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The Fenelon Falls Gazette.

Friday, Feb. 16th, 1900.

The Transvaal War.

The news from the Transvaal during the past few days has been far from satisfactory, and there is no telling how long the war, now in its fifth month, may drag on. Some elation was caused by the capture of a Boer position, said to be of considerable strategical importance, but nothing appears to have come of it. Buller, we were told, held "the key to Ladysmith," but now it is practically admitted that the relief of Ladysmith is impossible without a sacrifice of life that would be unjustifiable. What Gen. White and his garrison will do remains to be seen. On Christmas Day Lieut. Winston Churchill said that the place could hold out for a month, within which time it was confidently expected relief would arrive; but more than seven weeks have elapsed, and the beleaguered town will, apparently, have to surrender, although part of Buller's force was said, a few days ago, to be within ten miles of it. The crossing of the Tugela River for the third time is now admitted, and Buller's next move is awaited with great anxiety. It will depend, of course, upon the orders of Lord Roberts, who has the supreme command, and is now at Modder River with about 35,000 men. The Boers are said to be massed in great strength north of the Tugela, and to have a large number of guns trained upon the two bridges across that river. Making has been practically relieved, but the Boers are increasing their numbers and guns around Kimberley, the inhabitants of which were said, a few days ago, to be eating horse-flesh, but thirty oxen are slaughtered every day in Ladysmith. Kimberley is the present abiding place of Mr. Cecil Rhodes, who some months ago said, "There is not the slightest chance of war; the armed strength of the Boers is the greatest unprieked bubble in the world; Kruger will bluster and bluff and bully, but it will take a great deal to make him fight." Her Majesty's Ministers in Cape Colony said the exact opposite, and warned the Government that they were on a dangerous track; but they chose to believe Mr. Rhodes, and the result was a, so far, disastrous war, which a great many Englishmen of all ranks in society think might have been and ought to have been avoided. The London (Eng.) Times says:

"The war has taught us many lessons, but the lesson which sums up all the rest is that our land forces, as at present organized, are inadequate to the wants of the empire. That is the one clear truth which has sunk deeply into the mind of the nation. Campaigns between regular armies are almost certain to be decided in these days with a rapidity which will leave no opportunity to redeem initial errors. Only because of the special character of the Boer war is such an opportunity now offered us, and Lord Roberts, we are confident, will be able to make effective use of it. In this case the defects of our military system have cost us reverses and, under other conditions, might have brought upon us irretrievable disaster. We have in our army, it is true, an invulnerable defensive force, but in an empire like ours offensive operations may any time become indispensable, and these cannot, in many instances, be conducted by our fleet. Realizing, as we do, that our military system has proved

seriously deficient, we have made up our minds to amend it with the least possible delay, but that does not mean that a reform so vital and extensive should be attempted without a thorough investigation and mature deliberation."

Latest.—Generals French and Gordon have captured five Boer laagers, with their supplies. The British loss was small.

The Dominion Parliament.

The fifth session of the eighth Parliament has opened with a genuine sensation, for the debate upon the address, which last year occupied over four weeks and was participated in by a third of the total members of the House, was disposed of in two sittings, only two on each side, in addition to the mover and seconder, taking part therein. All that was necessary to be said, however, was easily compressed into those six speeches. Sir Charles Tupper and Mr. Foster exercised their rights to the full of criticizing every aspect of the Government's policy, doing so much more effectively than if the usual procedure had been followed of reiterating those criticisms through a score or two of their supporters, until such points as they were able to make were entirely lost sight of in wearisome and unending verbiage. The brief discussion was equally advantageous to the Government, for it enabled the Premier and Sir Richard Cartwright to present a concise, clear-cut and complete answer to their opponents, and the country is now in possession of the real situation, from which they will have no difficulty in drawing accurate deductions. The Opposition leader confined his remarks to a criticism of the Government's policy in the matter of the South African contingent, and that criticism consisted of a two-fold complaint, first that the Government had refused to act until compelled to do so by the unmistakable expression of public opinion; and, second, that when action was taken it stopped far short of what it should have been, inasmuch as no provision was made for paying our volunteers out of the Canadian treasury after they arrived at the seat of war. The Premier replied to each of these charges categorically and conclusively. He reminded the House that he had clearly stated at the first that the Government had no power whatever to spend the public money in military operations without direct authority from the people expressed through their representatives in Parliament, or otherwise; that Parliament, although it had been in session but a short time previously, had not anticipated the emergency that arose, and that it was therefore absolutely necessary that the mandate of the country should be expressed beyond all peradventure before the Government could act. The desired expression of the popular will was given, and instantly action was taken in compliance therewith, and so thoroughly well prepared was the Militia Department for all contingencies that, within three weeks of the call being made, the battalion was mobilized and on its way to the scene of conflict. As to the second charge, that the Government had fallen short of their whole duty in not undertaking to pay the men after their arrival in Cape Town, Sir Wilfrid laid before the House the correspondence with the Imperial War Office, which showed conclusively that the offer had been made and specifically declined, upon the ground that "Her Majesty's Government were of opinion that the arrangement by which pay at imperial rates should be provided from the imperial exchequer from the date of disembarkation in South Africa should be applied to all the colonial forces." "Therefore," added the Premier "you have the principle laid down and determined by the imperial authorities and absolutely put outside the pale of discussion." But while it was thus shown to be impossible to meet the entire cost of the Contingent as the Government and people of the Dominion would have preferred, the Premier demonstrated how completely his Cabinet was in accord with public opinion, by intimating that it was the intention to ask Parliament to provide a fund sufficient to pay the men the difference between imperial rate and the rate they would receive under Canadian regulations, such monies to be held in trust from them until they returned, or to be placed at their disposal of their families during their absence. This announcement took the fight out of the Opposition, for it went further than they had at any time suggested, and substituted a just and feasible proposition for their proposal, which had been shown to be impracticable. It had been the intention of the Opposition to propose a grandiloquent amendment, which could have been utilized, they fondly hoped, to some purpose during the next campaign, but the ground was knocked from under their feet, and there was nothing left to make a pretense of fighting for. The result was that when Sir Richard Cartwright sat down, there was not a man to be found on the Op-

