



A CORNER FOR STUDENTS

Contributions From the Pens of Local Writers

(This column will be open for the publication of questions, answers, discussions and original articles of an educational and literary character. Our readers are requested to contribute.)

To the Boys and Girls

We shall be glad to receive essays from any of our young readers. It does not matter what the subject may be, or even if the essay is not very long or very clever. If they will do the best they can we shall publish their work in this column. ED. WATCHMAN-WARDER

How Quebec was Taken

CLARA WELLSTOOD

"Yes," said uncle Ben, tilting his chair back against the wall, and taking a long pull from his short, black pipe, "yes, we made short work of them that time! You see," he continued, when we all got settled down for a good yarn, "it was this way. We had bombarded and bombarded, and no good came of it, so this idea entered the head of our clever young commander. He had taken this expedition much to heart, as it was his first, and such an important one at that. We never slept a wink for a whole week, from worrying over it, and when he would come out on deck for a stroll, we men would interchange looks which said as plainly as possible, 'No, my hearty, he's not long for this world.' But to come to the main thing," as he noticed a restless look in our eye, for we knew that when he once got launched in the praise of his beloved commander, nothing less than a miracle could stop him, "this plan of his was to send two ships down the river as if to attack on the east side, and then in the dead of night to row silently up and to land at a little cove below the heights, which he had discovered there the day before. Never will I forget it, I live to be a thousand years old. The trip up the river that night, although there was no moon the stars shone like immense diamonds in the clear, dark blue of the heavens, not a cloud was visible, the boats creeping up silently and slowly and seemed like some dark water-spirits looking for prey at dead of night. Not a sound broke the stillness until in the distance we heard the grating of a keel on the pebbly shore and in a few minutes we, too, had reached the landing and were scrambling up the bank. Then began the ascent. Look," said uncle Ben. We looked at his outstretched hands and they were covered with sores. "They are my souvenirs of that climb. The rocks cut like the knives of an enemy, the brambles tore and scratched, yet cautiously, and noiselessly we ascended. All at once, shrill on the clear night air, rose the cry, 'Qui vient ici?' Every man stood still where he was, with bated breath and paling face gazing up at the figure above us, clear-cut against the sky, but lucky for us from the highest soldier came the reply 'Les Français' and the sentinel moved on. Every man drew a deep breath of relief and then more cautiously moved upwards. At last we saw the dark form of one and then another, as he reached the top and lay flat on the ground waiting. Then came a faint sound of a scuffle as the sentinel was seized. The first faint streaks of daylight were beginning to appear in the eastern sky and long before the sun showed his merry face, quite a company had collected on the plains above. The French guard fired one volley and then fled to the city. This was the position we had striven all night to attain. Soon the sun rose brightly and gloriously, as if he did not know what a scene of blood-shed and carnage he would witness before he again set. Now we could plainly see our position. We stood on a wide plain gently sloping down to the city, where we could plainly see that all was confusion and bustle. We had not long to wait, for soon we saw the French troops issue forth from the gates and come rushing towards us. We drew up in line to receive them and it was the hardest thing I ever did to stand firm and motionless until the French were within forty paces of us. They fired as they advanced, and it made my heart ache to see so many gallant fellows fall groaning and wounded, never to rise again. At last after a seeming eternity of time the order was given to fire. Then the spirit of the British soldier showed itself in all its fire and passion. With a wild, almost savage cry, we rushed upon them, firing as we went. The thirst for blood was upon us and we were no better than beasts of prey, as yelling, shouting, firing, we charged upon them. All at once I felt a twinge in my side, and with a groan I sank down upon another poor fellow and was lost to everything. When I came myself I was lying in the midst of the dead and dying, from whom arose groans of anguish and cries of pain. I strove to rise but again fell back and knew nothing more until I found myself in a neat little bed along with numberless other poor fellows in like condition. There I remained for weeks and ended my only real action." Uncle Ben looked at his pipe and seeing that it had gone out during his story, he took a new one from the grate and proceeded to light it, and then fell into a reverie. We children took our departure with delight, although we had heard the same story a dozen times.

HOT FIGHTING ALL SATURDAY

Boers Maintain Rear-Guard Defence for Twelve Miles.

Enemy Driven Back With 102 Dead and 20 Captured—British Casualties Not All Known—Three Officers Killed and 10 Wounded—Kruger and Steyn Are Now Asking for Peace and European Intervention.

