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IRON PIPE, and
PIPE FITTINGS.**

Thos. Robson,

Fenelon Falls.

The Fenelon Falls Gazette.

Friday, May 4th, 1900.

The Transvaal War.

There has been no event of importance at the seat of war since the relief of Wepener last week, but the advance is said to have begun, and General Hamilton's force marched last Friday from Thaba N'Chu in a northerly direction. At Israel's Poort, about seven miles west of Thaba N'Chu, there was a fight on the 26th, in which Col. Otter, who was leading the Canadians, was wounded, but not seriously. The account says:

"Three hundred Boers were strongly entrenched on two kopjes. The place of honor was given to the Canadians, who advanced very cleverly under their dashing commander, Col. Otter. The Boers reserved their fire until the Canadians had reached the wire entanglements. Then they opened with a terrific hail of bullets. The Canadians, however, had taken good cover, and were not greatly damaged. They were ably supported in the assault by the Grahamston Horse. Successive rushes brought them right up to the kopjes, when Colonel Otter was struck twice, one bullet inflicting a nasty but not dangerous wound in the neck, and the other tearing the badges from his shoulder. But he still cheered his men on until the kopjes were carried. The Boers bolted. The British losses were twenty in killed and wounded."

The above fight was on too small a scale to be of much importance, but it afforded another proof of the gallantry of the British troops in rushing strong and well defended positions. A Boer convoy was captured near Thaba N'Chu, but the main body completely evaded the cordon thrown around them by Lord Roberts, and were, according to the latest account, in full retreat northward to Ladybrand. It is still an open question as to how long the war is likely to last; for, though it is asserted that the Boer force is shrinking, that they have lost 13,000 in killed, wounded and missing and that many of them have deserted, it is also said that "the Boer army is well led and shows no sign of abandoning the struggle. Its Generals have seemingly recovered from the panic caused by Paardeberg, and have demonstrated their ability to impede the advance of the British army and harass it on the flank, without exposing their commandos." A special from London on Tuesday last says that the mobility of the Boers' force must be something uncanny if all accounts are worthy of credence, and that a cavalry reconnaissance on Sunday east of Thaba N'Chu revealed them in considerable force on a line of steep kopjes. Making is not yet relieved, but there is a probability that it soon will be. On the 11th of April the place had been invested exactly six months, and the Boers celebrated the day by a more than usually vigorous bombardment, which did some damage to buildings and live stock, but neither a soldier nor a civilian was killed or wounded. Though the Boers have removed their big gun and nearly suspended the bombardment, they have blown up the railway south of the town, evidently expecting the advance of a relief column from that direction. The garrison is now eating the ambulance oxen, reserving the mules until the last. The daily ration is six ounces of gritty oat-bread, a pound of bully beef and a quart of skilly.

The Greatest Canadian Fire.

The greatest fire that ever took place in Canada ravaged the cities of Hull and Ottawa on Thursday of last week, resulting in the loss of seven human lives and the destruction of property worth from \$15,000,000 to \$20,000,000, on which there was a total insurance of only \$3,644,000. The fire originated at the north end of Chaudiere street, at the limits of the city of Hull, in a district composed of wooden cottages, the chimney of one of which, occupied by a family named Kirouac, who had moved into it the previous day, took fire while dinner was being cooked. The cottage was soon a mass of flames, and a sudden blast of the high wind that was blowing at the time swept a wall of fire down upon a block of frame buildings in a ravine below. Desperate efforts were made by the Hull fire brigade, assisted by the Eddy brigade, the union brigade of Chaudiere and a portion of the Ottawa fire department to confine the damage to that limit, but, owing to the force of the gale, they were powerless. The whole of the city of Hull, except one corner of it, was destroyed, and the fire, crossing the river and burning both bridges, committed fearful ravages in the nearest quarter of Ottawa city, where, as in Hull, it died out, practically of itself, about midnight. It was the most destructive fire in the history of Canada, all the great mills and manufacturing works, except Eddy's sulphide works, having disappeared, together with the city hall, the registry office records, the Merchant's Bank, and many million feet of lumber. Among the buildings burned on the Ottawa side of the river was the handsome residence of Hon. George E. Foster, which was over two miles from where the fire originated. The latest account says that 2,500 buildings were destroyed and that 5,000 families are homeless. Very soon after the news of the disaster was heard, steps for the relief of those who had lost their all were taken, and money, provisions and necessaries of various kinds were sent to the sufferers from all quarters. The Dominion Government promptly voted \$100,000; the city of Ottawa \$100,000; the Ontario Government \$25,000; the city of Toronto \$25,000; the Bank of Montreal \$10,000; the Bank of Ottawa \$5,000; and so much was given in smaller sums that by Friday night the contributions footed up to nearly or quite \$300,000. The Earl of Derby wired \$5,000 on Saturday; a "Mansion House fund" has been opened in London, England; Buffalo sent \$1,000, and action is being taken in other American cities. Evidently sufficient money to meet all requirements will be forthcoming, and a report from Ottawa on Monday said:

"The Relief Committee is working ceaselessly, and the scenes at the drill shed, exhibition grounds and other places of shelter are heartrending. The full extent of the disaster is beginning to appear in all its hideousness upon the sufferers, who were too dazed yesterday to fully appreciate their situation. The committee is working hard, and their immediate needs are being supplied in Ottawa with some degree of system. At a meeting of the Executive Committee this morning it was announced that every family in Hull was fed and housed last night, and every family in Ottawa was under shelter."

