

The Spectator

FOR THE

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WEEK ENDING SATURDAY, JANUARY 6, 1900.

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* * The Editors cannot undertake to return Manuscript, in any case.

NEWS OF THE WEEK.

THE general military situation has not changed much since last week, but there have been movements in the southern and western sections of the theatre of war which have been, on the whole, favourable to the British. They

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correspondents,

though allowed to tell us about the activity of the Boers, give no indications as to what are General Buller's "only" when they saw the enemy." Early in the action

intentions,—whether, that is, he is going to make a turning movement to the west or to the east. Whether a turning movement, if made, will be of wide or narrow compass, or whether he will again make a frontal attack, having, of course, first heavily bombarded the enemy's positions. The only positive pieces of news about the position in Natal are the following. The Tugela is falling, and Buller has now nearly thirty thousand men and some sixty-six guns of various kinds. Our scouting and reconnoitring has immensely improved, as we constantly hear of small bodies of our men, both regular and irregular, surprising parties of the enemy and inflicting losses on them which, if slight, are worrying, while themselves having no losses. Again, the correspondents give the traction engines which have arrived a very good character, and Mr. Winston Churchill describes them as drawing trains over the veldt with great rapidity. "manoeuvring and climbing steep gradients with apparent ease," and declares that they are "capable of drawing heavy supplies anywhere." As regards the enemy's entrenchments, we are told that they are being extended daily, and now cover nearly twenty miles. It is also reported that on Thursday morning our big guns vigorously shelled the Boer positions, and "smashed" a portion of them. Whether any real damage was done is, of course, impossible to say. With such knowledge we must be content till next week. Mean

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