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## THE SITUATION.

Lord Wolsley admits that the Boers have proved much more powerful than had been supposed, and the statement is made in other quarters, for which official warrant is claimed, that 10,000 more men will be forwarded. Our second contingent is not required and will not go. General White has not only held his own at Ladysmith, but has continued to make spirited and successful sorties, in which a large number of Boers were slain and many prisoners made; one account, which carries exaggeration, put the number of the latter at 2,000. The Boers captured and held for a short time the town of Colenso, but were driven out. The Boer column was attacked in the rear with great slaughter. This was a great step toward re-establishing communication with Ladysmith. The railway bridge over the Tregula River was intact when an armored train reached there last Saturday evening. The Boers bombarded the British camp at Mafeking for thirty-six hours, but little damage was done. The fire of the British rifles and Maxim guns finally produced a panic among the enemy, ending in flight. Col. Plumer is reported to be making his way from Rhodesia to the relief of Mafeking. At Kimberley the Boers set the Veldt on fire, and the fire reaching a magazine which contained thirty-five tons of dynamite, caused a terrific explosion. Some of the above statements as to what was done at Ladysmith and farther south want confirmation. There is a general belief in England that things are taking a turn which will in future bring more favorable tidings; General Buller, who dates from Capetown, is now directing the operations.

It is now known that the campaign in Natal was at first influenced by considerations other than purely military, the protection of places in the apex and of Ladysmith. This, it is said, was due to local pressure. The fact recalls the trouble made by Mr. Merriman, a member of the Cape Government, who on a previous occasion insisted on controlling the action of General Gordon, from whom he met objection. If civilians in the colonies undertake to direct the Imperial military force things are sure to go wrong. Ladysmith, surrounded as it is by commanding heights, is just such a place as most Generals would refuse to select

for a battle ground, and this is true of the places farther north where battles have been fought. There is an expectation that General Buller will avoid mistakes of this kind, and refuse to give the enemy an advantage of ground, where that is possible. Many of the greatest generals of all ages have steadily refused to fight on ground which put them at a disadvantage, if they could avoid it. The apology for General White having acted upon a different plan is that the loyal people of the places he defended deserved some return for their sacrifices. This is true, their conduct deserves all praise; but, in the end, the plan of campaign which will bring the war soonest to a successful close at the least cost of life is best for all concerned.

A second contingent for South Africa was offered by the Governor-General, with the consent of the advisers of the Crown at Ottawa. New South Wales has sent forward a second contingent, and two other Australian colonies do not think it necessary to send a second, their loyalty being sufficiently established, and a real need for a further contribution of troops not being apparent to them. The journal which is supposed to express the views of Mr. Tarte, sees no difference, in principle, between sending one or two contingents without the previous authority of Parliament; so that the responsibility of doing so might be incurred a second time if there were reasons for haste. A question of doing something in connection with the militia came up in 1837. The inhabitants of Kingston, in public meeting assembled, had offered to raise a volunteer corps, and so informed the Governor, Sir Francis Bond Head. Mr. Joseph, in replying to this request, November 6, said: "His Excellency knowing that the constitution most jealously interdicts the creation by the executive of any military force, whatever, which has not been authorized by Parliament, desires me to observe to you that he could not without the concurrence of the Provincial Legislature sanction for any purpose the formation of a volunteer corps." On the present occasion the question, which was not the same, was settled in a different way; but that way, though right then, is no precedent for us; and the present decision will be justified by Parliament, as soon as possible after it meets.

The tripartite partnership between England, Germany and the United States in the Samoan islands, which occasioned some friction, from time to time, has come to an end; Germany getting the islands of Opolu, Tavil and the small adjacent islands; Tatuila and the adjacent small islands going to the United States. Great Britain renounces all claim to the Samoan islands and gets compensation elsewhere; Germany renouncing any claim to the Tonga or Friendly islands and the Savage Island, in favor of Great Britain, and ceding to her Choiseul and San Isabel, two of the easterly islands of the Solomon group, with their insular surrounding. The concession of these two Solomon islands will be especially grateful to Australia, though doubtless they would have been better pleased if Germany had not retained a right to enlist free native laborers in the whole of the Solomon group, including the two which she has ceded to Great Britain. This does not end the territorial readjustments between the two countries. The British and German possessions on the gold coast, West Africa, will be bounded by the Falka River, to the 9th degree of latitude, thence north by a line to be determined by a mixed commission. The countries of Mamprusi and Gambasa are to go to Great Britain, and the countries of the Yeudi and Chucosi to Germany. While France looks enviously on, Great Britain and