

## The Free Press, LONDON, ONT.

Thursday, March 1, 1900.

### ON TO BLOEMFONTEIN.

Now that the renowned General Cronje is finally disposed of, a prisoner of war, sent off with his suite to some distant spot far away from the scene of his military adventures, the onward path of General Lord Roberts is thus far cleared. The deduction of some 4,000 fighting men who served under the defeated Boer leader, the very flower of his army, makes a big gap in the Boer army list, 1,000 or more having been killed or incapacitated by wounds, and about 3,000 prisoners. The public has scarcely had time enough thoroughly to consider the enormous importance of the defeat of Cronje as it affects the issue of the war. This blow to the Boer cause cuts two ways, first it depletes to a considerable extent the attacking and defensive forces of the enemy, then we have to take into consideration its moral influences upon the rest of the Boer forces, to adopt a metaphor, has lost his right arm. In Cronje, he had a man who was certainly the chief aide and abettor of the war; a man of deep intuitive genius, bold, fearless, full of strategy and resource. There is no one in the Transvaal or Free State to replace him. General Fourie is an aged man, broken in health, and already discouraged either as a fighter or a tactician. The "very head and front" of the Boer army, its chief adviser, the man of vast resources has disappeared from the scene leaving no heir apparent. If a British general is wounded or killed there are a dozen ready to step forward to see him, all, perhaps, equally as valuable as the one displaced. Not so with the Boers whose military genius in able men is circumscribed.

Finding it difficult, if not impossible, for the British army to force its way towards Pretoria from Natal across the dividing range of hills of which Laing's Nek is the chief pass, General Lord Roberts and General Kitchener, his chief of staff have decided for an advance through the Orange Free State. Cronje's surrender took place on the 27th February at a point on the Modder river named Paardeberg; taking an approximate calculation on the map this is distant from Bloemfontein the Free State capital about 70 to 80 miles. As there is no intermediate railway, the army must go a-foot, carrying its provisions, ammunition and camp equipment on wagons, and the guns drawn by horses or oxen; the impediments of such an army as General Roberts controls must be enormous inclusive of the baggage, ambulance corps, sick and wounded. The provisions for the soldiers and forage for the horses alone would entail an enormous cavalcade. With such a host, twenty miles a day would be doing good work; that would make the journey last four days, and it may therefore be concluded that it will be next Saturday or Sunday before the railway line which runs direct to Johannesburg, the English-built town, and thence to Pretoria is reached.

In his march east, it may be that General Roberts will follow the Modder river line so as to insure water for his oxen and his horses, as well as for his men. Such a route, for his main army, would bring him to Brandfontein a point some 40 miles north of Bloemfontein; it may be possible that while the heavy corps is taking this route a grand combine of cavalry with horse artillery will make a separate advance on the capital. These conjectures are presented as possible contingencies. The moral effect of an advance to, and occupation of, Bloemfontein of more advantage from a political than from a military standpoint. Assuming that General Roberts arrives there by Saturday or Sunday with his advance cavalry and artillery he is then distant 21 miles from Pretoria. His difficulties of transport from the Modder river so far overcome, how is he to obtain further supplies for his enormous army of 40,000 men and horses? He may adopt the usual methods of making requisitions upon the country such as the German commanders did in the invasion of France in 1870, paying cash for the supplies taken, or giving orders for payment on the Free State treasury. If the railway line from Port Elizabeth via Colesburg could be opened and kept open, as is the road now from Cape Town to Kimberley a distance of 647 miles, all supplies could reach him by rail direct from that port. It may be assumed, then, that before General Roberts can advance north from Bloemfontein, he will have to provide for direct communication clear from Port Elizabeth north. This necessity must be met by another army operating on the Orange river from Colesburg north which is at present under the control of the enemy.

The further north General Roberts proceeds from his base of supplies the greater his difficulties become, unless he can obtain supplies from the country through which he passes. A commander of a large army in an enemy's country, if denied supplies for which he is willing to pay in cash can threaten to make reprisals of burning towns and otherwise devastating the country so as to bring the stubborn inhabitants to their senses. Such a course should not be undertaken except under tremendous pressure, but very recent history justifies the expedient. Hitherto, according to a calculation made by the London "Graphic," a force of 22,000 men has had to be left to the rear to guard the railway communications from Cape Town, Port Elizabeth, East London and Durban. With an active energetic army to his rear, perhaps 10,000 more men will be necessary to maintain this absolutely necessary service.