position side to continue the debate. They ignominiously retired from the battlefield without even the honors of war, and the motion for the address was carried without a dissenting voice.

Hair Splitting as a Fine Art.

Thursday afternoon's sitting of Parliament was enlivened by a somewhat remarkable speech by the leader of the Opposition, in which he made a most strenuous effort to repudiate the charge which has been frequently made and pretty thoroughly proved, that the Conservative party, both in power and in Opposition, has made a practice of appealing to racial and religious prejudices to secure party advantages. In the course of this endeavor he treated the House to a somewhat extended autobiographical sketch altogether too discursive to follow in detail, but one instance may be given as a fair sample of the whole. Sir Charles complained that Sir Wilfrid Laurier had in 1896 falsely charged him with appealing to the electors of Manitoba to vote for him, an Englishman and a Protestant, rather than for Laurier, a Frenchman-Canadian and a Catholic. That, said the Opposition leader, was a gross misstatement of what occurred. The fact was that he was addressing the Conservatives of Manitoba who were deserting him, and he said to them, "Why desert me, an Englishman and a Protestant, because of my course on the school question, to vote into power a French-Canadian and a Catholic who is pledged to do even more for the minority than I am?" This distinction without a difference was greeted with loud laughter from the Government benches, and it is more than probable that it will be received in a similar manner throughout the country.

Beginning the New Year Well.

The trade returns between Canada and the old country for the first month of the present year are exceptionally gratifying, for the increases in the principal lines of export are in excess of any previous month. The increase in the value of wheat imported from Canada is \$500,000; of bacon, \$190,000; cattle, \$165,000; flour, \$115,000; oats, \$65,000; lumber, \$60,000; fish and timber, \$30,000 each; cheese and hams, \$20,000 each; and eggs \$10,000; or a total increase in these articles of over \$1,200,000. As an offset against this, there is a small decrease in sheep and horses, pease, corn, butter and pulp. But the total decreases are less than \$200,000, making a net increase for the month of considerably over \$1,000,000. British imports into Canada also show a general increase, especially in woollens, carpets and metal materials.

Major-General Hutton Has Resigned.

A special despatch from Ottawa to the Toronto papers states that Major-General Hutton, commander of the Canadian militia, resigned on Saturday last, and that his resignation was accepted. All our readers are aware that hard feeling has existed for a considerable time between Gen. Hutton and Lieut.-Col. Sam Hughes; but only last week we copied and commented upon a despatch to the effect that the "breach had been bridged," and that Sam would be recommended to a position on Lord Strathcona's force. When it was said some time ago that the correspondences between Hutton and Hughes would be produced in Parliament, Gen. Hutton more than hinted that its production would be a bad thing for Sam; but the General's resignation gives rise to a suspicion that the correspondence may contain something of which he himself has no reason to feel proud. It has always been understood that the trouble was caused by a breach of military etiquette on the part of Sam Hughes, which, his friends alleged, was provoked by the haughty bearing and dictatorial language of Gen. Hutton. The probability is that both were more or less to blame; but the resignation of the commander of the militia is certainly a feather in Sam's cap, as the storm that was brewing in Parliament on his behalf was undoubtedly the cause of it, and it is said that, "if the worst had come to the worst, Hutton might have been dismissed." The despatch, which was dated February 11th, said that Gen. Hutton was to leave on Thursday for England, and that, he and his wife having a good deal of influence at Downing street, he has already received an appointment to South Africa. If he should there fall in with Lieut.-Col. Hughes, it is to be hoped that they will forget their quarrel, shake hands, and agree to see which of them can do the most towards "saving the empire."

A. J. Graham's great sale is now going on and will continue until Saturday night. Bear in mind that this is Graham's last week in Fenelon Falls, and if you care to save from \$4 to \$5 on a suit or overcoat call on Graham at once.