the government will not be taken to throw the responsibility on China of so unfortunate an occurrence. It is greatly in the interest of Great Britain and also of the United States that the Chinese difficulty should be brought to a close speedily. They at all events have no interest in seeing China divided up among the great powers of Europe. Their desire is to see China established strong and prosperous, for it is only in this way that they can increase their trade with the great mongolian empire. On the other hand Russia and France are greedy for more territory, and no doubt they will be unwilling to let the present occasion drop without resorting to extreme measures against China. The true policy, however, of the friends of civilization is to place the Chinese government in such a position that it cannot be coerced by any single nation, and that it can defend its own territories wherever they are attacked, whether on the borders of Russia or on the seaboard.

#### RUSSIA AND THE UNITED STATES.

Ever since the American civil war there has been a sort of sentimental friendship between Russia and the United States based on the attitude of the Russian government towards Great Britain at the time of the Trent affair. Good Americans are taught to believe that the war then placed his fleet at the disposal of the United States, although if he had done so it would only have been a price to the British navy, which then out-ranked that of Russia five to one. Many times since then the absurdity of this sentimental attachment between the greatest despotism of modern times and a free republic has been pointed out, and there is no doubt that the Russian-American entente has only been kept alive by mutual dislike of Great Britain. It has been a part of the policy of the United States to be anti-British, and as Russia was steadily and consistently anti-British, they became friends. This alliance was only likely to be broken up as a result of the war in China. It received something of a shock during the war with Spain, when it was discovered that Russia united with the other continental powers in an attempt to bring pressure on the United States, which action was only prevented by the attitude of Great Britain. Much stronger reasons than any arising from the events of the Spanish war have come to the front since then. The people of the United States have developed a large trade with China, and this trade has been threatened by the attitude of Russia towards the mongolian empire, any possession on which falls into the hands of Russia being at once closed to the commerce of other nations. In fact Great Britain is the only European nation which opens all its ports to American vessels on equal terms, it being in that respect far more liberal than are our neighbors across the line. The people of the United States are free, as British people are free, as British people are free, and whatever views the Americans may entertain with regard to ports on this side of the Atlantic, they have a strong desire to see all the ports in China kept open.

It is now believed at Washington that Russia has plans of her own with respect to China which are not in accord with those of Germany, Great Britain and the United States, and that in fact the Russians desire to get possession of Peking themselves so that they may exact from the government of China whatever

indemnity in the shape of territorial compensation they may choose to demand. We may expect therefore to see during the next few months a great cooling off in the friendship between Russia and the United States. In fact it is quite possible that before long their attitude may be one of hostility to each other. This will be a great gain to the cause of civilization, because this absurd friendship between Russia and the United States was one of the chief elements in keeping the United States and Great Britain apart, and preventing them from doing good work in union with each other for the extension of commerce and the promotion of civilization.

#### "A BRITISH EXAMPLE."

This is the title of an article which the Sun published on the 30th of June last, with regard to the action of the British government with reference to the complaints which had been made respecting the management of the hospitals for the sick and wounded soldiers in South Africa. When the matter was brought up in the British House of Commons, Mr. Balfour, the government leader in that house, announced that they would assent to the appointment of a competent committee of medical men and others to investigate the whole matter. This prompted the Sun to explain in its most enthusiastic fashion, "that is the British way." And then the Sun went on as follows: "Had such a matter been brought up in the Canadian parliament the government would have resorted all efforts to have an investigation, and when forced by the current of public opinion to take action would either have appointed a parliamentary committee to make an investigation, or a commission with restricted powers, who would not be permitted to get at all the facts. That is the un-British way."

If Mr. Balfour had been of the same class of statesman as Sir Wilfrid Laurier and his colleagues he might have moved for the appointment of a commission to inquire into the hospital service at the time of the Crimean war or the Indian mutiny, ignoring the demand for an investigation. But one cannot imagine a British government stooping to the tactics of a Laurier, a Blair, a Tarte, or a Dr. Borden.