General Lord Roberts' advance, then, now becomes a question of provisioning his army. Can he do it effectually from his own supplies to be forwarded or must he forage on the country around stripping it bare of food supplies leaving destitution in his wake? This is the problem to be solved. If the reports are accurate, and we have no reason to doubt them, a large body of Boer troops is assembling to check, to harass, the British advance. Much skirmishing, perhaps pitched battles, will take place before the British movement northward can take place in force apart from the food and general supplies question. Every mile of road that General Roberts covers will have to be guarded against raiding Boer commandoes who may assemble to his rear. No wonder, then, in view of these difficulties to be met and overcome that another fighting division leaves England at once for Cape Town. Even the relief of Ladysmith would not free many of General Buller's troops unless the Boers decided to leave Natal permanently to their Transvaal and Free State homes. Even, looking at the subject all round from its most favorable point of view, Lord Roberts' task will prove tedious and difficult, though not impossible.

### RUSSIA AND ENGLAND.

Has Russia a friendly understanding with England? A writer who has been an official of the British Government in respect of Afghan affairs maintains that Russia's recent advance in that quarter is probably based on such an agreement, which will result in a Russian embassy to Kabul in the spring. Some weeks ago it was given out that the Viceroy of India, Lord Curzon, who is a statesman of the advanced school with regard to Central Asia, had determined to reverse the policy of his predecessors and return to a state of "masterly inactivity." It is explained by this writer what was meant by the advanced policy initiated by the late Sir Bartle Frere. It never meant the conquest of Afghanistan, but merely the establishment of embassies or agents in all parts of Central Asia. And in Lord Curzon's book of travel through Central Asia it is clearly seen that Lord Curzon is in favor of a very friendly understanding with Russia on the one hand, and of a vigorous frontier policy on the other.

In the present condition of things it would be completely in harmony with Lord Curzon's avowed policy that Russia should be invited to send an agent to Kabul so that the British and Russian agents may be able to thoroughly understand the condition of affairs on the spot. The time has come when there must be an understanding with Russia with regard to Afghanistan, even as there is with regard to Persia. Persia is considered within the sphere of Great Britain's. But the advanced school of statesmanship in regard to Central Asia maintains that the whole country should be opened out by railways, and if Ameer Abdur Rahman had been amenable to reason there would have been a railway from Samarkand to Peshawar by this time. With a Russian embassy in Kabul and a thorough understanding between Russia and Great Britain, Central Asia will be rapidly opened to commerce, and there will be no longer that closed door which has been such a hindrance to the spread of civilization. The "do-nothing policy" of Lord Lawrence was intended to draw an impassable line along the foot of the hills and to allow the Afghan tribes to do as they pleased. But the Peshawar Valley is a part of Afghanistan inhabited by Afghan people and yet under British rule, and here in the real bone of contention between the ruler of Afghanistan and the British Government. It is an open sore with the Afghan Amirs. But Lord Curzon does not propose as Lord Lawrence did in the case of the Indian mutiny of 1857, to bring the frontier line of British India back to the River Indus. On the contrary his policy is, by showing a firm front, to convince Russia that it is her interest to come to some complete understanding regarding the Afghan tribes.

There is now no analogy between the condition of things in 1857 when the Amier of Kabul received a Russian mission with honor, and turned a deaf ear to the friendly offers made by Lord Salisbury as the Secretary of State for India under Lord Beaconsfield's administration. The establishment of a Russian embassy at Kabul in the light of the recent Afghan war would simply mean war to the knife with Russia, unless, according to the line of action so clearly indicated in Lord Curzon's well-known book, a friendly understanding exists between Russia and England.

