

ST. JOHN, N. B., SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 24, 1900.

## LIFE IN A BOER HOSPITAL.

Nurse Tells of Her Patients—How the Boers Took Their Victories and Reverses.

Capt. Ecclestone, in a letter to the Hamilton, Ont., Times, dated Cape Town, October 12, gives some very interesting information regarding the Boer character and hospital arrangements, as described to him by one of the Boer nurses.

She first of all reminded us that she was a Hollander, resident in Johannesburg at the time of the outbreak of hostilities, and was then a teacher of languages, being, however, a qualified nurse as well, and from her nationality intensely sympathizing with the Boers, it not with their cause. She elected to nurse on the Boer side, and accordingly volunteered her services. She was drafted to take charge of a hospital at Krugersdorp, a few miles west of Johannesburg, and the place where Jameson and his force came to grief.

The chief hotel in the place was commandeered and fitted out as a hospital to accommodate 50 patients. There were no other qualified nurses, but the staff consisted of a number of Boer ladies who had offered to give assistance to the extent of four hours per day. All was ready and now they were only waiting for patients to arrive, but it was not until the second week in December that the Boer hospital at Krugersdorp was favored with half a dozen wounded men from the vicinity of Mafeking. Ere long, however, the number reached 37, this being the largest number of men who were ever in this particular hospital at one time.

Amongst the 37 were nine foreigners, two being Germans, five Italians and two Hollanders, the remainder being Boers, pure and simple. Computing the largest number, the Boers could muster of them selves to be 60,000, the foreigners, reckoning on this basis, swelled their army to 80,000. To this number add the rebels of Cape Colony, who rallied round the Boer standard, and we arrive at no mean army of men whom we have had to attack and drive from stronghold to stronghold.

Life at the Krugersdorp hospital was not all jam and honey. Disension crept in among the Boer lady helpers. They did not always respond to duty; letters of apology and excuse became frequent, until the one qualified nurse was completely done up. There were no thanks forthcoming for her prolonged hours and her untiring efforts to do all that was necessary; in fact she could never do enough, and her arduous labours were only half-heartedly, if at all, appreciated, so she insisted upon transfer to the Johannesburg hospital. Here there was considerably more going on, for Glencoe, Elendagat and Jeround Ladysmith has been responsible for a good deal of executive work in the Boer lines, especially Elendagat.

Still matters went on pretty briskly on the Boer side. They were confident of victory and of driving the hated rooincks into the sea or into submission. Every young Boer seemed strongheaded, each anxious and ardent to do his share, and all strapped on their bandoliers, shouldered their rifles and were off to the front. Then came to them the delightful, to us the sad, news of Stormberg, Colenso and Magersfontein, and everybody in the Transvaal went trilled with jubilation. Scarcely one amongst them ever wavered or doubted for one moment what they considered was now the inevitable result for their side, and that result was victory, the crowning triumph of years of preparation and scheming. The wave of enthusiasm which at the commencement of the war had swept over their land was now more than doubled and the spirits of all Boers ran exceedingly high. The relief of Kimberley came at last, but the Boers took the matter very quietly. It was a point to us, but Majuba day was coming, that great day which in the past had seen such glorious triumph for their arms, and they were looking forward with a superstitious notion to the anniversary of Majuba for the consummation of their deep-rooted desire to inflict a crushing defeat upon the English. They ventured many with Bibles in hand, that on this day many great things would be done, but not of the kind they could appreciate. Majuba day, that great holiday of theirs, when they made every Englishman in the Transvaal also

take a holiday in commemoration of our defeat, in '81, was this year turned into "Paardeburg Day." Cronje unconditionally surrendering was a terrible eye opener and cruel blow to the Boers, a blow which it is said they had most felt throughout the whole of the war, Cronje as a general in the eyes of the Transvaalers was on a par with Joubert, and his surrender with all his host was a paramount calamity. It came to them as a fearful shock, and they must have recognized that, with this disaster, the critical turn of the tide had come. Notwithstanding, however, this gloomy event, and the rude shaking it gave them, they were by no means wholly and finally disconcerted, because they looked for outside influence, and, more especially, perhaps for the working of some great miracle or other. It was about this time that the nurse visited Pretoria and told the following little story concerning Oom Paul, who welcomed her with a cup of coffee and some cake.

The president made a few preliminary enquiries of different kinds, about her duties, and so forth, and then began paying her compliments, chiefly about her personal appearance. Much astonished at the president's levity, she exclaimed, "Oh, Oom Paul! Oom Paul! I thought you were too old to flirt," and Paul replied in a dry manner, "Ah, but you see an old fossil sometimes likes a green leaf." A prayer meeting was about to be held at Kruger's house for success to the Boer arms and the Boer cause, so the nurse was invited to stay, but I fear she had not much faith, for she was plainly a believer in the Napoleonic idea that "God is on the side of the big battalions."