The Budget Debate.

The principal business before the House is still the debate on the budget, and hon. members of both sides continue to provide their respective constituents with what they consider good campaign material, while the Printing Bureau is kept so busy rushing out extra copies of their speeches by the tens of thousands that departmental reports are seriously delayed in consequence. The debate has become inexpressibly tedious, though it must be admitted that occasionally it is relieved by interesting passages. Take, for example, that portion of Mr. McMullan's speech, in which he accepted Hon. Mr. Foster's challenge to study the political history of Canada, "in the light of the record of the great Conservative party." Taking only acts attributable to Conservatives still in active public life, he drew attention to the Chignecto ship canal, an impossible project saddled on the country at a cost of \$3,400,000, every cent of which has been absolutely wasted, for the whole scheme proved a gigantic failure; the St. Charles Branch Railway, which was to cost \$400,000, and even then was not required, but which actually cost over \$1,700,000; the Oxford and New Glasgow branch of the Intercolonial Railway, which was to reduce the line of communication 45 miles and lower all grades, but which actually reduced the distance four and a half miles only, and considerably increased the grades; the harbor improvements in Montreal and Quebec, and the graving dock on the Pacific coast, which cost over \$3,000,000, nearly a third of

which was absolutely stolen under the eye and under the management of Tory ministers. In the construction of the Printing Bureau another \$50,000 was stolen; the Langevin Block cost \$550,000, though the estimated cost was only \$300,000; the Curran Bridge, estimated to cost \$200,000, actually cost \$450,000; and in both these instances nearly the whole of the difference between the estimated and actual cost was deliberately stolen. These were sample passages from the history of the country during the last few years of Tory administration, and, said the member for North Wellington, the Liberals cordially endorsed the recommendation recently given by Mr. Foster to the young men of Canada, to read the political history of the country, "in the light of the record of the great Conservative party."

One reason why the House has not yet disposed of the budget debate is the persistent manner in which the Tories are obstructing public business, by the introduction of every variety of side issues. No one who is following the proceedings in the House will question the fairness of the charge that the course being pursued by the Opposition is one of deliberate obstruction; indeed, they appear to be getting desperate from the eagerness with which they seize upon the wildest kind of newspaper gossip, and parade every street rumor out of which even temporary capital can be made. Take, for example, the performance of Mr. McCleary of Welland, who on Tuesday undertook to pronounce a terrible indictment against the Militia Department, because it was alleged there was no ammunition for the volunteers at St. Catharines when they were called out to protect the Welland Canal after the dynamite outrage; and, moreover, he said that he had heard there was no artillery ammunition at Toronto, Hamilton, or London. Apart from the manifest indiscretion (to put it mildly) in disclosing such a condition of affairs, if such actually existed, it would have been better for Mr. McCleary's own reputation if he had taken the trouble to make some inquiries before repeating such an extraordinary and improbable story. But the Tory papers eagerly seized on the story and heralded it far and wide under big scare heads, such as "A Sample Liberal Blunder," "Disgraceful Show up of the Militia Department," and so on. But investigation showed that there was no neglect of duty on the part of the Department, that every precaution had been taken for a sufficiency of supplies at all points, that any lack of those supplies was entirely due to neglect on the part of the Colonel of the regiment, and that there were ample supplies of artillery ammunition at every point where there was adequate magazine accommodation for them. It was further shown that years ago attention had been called to the necessity of greater precaution for the protection of the Welland Canal and other public works along the frontier, but that the Department, under Tory administration, had persistently refused to adopt measures frequently urged upon them. Sad to relate, the Tory "newspapers" have, thus far, failed to give the same prominence to this statement of the actual condition of affairs that they did to the sensational yarns previously referred to.

Personals.

Mrs. Chas. Reid returned to Syracuse, N. Y., on Wednesday.
Miss Tennie Campbell returned home from Cannington on Saturday last.
Mrs. W. J. Morrow left on Wednesday to join her husband at Midland.
Mr. S. Morrison and his sister, Miss Morrison, of Lindsay, spent Sunday at the Falls.
Miss Mary Ellis of Toronto was at the Falls from Wednesday of last week until Monday.
Mrs. Lewis Wakeley left on Wednesday with her baby daughter to join her husband at Vancouver, B. C.
Messrs. Robert Colmer, Henry Carr and James Chambers left the Falls last Tuesday for Victoria Harbor.
Mrs. Robertson and Miss Mattie Robertson, of Peterborough, spent a few days last week with friends at the Falls.

Powies' Corner.

(Correspondence of the Gazette.)

Mr. Thos. Lane commenced last Tuesday morning to build stone foundation for a large barn, 42 x 60 feet, that the Hewie brothers are building.
New officers were recently elected in the Epworth League here. There is a good attendance every Wednesday evening, and the young people are getting interested, and it will be a benefit to themselves and an example to others.
The war in South Africa, the Ottawa and Hull fire, the great increase in the Dominion revenue, and the farm operations are occupying the minds of the public.