Sometimes a good word is said for the treatment of prisoners by the Boers at Pretoria. Here is the story of a Dundee resident who was captured by Boers and lodged in Pretoria jail. He says:—"Our prison door was opened at 5.30 in the morning, and then our morning meal came around, consisting of mealie meal porridge in a tin dish and a piece of bread. For dinner we had bread and boiled beef, while the water that the latter was boiled in was carried around, and we each got a pannikin. In the evening we got mealie meal and porridge. After the evening meal our rooms were searched as well as our persons, the roll was called, and we were then locked up for the night. On Christmas day they allowed us a little hot water to make some tea, and a few days before we left they allowed us to buy a loaf of wood to boil water for coffee once a week. We were allowed to buy any food we wanted from outside. We were not allowed to talk with the other prisoners, and we had each our bit of ground marked off. One thing I wish to bring to the notice of the public is that, while we treat the Boer prisoners to good food, tea and coffee, our colonial volunteers in Pretoria jail have to submit to prison rules as if they are convicts, and get nothing to eat but dry bread, mealie meal, porridge and corned beef."

### BIDDY'S LETTER TO PADDY AT THE WAR.

Och, Paddy, my heart throbs with pleasure As I read of your deeds at the war, Shure I said when I heard you were going That the Boers right and left would take care And they say when they heard you were coming That for shelter behind walls they fled, So that nought could be seen of their armies But smoke and the top of their head, Shure it's mine to take shelter on hill tops, And were the white flag in the breeze? And then when the British cease firing To turn round and shoot who they please. They're a shakin' and a treacherous party, But I'm thinkin' they soon will have done With their blidin' and shootin' and foolin' For the British want none of their fun, Och, my heart beats in union with yours, Pat; Shure I long to be first in the fray, It's myself that would soon be beside you, 'Tis wasn't for crossin' the say; So I'll send your shillelagh instead, Pat, I'm shure you were in a nice fix When you found you had left it behind you, And the colonel cried, 'Lads, bayonets fix!' They say they've an old chap called Kruger Who would do for us all if he dare, Let him taste your shillelagh some mornin' And send me a lock of his hair. So good luck to you Paddy, my darlin', This is all I can say in my note, It's only the Queen that can give you A medal to wear in your coat. But when you come back to old Ireland, And wear a red, white and blue, I'll do what you asked me, dear Paddy, I'll give my heart's keeping to you, Greenland. BIDDY.

Mrs. Adair, who is now representing the American hospital ship Maine in the United States, has received this letter from the Duchess of Roxburgh:—"I write to tell you that I read both your circulars to the Queen. She was much interested and much pleased and begged me to express to you her high appreciation of all that has been done by the kindness and generosity of the Americans. It has deeply touched her. Her Majesty knows, too, that your son has gone."

A surgeon in the French army has just discovered that stamp collectors may be the means of disseminating tuberculosis by means of the stamps. A man in his employ was a great stamp collector, says the Medical Press and Circular, and occupied his spare time in fixing the stamps in albums or on sheets of gummed paper for sale, moistening the stamps for the purpose with his tongue. Three hundred of the stamps were placed in sterilized water, and with some of the water eight guinea pigs were inoculated. Each died with characteristic tuberculous lesions. The surgeon, says the journal, should be very careful in the future, and stamps near their mouths in order to moisten them, and foreign stamps should be disinfected in a 5 per cent. solution of iodine in acid before adding them to collections.

Mr. J. S. S. Brame delivered a lecture at the London Institution on "Modern Explosives." Having shown a number of interesting experiments, he said that for an explosive they wanted a substance that would generate a large quantity of gas during combustion of some of its constituents, that gas becoming greatly expanded by the heat evolved. A cubic inch of nitro-glycerine would produce 1,200 cubic inches of gaseous product, and this, owing to the heat generated, would expand to eight times that volume. The lecturer referred to the charges which had taken place in artillery during the last forty years by the substitution of guns of larger calibre, the introduction of rifling, and the use of the high explosive. As a consequence the propelling charge had to be arranged as to give a gradually increasing pressure of gases behind the projectile until it reached the muzzle.