Driefontein, March 11. — All of yesterday was occupied in fighting. The Boers maintained a stubborn rear guard action along a running front of 12 miles on a very difficult ground. The British were advancing in three columns. Gen. Tucker, to the southward, occupied Petrusburg unopposed. Gen. Kelly-Kenny, after following the river bank, moved in the direction of Abraham's Kraal. At Driefontein, about eight miles south of Abraham's Kraal, the Boers were found posted in considerable strength on the ridges connecting several kopjes where they had mounted guns. The action began at 8 o'clock in the morning with an artillery duel. Gen. French's cavalry and Gen. Porter's brigade supported our guns. The Boer artillery was accurately handled and the British cavalry found a task harder than they had expected. Gen. Broadwood, with dogged perseverance moved altogether six miles southward, trying to find a means to get round, but the Boers followed behind rising ground and even attempted to outflank him. Meanwhile the sixth division of infantry, advancing on the Boer left, slowly forced the enemy to retire. Had the infantry been able to move faster, the Boers would have been enveloped. The last shot was fired at 7.30 p.m. This morning not a Boer was to be seen. The prisoners belonged to President Kruger's own commando.

Fight Was Involved.

London, March 12.—The Morning Post's correspondent at Driefontein, telegraphing Sunday, says: "The fight throughout was much involved. The enemy evacuated and re-occupied positions subtly concealing their intentions and only withdrawing their guns a few minutes prior to their impending capture. Their guns outranged ours, the naval brigade not arriving in time. Our cavalry horses were completely tired by the repeated withdrawals. The turning movement was begun too late. The enemy attempted with heliograph to lure us to occupy a kop which they held, but detecting the deception we returned."

A Sensational Order.

The Durban correspondent of The Daily News says: "On March 1 an order was issued from Pretoria to field cornets to make an immediate return of all the women and children in the Johannesburg district, with particulars as to whether each family would possess means of transport in case of sudden removal. The order created a sensation."

A Fine Piece of Work.

A despatch to The Times from Driefontein, dated Sunday, says: "The storming of Alexander's Kop by the Welsh was a particularly fine piece of work. The mobility of the Boers in moving their guns was very remarkable. The New South Wales Mounted Infantry made a gallant and successful attempt to capture a gun. According to the latest reports another engagement to-day is not improbable."

SEVERE FIGHTING.

Boers Made Stubborn Resistance on Saturday Against British Advance on Bloemfontein

Driefontein, Orange Free State, March 11.—(6.35 a.m.)—Broadway's Cavalry Brigade, advancing on Bloemfontein, unexpectedly found the Boers in a strong position in the Driefontein kopjes yesterday. Gen. Kelly-Kenny's division, arriving, severe fighting ensued. The Boers resisted stubbornly, but were driven from their centre position, leaving a number of dead and 40 prisoners. The British force is moving forward today. During the fighting, in which five regiments took part, with artillery, the Boers, though forced from their centre position, clung tenaciously to the other kopjes, shelling the British freely with three guns and two Vickers-Maxims. The British cavalry began to turn the Boer position, but night fell before the movement was completed. The Boers retired during the night.

AT THE POINT OF THE BAYONET.

Boers Were Turned Out of Strong Positions by the Welsh and Essex.

London, March 12.—A despatch from Driefontein to the War Office from Lord Roberts, dated March 11, 9.55 a.m., says: "The enemy opposed us throughout yesterday's march and from their intimate knowledge of the country gave us considerable trouble. Owing, however, to the admirable conduct of the troops the enemy were unable to prevent us reaching our destination. The brunt of the fighting fell on Gen. Kelly-Kenny's division, two battalions of which, the Welsh and Essex, turned the Boers out of two strong positions at the point of the bayonet."

The British Casualties.

A despatch from Driefontein to the War Office from Lord Roberts, dated March 11, 9.55 a.m., says: "I cannot get the precise number of casualties before I march, but will communicate it as soon as possible. The Boers suffered heavily, 102 of their dead being left on the ground. We captured about 20 prisoners. The Killed—Among the killed are: Capt. Eustace of the Buffs, Capt. Lomax of the Welsh Regiment, Mr. McCarty a retired Indian civilian attached to Kitchener's Horse. Wounded—Among the wounded

are: Buffs—Col. Hickson, leg severe; Lieut. Ronald. Welsh Regiment—Lieuts. Torkington, Pope, Wimberley. Essex Regiment—Capt. Broadwood. Field Artillery—Lieut. Devenish. Medical Corps—Major Waite, Lieut. Berne. Australian Artillery—Col. Umphely, abdomen, dangerous. A large number of Australians were engaged yesterday. The Australian Horse Brigade, with the Scots Greys, advanced within 800 yards of the Boers under heavy fire. The New South Wales Mounted Infantry joined in the pursuit of the Boers northward.