After this our readers will be prepared to believe that the commission appointed by the British government to inquire into the South African hospitals gave unlimited satisfaction to the public, but this, it appears, is not the case. Mr. Herbert W. Paul, who sends cable letters to the New York Herald, to which he signs his own name, and who is also a leader writer on the London Daily News, states that the commission is very far from satisfying the public. It consists of one judge, two doctors, the British of Glasgow and a railway manager. One of the members of the commission, Dr. Cunningham, of Dublin, is objected to because he holds an appointment under the war office, and the chief objections to the commission are its limited scope. On this point we quote Mr. Paul's words:

"Far graver grounds for dissatisfaction are the limited powers of the commissioners and the restricted scope of their inquiry, upon which Mr. Balfour's comments have been so forcibly in the papers. 'Lord Justice Romer has, of course, no judicial authority when not sitting in court. Neither he nor his colleagues can compel any one to come forward as a witness or insist upon any witness who has not come forward, answering any question he does not like.'"

"If a defaulting orderly were to incriminate himself they could give him no protection. Having no compulsory power they cannot effectively cross-examine. It results that the military medical authorities will supply the commission with such witnesses as they may think proper to produce."

"The confidence of the nation will not be secured by such a nondescript tribunal, which is neither a parliamentary committee nor a royal commission. A statutory commission created by act of parliament, such as the Parnell commission of 1889, would have possessed all the requisite powers, but then the whole subject, including the powers of the commissioners, would have been open to parliamentary debate and Mr. Balfour, for reasons best known to himself, has done his best to avoid it."

"He has refused to give as leader of the house a single hour for the purpose. 'It is only by exercising his right of moving an adjournment that Mr. Labouchere could raise the inquiry of the house. Mr. Balfour appointed two other members not connected with the medical profession.'"

It appears from the above that the British example, which the Sun regard with so much favor, instead of being one which the Canadian government should follow, is one which they should carefully avoid. Instead of doing his utmost to facilitate the inquiry, Mr. Balfour seems to have done his worst to limit its scope. That is not the way the government of Canada dealt with Mr. Moloch's army ratings investigation. A commission was quickly appointed, the evidence was taken, a report was made, and the whole evidence is now in possession of the public in the form of a blue book which was issued before the rising of parliament. We are inclined to think that the Canadian way is a better way than the British way, if the British way is properly represented by the action of the government with respect to the hospitals in South Africa. But it suited the Sun to make the comparison because the government of Canada is a Liberal government while that of Great Britain is Tory.

#### THE CLIMATE OF CHINA.

Most people are accustomed to think of China as a tropical country and so it is in part. Southern China touches the twentieth degree of north latitude which

is the latitude of Central India, of Nubia and of Cuba, but if there is a campaign this autumn against Peking, it will be in northern China, and Peking is on the fortieth degree of north latitude, the latitude of New York, Columbus, Ohio and Springfield, Illinois. It is unnecessary to inform a reader who has been born on this side of the Atlantic that these cities do not enjoy a tropical climate. The climate of eastern Asia corresponds very closely with the climate of eastern America, except, perhaps, that it is rather more severe. Peking has a cold winter temperature and a hot summer temperature; rains are frequent in summer and consequently the air is humid. Winter begins at Peking as early as the first of November and the air is cold and dry. The Peiho River is frozen and conditions are very similar to those which prevail in New Brunswick. A winter campaign in Northern China would therefore be difficult, so that the best time for the allies to make an advance on Peking would be to start as soon as the summer heat is over and endeavor to finish the campaign before the cold of winter sets in.