Mrs. Langtry has met with unbounded success in Philadelphia in her entertainment for the benefit of the British soldiers in South Africa. Every available part of the Broad Street Theatre was crowded with the best of society to hear Mrs. Langtry recite "The Absent-minded Beggar." A Philadelphia despatch says:—"A busy woman she was as she passed from tier to tier, before the performance began and between the numbers, disposing of copies of the 'Absent-minded Beggar.' They are throwing Mrs. Langtry a dollar at my feet," she said to the reporter, radiant with delight at her success. "All the world seems here, and I am so delighted that I never looked so hard in my life. Every one is so kind to me." She certainly worked like a trooper for the families of the soldiers. Mrs. Langtry, who is in a box with her husband, the British consul, Mrs. Langtry added, "has sent me her card, inviting me to be her guest. I'm going up at once," and away she tripped. Generous applause, which greeted every number on the programme, was made especially manifest upon Mrs. Langtry's appearance on the stage. After her recital of "The Absent-minded Beggar," the applause was so hearty and prolonged that she was compelled to respond with an encore, reciting "The Lesson of the Fan," and later "The Women of Great Britain," which she had to follow with Alfred Austin's "To Arms." At the close of the entertainment Mrs. Langtry stood in the lobby of the theatre and auctioned off, at good prices, a lot of Red Cross bags, made of khaki cloth. As a result of the afternoon's performance the fund for British soldiers will receive more than \$3,000.

### A DEMAND FOR COAL.

New York, Feb. 28.—There was a rumor in coal circles today that the British Government, through an outside party, was making inquiries as to whether it could secure 1,000,000 tons of bituminous coal here, says the Mail and Express. There appears to be some trouble in Great Britain, Austria, at the close of the entertainment Mrs. Langtry stood in the lobby of the theatre and auctioned off, at good prices, a lot of Red Cross bags, made of khaki cloth. As a result of the afternoon's performance the fund for British soldiers will receive more than \$3,000.

## IN THE LEGISLATURE.

### The Debate on the Address Not Yet Concluded.

#### MR. LUCAS' TELLING SPEECH.

Instead of a Royal Commission to Shelve the West Elgin Frauds, We Want Detectives to Run the Criminals Down and a Public Trial in a Criminal Court.

#### Special from Our Own Correspondent.

Toronto, Ont., Feb. 28.—The debate on the address was resumed in the Legislature this afternoon. Mr. Lucas (Centre Grey) picked up the thread of his speech where he dropped it yesterday. It was rather startling, he said, to find the Attorney-General contending that no responsibility rested on his department to take steps to ferret out and convict the criminals guilty of these election frauds; yet that same honorable gentleman, before sitting down, moved a resolution practically congratulating himself on having taken those very steps. These positions were plainly inconsistent. The contention, as put down yesterday, could not possibly bring to light anything but what was already known. Instead of royal commissions to solve questions, we wanted detectives to gather the criminals together; constables to place them in the prisoners' dock, and a public trial in a criminal court. (Applause.)

Mr. Gibson asked why an investigation was not insisted upon at the time when the conduct of the officials could be brought into and the criminals punished. "Drowning men grasp at straws," retorted Mr. Lucas. He was prepared to acquit the Government of any wrongdoing if they would but do right now. All they were asking the Government to do now was to give them a free, full and unlimited investigation into all the classes of fraud and all the classes of conspiracy that led up to these crimes. (Applause.) The Government had suggested that the two parties go together to put down corruption. As had been said, the best method to put down corruption was to punish the offenders. Well, let them get together and go up to the hills. The only reason that the Government did not prosecute and investigate and thus relieve themselves from the jibes of the Opposition and the censure of an outraged public must be that they were afraid to get to the bottom of the conspiracy. They were afraid of the disclosures, and they were afraid of the exposure. (Applause.)

More confessions they dared not face. One confession was as good as another. He defended the appointment of the financial commission and its personnel. He concluded by asserting that if the West Elgin cheaters were not put down, the Government would be the first to cry out if the Attorney-General started an investigation, and they would argue the matter with the left to local officials.

Dr. Barr (Dufferin) argued that in the Government scheme for the colonization of New Ontario preference should be given to Canadians over foreigners. As to electoral corruption in West Elgin, the acts of the former Conservative Government at Ottawa were not pertinent to the issue and could not be pleaded in extenuation. "If there is a man in this House or in Ontario," said the doctor, "who believes that these ball games were destroyed by Barrum's museum as a curiosity," (Laughter.)

Mr. Malcolm (Centre Bruce) told a few stories, indicating that he had been elected as an independent, but since coming to the House had arrived at the conclusion that the Ross government was all right, and he pressed the opinion that the province was in a good financial position. Mr. Carscallen moved the adjournment of the House at six o'clock. There was no night session.