Lord Roberts Sends a Hot Message to Kruger and Steyn About the Treachery of Their Troops.

London, March 12.—The War Office has received the following advice from Lord Roberts, dated Driefontein, Sunday, March 11, 9.45 a.m.: "The following telegram has been addressed by me to their honors, State Presidents of the Orange Free State and the South African Republic: "Another instance having occurred of gross abuse of the white flag and of the signal of holding up hands in token of surrender, it is my duty to inform you that if such abuse occurs again, I shall most reluctantly be compelled to order my troops to disregard the white flag entirely. "The instance occurred on a kopje east of Driefontein yesterday evening and was witnessed by several of my own staff officers, as well as by myself, and resulted in the wounding of several of my officers and men. "A large quantity of explosive bullets of three different kinds was found in Commandant Cronje's laager, and (this has been the case) after every engagement with your honors' troops. Such breaches of the recognized usages of war and of the Geneva convention are a disgrace to any civilized power. A copy of this telegram has been sent to my Government with the request that it may be communicated to all neutral powers."

REBELS LAYING DOWN ARMS.

This is the News From Lady Grey, Herschel and Aliwal North.

Cape Town, Sunday, March 11.—News from Lady Grey, Herschel and Aliwal North, show that the rebels are laying down their arms in large numbers and that the Boers all along the border are in serious straits. The rebels assert that the Boers are subsisting on bread and water and so-called coffee, made from rye. Other rebels are leaving to fight in the Free State. British rule has been restored at Lady Grey, where a big fight is reported to have occurred, many rebels being killed. It is reported that thousands of rebels contemplate surrendering to Gen. Brabant.

Kitchener After the Rebels.

Carnarvon, Cape Colony, March 10.—Gen. Kitchener has arrived at Victoria West to organize various columns for the purpose of suppressing the rebellion, which is spreading in this district. Minor fighting has occurred in several directions.

BULLETIN FROM BOERDOM.

Shots Exchanged Between British and Boers Near Helpmakaar.

Pretoria, Friday, March 9.—The President has returned from Bloemfontein. General Joubert is expected here shortly. Fighting commenced in the direction of Helpmakaar this morning.

Shots Were Exchanged.

Boer Headquarters, Biggarsberg, Friday, March 9.—Shots were exchanged this morning near Helpmakaar with a small body of British, who retired hastily. Scouts report that the British main advance is coming from Ladysmith towards Sunday River.

FIVE BOER MESSAGES.

Were Said to Have Been Received in London From Presidents Kruger and Steyn.

London, March 12.—Several papers announce that the Government on Tuesday received five messages from President Kruger and President Steyn in Dutch, asking upon what terms a cessation of hostilities could be brought about. The messages surprised and delighted the department concerned. While their tenor was understood, it was found necessary to summon persons thoroughly capable of accurately interpreting the messages, all of which were filed at Bloemfontein.

Cabinet Discussed It.

The Cabinet convened on Wednesday to consider the messages and it is believed that an uncompromising reply was sent, which is known to have reached Bloemfontein by the same means as the Boer cablegram reached the Government. The nature of the reply was such as to lead to a further, but gradual retirement of the Boer forces.

Boers Not After Peace.

London, March 12.—The Daily Mail has received the following despatch from Pretoria, dated Saturday, March 10, and censored by the Boer Government: "President Kruger and President Steyn have wired Lord Salisbury peace proposals on condition that the independence and the rebel colonials be respected. Yesterday the foreign consuls were called into conference, and were requested to invite the intervention of the powers represented in order to prevent further bloodshed."

What Leyds Says.

Brussels, March 12.—Dr. Leyds asserts that President Kruger and Steyn have not telegraphed any peace propositions through him. He admits, however, the possibility of such a step, upon condition that the independence of the Republics is guaranteed, in order to prevent further bloodshed.

J. J. WETHERUP

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