#### THE BOER DELEGATES.

The Boer delegates when last heard from were in Paris and now they appear to be making another tour of Europe, not because they hope to obtain any support from any of the nations of Europe, but simply for the reason that they have nothing else to do. If not exactly in the position of men without a country they are men without a home. Since they left Pretoria a few months ago everything has been changed. Their countrymen have been defeated and the capitals of the Free State and the Transvaal republic have been occupied by the enemy. Their homes and lands are now in possession of the British, and their leader is a fugitive lying in a Pullman car on some portion of the line of railway between Pretoria and Delagoa Bay. They therefore have no other means of spending their time and waiting the course of events but by remaining in Europe, but unless they were very well supplied with money before they left home, their board bills are likely to remain unpaid for it is understood that there is nothing in Europe for them to draw upon and President Kruger has no money to spare himself.

The total failure of the Boers' mission to Europe is interesting, because there is no doubt that before the war commenced, Kruger received assurances of European support in the event of a war with Great Britain. It would not be difficult to identify the persons who made these promises, but it is easy enough to see why they were not kept. The unexpected display of military and naval strength shown by Great Britain speedily put an end to the Boers' mission to Europe to keep their hands off, and the Boers were left to fight the battle alone with the result that these two South African republics have practically ceased to exist.

#### THE POSTMASTER GENERAL.

The Sun yesterday made an attack on the postmaster general which is a remarkable illustration of the lack of political ammunition which now affects the Tory party. The postmaster general is one of the members of the Liberal government whom the Tories cannot forgive because he has been the means of unearthing Tory recalcitrances. The blue book published by him which showed the manner in which contracts for the carrying of the mail were let and the preference given to political favorites by the late government, angered the Tories more than anything else that had occurred in connection with the change of government. They tried to make it appear that the letters which were published in the blue book were private letters, as if the marking of "private" on a letter relating to public contracts made it cease to be a public document. Since then Mr. Mulock has incurred additional ill-will from the Tories because he has been able to reduce the postage on letters, and that without any interference with the postal revenue. Achievements of this kind are considered to be good grounds for attacking him, and for trying to make it appear that he is a minister not worthy of the confidence of the people. We are inclined to think that the more Mr. Mulock is attacked by the Sun, the higher he will rise in the public estimation. A post office has been able to save money for the government and to reduce the rate of postage to the people is not likely to suffer any injury from the attacks of the Sun.

#### THE PHILIPPINES.

The Philippine question is likely to be an important feature in the coming presidential election in the United States. Among the most strenuous opponents of imperialism was Senator Hoar, of Massachusetts, and that without any interference with the postal revenue. Achievements of this kind are considered to be good grounds for attacking him, and for trying to make it appear that he is a minister not worthy of the confidence of the people. We are inclined to think that the more Mr. Mulock is attacked by the Sun, the higher he will rise in the public estimation. A post office has been able to save money for the government and to reduce the rate of postage to the people is not likely to suffer any injury from the attacks of the Sun.

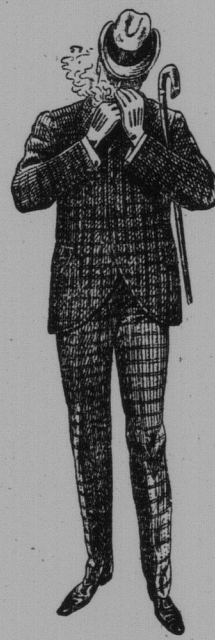
While President McKinley has undertaken to subdue the Philippine Islands, and declares they belong to us, and not to the people that dwell in them, making in that declaration a great mistake both of principle and of policy, yet both he and the Republican party have committed themselves to secure to them local self-government so far as they shall be found fit for it.

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found fit for it, and, being found fit for self-government, independence will surely follow.

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It will be seen from the above that Senator Hoar thinks that President McKinley will be compelled to grant independence to the people of the Philippines, yet it does not appear that there is anything in the present situation to warrant such a belief. The people who are supporting President McKinley most strongly are strong advocates of an imperialistic policy, and believers in the right of the United States to acquire territory in any part of the world. Many of them have declared that where the American flag is raised it must never be hauled down, and Mr. McKinley himself has never made any statement that would warrant the belief that he would be disposed to agree to give up the Philippines. There is no doubt that this new acquisition of the United States is likely to be a very costly one, and that the policy of imperialism will not be so popular a year or two hence as it is at present. But we can hardly think that the reaction will come early enough to do any good to Mr. Bryan, who for many reasons would be a most undesirable president.