### Phases of Russian Military Life in Vladivostok.

The Novoe Vremya of St. Petersburg recently printed a series of articles from a supposed military correspondent in Vladivostok, in which is described the life that the Muscovite soldier leads in Russia's port on the North Pacific ocean. It is said that in the town itself the troops lead a comparatively easy existence. The unmarried officers live in barracks as a rule, although some of them club together in a large house or pavilion and divide expenses. Food is very cheap, a dinner and supper daily costing only \$2 a week. The newly founded Marine Club supplies meals at private houses, and at officers' club-houses. Meat and eggs, which come from Manchuria, cost, respectively, 7 cents a pound and from 75 cents to \$1.25 a hundred. Potatoes cost 12 cents a pound, and milk is to be had for about 4 cents a quart. Other dairy products are scarce and dear, but the so-called Siberian butter costs 22 cents a pound. The price of tea was doubled since the introduction of the tariff, but still cheaper than it can be obtained in St. Petersburg.

The writer in the Novoe Vremya says that officers have little to do, wine and card playing have led to the ruin of many of the unmarried ones. Daily life is subjected to very little variety. After three years' service a leave of absence for six months is granted an officer, but this furlough is rarely made use of on account of the long and costly journey to European Russia. When the Trans-Siberian railway is completed the authorities, it is said, will make special terms for officers going on furlough. There are private theatricals and occasional balls; there is also a public theatre. The married officer lives almost exclusively with his family, and is to be seen at the clubs for the most part only at concerts and dramatic performances. Public life is being developed very

slowly, but there are said to be growing signs of animation in it. Dwellings in the town proper are very dear and very difficult to find, and this want of accommodation is felt severely by the families of officers. In this respect the artillery officers suffer most, since the greater part of the artillery is stationed over against the town and at the fortifications on the opposite side of the bay.

#### Modern War Conditions.

Mr. Bloch, an eminent Polish author, in his works on "The Future of War" gives in a few propositions the results of modern investigation on the subject of strategy, as follows:—

1. That the moral superiority of attack would be more than counterbalanced by the tremendous accession of strength to the defenders which results from improved small arms.
2. That battles would seldom be decisive.
3. That the victors would not be in a position to pursue and that the retreating force would fall back on new positions a few miles to the rear, and intrench themselves.
4. That infantry would be prostrated after battle and not in a position to carry successes home.
5. That frontal attacks would be impossible without great superiority of numbers.
6. That night marches and night attacks would have to be resorted to.
7. That intrenchments would be properly adapted to modern fire would be invincible.
8. That the troops on the defensive would be more likely to surprise than to be surprised.
9. That the future war will be a war of sieges and entrenched positions.
10. That invisible sharpshooters would mow down hundreds.
11. That an abortive attack would lead to the attacker intrenching himself, and the exchange of roles.
12. That ambulance work would be carried on under almost impossible conditions, owing to long-range fire, which would lead to accusations of violation of the Red Cross.
13. That satisfactory reconnaissance would be much more difficult than formerly. (M. Bloch declared that only infantry could reconnoitre successfully.)
14. That the loss in officers would be disproportionate.
15. That troops could only advance along railway lines.
16. That with equal resolution war would last longer than in the past.
17. That turning movements with immense numerical superiority would be the only means of gaining decisive victories.

#### HEAVY STORMS.

Snow, Sleet and Rain Raging West and South.

Chicago, Ill., Feb. 28.—Local traffic was blocked today in parts of the city by the snow-storm which started last night, and trains were much delayed. The weather bureau announced today that the snowfall was the heaviest in years, averaging nearly seven inches in the Middle Western States. It was stated that the conditions gave no promise of any abatement of the storm before to-morrow. In Chicago traffic was carried on with the greatest difficulty, the streets being blocked by great drifts of snow. A mile of carriages were tied up on the north side line for hours, and in other portions of the city the blockade was so effective that many people were compelled to wade through the snow on foot to their places of business. Reports received from various cities in Tennessee, Mississippi and Louisiana indicate that the storm was generally down the Mississippi Valley to a point not far south of St. Louis, Mo.

St. Louis, Mo., Feb. 28.—The snow that fell yesterday to a depth of several inches was followed last night by sleet and rain that froze as it came down and covered everything with a thick coating of ice, and hundreds of trees are broken. For several hours street car traffic was almost entirely blocked. So far as known there were no casualties, but several horses were killed by live wire, and a number of persons had narrow escapes from death. Railroad trains were badly delayed.