#### THE HORSELESS CARRIAGE.

The horseless carriage has not been much in evidence on the streets of St. John although one or two of our citizens have invested in that kind of vehicle. Yet we believe that the horseless carriage is destined to effect a very considerable revolution in all the cities on this continent, and if it does so St. John will hardly escape the prevailing influence, although perhaps its streets are less suited to the horseless carriage than those of many other cities. The advantages of the use of this vehicle are so obvious that they hardly require to be mentioned. Apart from the first great cost of the horseless carriage, which of course is a very serious item, the maintenance of it is far less than that involved in keeping a horse and carriage which does regular work. The speed of a horseless carriage is superior to that of any horse that ever looked out of a collar, and it can be maintained without difficulty for any length of time. A horseless carriage does not tire, does not get winded, is not subject to disease and is always ready for the road. The one feature in our climate that is opposed to its use is that for a short time in the winter season our streets are covered with snow, and possibly at that time a horseless carriage could not be used, or at all events, not as advantageously as in summer. Yet even this difficulty might be overcome. Certainly our streets would be much

cleaner and kept in a better condition if the horseless carriage was substituted for the horse.

The Sun continues its efforts to defend Mr. Spruille and his Tory allies and to justify the brutal attack made on the son of the minister of militia who the other day was killed in South Africa. It says that "all Canadians sympathize with Dr. Borden in his great loss, but they do not forget the fathers of the fifty other Canadian heroes who lie dead in Africa, and of the hundreds who are yet in danger and in suffering." That no doubt is true in part, although we take leave to doubt the sympathy of the Tory members with Dr. Borden after the manner in which he has been treated by them. But the fifty other Canadian heroes who lie dead in South Africa were not attacked by a member of parliament. Their fathers were not told in the House of Commons that they were nowhere when they were likely to be in danger except from sickness. No results have been seen upon them or upon their parents as was the case with respect to Dr. Borden. The fact remains, and the people of Canada will not soon forget it, that Dr. Spruille with the approval of the other Conservatives in the House of Commons, made a bitter and uncalculated attack on the gallant young officer who has since died for his country, the only ground for that attack being that his father was the minister of militia in a Liberal government and therefore politically opposed to them. Dr. Spruille and his friends in the House of Commons enjoy the distinction of being the first Canadian public men to bring a vindictive spirit into Canadian public life.

The Cuban teachers who arrived in the United States recently to the number of some 800, for the purpose of studying methods of teaching in the latter country,

have had a very unpleasant experience. A great fuss was made over their arrival in the United States, but it seems that since they left Cuba new regulations have been made with regard to the schools, which are likely to deprive many of them of their salaries. The salaries of the teachers have been reduced by more than 20 per cent., and a regulation has been passed requiring all teachers to present themselves for examination by a certain date. As it will be impossible for most of the teachers now in the United States to return in time, the effect of this regulation would seem to be to deprive them of their salaries, which is rather a melancholy outcome of their trip. The astonishing part of it is that these regulations have been approved by General Wood, the governor of Cuba, although he must have been aware that it would injure about 800 teachers, who had gone to the United States with his approval to learn the United States methods of teaching.

The report of the engineer and superintendent of the sewerage and water supply for 1899 contains a very full account of the operations in connection with the laying of the new main from Spruce Lake to Carleton. This main, as our readers are already aware, is 24 inches in diameter and has a capacity of 2,500,000 gallons per day. The other 12-inch main has a capacity of 605,000 gallons. The overflow of Spruce Lake, the source of supply for the west side, is estimated to exceed upwards of 13,000,000 gallons a day. The entire cost of the Spruce Lake works up to the 31st day of December, 1899, including land and water rights and rights of way was \$106,029, of this sum not less than \$43,295 went for land damages. The engineer explains that these land damages were increased by the fact that the council ex-

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