Kansas City, Mo., Feb. 28.—The southwest wind was under a mantle of snow that lies from two to three feet deep on the level. Trains are late in all directions, and telegraph and telephone facilities are badly interrupted.

#### "MAJOR" McBRIE DEFEATED.

South Mayo Evidently Has No Use for Boer Leaders.

London, Feb. 28.—The result of the election, which took place in South Mayo yesterday, for representative in Parliament in succession to Michael Davitt, who resigned as a protest against the Boer war, was as follows:—John O'Donnell, Nationalist, 2,410; Major John McBride, Nationalist, 427. Major McBride was the organizer of the Irish brigade in the service of the Transvaal Boers. At the last election in South Mayo Mr. Davitt was re-elected unopposed.

#### FIRE FLASHES.

Chesley, Ont., Feb. 27.—About nine o'clock last night smoke was seen issuing from the basement of R. Halliday & Co.'s general store and in a few minutes after flames burst through the first floor of the grocery and shoe department and spread to the dry goods and millinery departments. The fire had gained so much headway before the firemen got a stream of water to play on the interior of the building that everything of an inflammable nature was burnt or badly scorched. It took three hours of hard work before the fire was got under control. It is supposed the fire started about the furnace in the cellar. Loss on stock is estimated at \$14,000. Insured in the Gore Mutual for \$8,000. The building is owned by Harriet Bros., of Minn. Dakota, and is badly damaged, but fully covered by insurance.

New York, Feb. 28.—The greatest fire Newark, N. J., ever experienced swept through the retail dry goods district last night, destroying a score or more buildings. The loss is estimated at over \$1,000,000. Several lives may have been lost and several persons were badly burned. The fire started in W. V. Snyder's department store at Broad and Cedar streets, a four-story building of seventy-five feet frontage and extending two hundred feet along Cedar street. The stock was valued at half a million dollars, and nothing was saved. The building was burned to the ground.

Portfolio No. 7 is here. We have a few of No. 6 left. If you want them, call quick.

# Kingsmill's Spring Talk.

## Substantial Facts Governing the Pocketbook.

KINGSMILL'S is a DRY GOODS STORE—nothing else.  
KINGSMILL'S buys and sells for CASH.  
KINGSMILL'S CAREFUL MANAGEMENT is proverbial.  
KINGSMILL'S buys of the MANUFACTURER.  
Every Way the Gain is Yours.

## Three Pegs of Comfort

MARCH has come in like a lion, with victory crowning his head. He shakes his mane, and his foes kneel before him. So with the small dealers. Kingsmill's has weathered the storms of thirty years. Smaller dealers have come and gone with each recurring season. Our commercial prosperity is based upon the CASH-BUYING SYSTEM. Cash in hand to the manufacturer means large reductions in price to you, my retail purchasing friend. We give you the benefit of the discount. Our cash commands the best at the very lowest price.

This is NOT A DEPARTMENTAL STORE—it is simply a first-class, conservatively conducted dry goods store—nothing else. We believe that every man should be the recipient of the benefits accruing from his own particular calling or trade. We have no desire to usurp the rights of the grocer, the hardware man or the crockery dealer. We have devoted all our energies and our money and time to the BUILDING UP of the DRY GOODS BUSINESS, and to nothing else.

Our CAREFUL MANAGEMENT is PROVERBIAL. We employ only polite, proficient and careful clerks. We teach them the closest economy. We waste nothing, hence nothing is lost. "WASTE NOT—WANT NOT" is a good motto in any business, and especially in ours, as many have found at our Great Remnant Sale. THIS ECONOMY is YOUR GAIN. We have some thirty-nine different departments in which to exercise this economy. They are our source of income, but the volume of saving is unusually large when you come to look it all over. Think, then, what a percentage is yours, my friend, if you deal with

# Kingsmill's, The Leaders in Styles.

The First in the Market with New Goods,  
The Great Mammoth Establishment of Canada.

WHAT STYLES ARE FASHIONABLE?  
ASK KINGSMILL'S.  
WHAT ARE THE SPECIALLY NEW IMPORTATIONS?  
ASK KINGSMILL'S.

Who Knows Most About the Dry Goods  
Trade in Canada,

# KINGSMILL'S