When Oom Paul and his henchmen saw that things were getting too hot for them they collected all the 'swag and booty' in sight, paid their debts with promissory notes, and 'lit out.' The nurse in question received a number of those notes in payment for her service, and it is possible that they will never be more valuable than the paper they are printed on.

'Paardeburg' was followed by the relief of Ladysmith and Mafeking, but the Boers appear to have taken these reverses very quietly, and vowed the English would never enter the Transvaal. The Transvaal Boers were determined as regards this item.

"The Boers appear to have cared for their wounded fairly well, but then it must be remembered that all farm houses were available for any who had fallen on their side, the occupants being their friends and our foes. It has never been possible to accurately state what their losses have been, on account of the number accommodated in farm houses, and who were carried there by Boer women following in the trail of the army. I believe the number killed and wounded on the side of the enemy is, and always will be as much a profound mystery to the Boers as it is to ourselves. One thing is certain, throughout the campaign they must have suffered heavily, although their losses were absurdly minimized in Boer papers. I know of a single engagement where on the following day our men buried 143 dead Boers. All of the Boers have not fought with heart and will, for some are known to have slightly wounded themselves through the hand or through the calf of the leg, to escape facing the British guns and the British lines."

### Cutting It Short.

"You can bet if I were nominated for president I wouldn't fool away my time writing a long letter of acceptance that nobody reads."

"What would you say?"

"Thanks, I'll run!"

### Alarming Symptoms.

"Mandy," said the old gentleman, "I am afraid that boy of ours is goin' to be a poet."

"He ain't writ nothin'," has he?" asked the old lady in alarm.

"No, he ain't writ nothin' yet, but I notice him doin' less an' less work every day, an' doin' it carlesser."

### A Mild Answer.

"Now, don't give me any song about

misfortune an' wantin' to be a hard worker 'n' all right," said the hard-faced lady. "I can see right through you."

"Gee!" said Dismal Dawson, "I knowed I ain't had nothin' to eat for three days, but I didn't know it had thinned me down like that."

### BRITISH PLUCK.

Saved the Crew of a Steamship—Repairs the Disabled Vessel.

About midway between the islands of St. Helena and Tristan de Cunha, in July last, the SS 'Athena' broke her shaft. It is often the case, under such circumstances, that nothing is done to repair the damage. Instead of that the captain whistles for a tow, and lands the vessel's owner in large salvage expenses. But the 'Athena' had resourceful engineers and a plucky crew. The London 'Syren' publishes a long letter describing how the shaft was put right on the open sea. The ship was bound for Bahia Blanca. At Bahai, San Salvador, she was brought up, and Capt. W. Jones wrote to the owners commenting on the fouling of the ship.

Sign after leaving port there was undeniable evidence of this. The vacuum repeatedly fell low, but, thinking that seaweed was choking the injector, the captain kept the vessel on her way. On July 9 the shaft broke, as darkness was setting in. The crew knew they were in a tight corner, and waited until daylight.

Though stored for five months, over three had been spent so all the crew went on one third rations, while the engineers endeavored to put matters right. For thirty-six days not a sail hove in sight. Had the repair failed, it is painful to contemplate what might have been the lot of the crew.

It was found that the stern tube was broken, exposing a fractured shaft in the fast frame of the peak, and the task of mending it seemed hopeless.

Owing to the contracted space only one man could work at a time, while a donkey engine had to be kept going to pump the water coming through the stern bush.

Stanchions were taken out of the holds, and suitable forgings made to form the keys and hands; bolts were taken out here and there for the feet of the engine columns; and a sleeve of quarter-steel plate made to fit closely to the shaft. Every part of the work was thoroughly done. "Take no risks" was the motto.

When all the keys were fitted, the open fracture was wedged with one-half inch and five-eighth inch iron and made solid, and over all and through was run magno metal. The shaft was then sheathed with the sleeve and bound firm.

After weeks of anxiety and aimless drifting—thirty-five miles aft daily—the work was tested. The machinery at once revolved; the vessel forged slowly ahead. At rather more than half speed 900 miles were covered and port reached. Not a penny went in salvage, not even for shifting births in harbor. The crew are now waiting to see how the underwriters and owners will appreciate this smart piece of work.

### A Veteran.

"Won't you give a veteran something to eat, mum?" said Tired Thompson to Mrs Whiffet.

"You a veteran," replied Mrs Whiffet, unbelievably. "You were never a soldier, I'll be bound."

"Madam," added the tramp, "you do me a grievous injustice. I have done nothing but soldier all my life."

### Not Complimentary.

"It is complimentary to have such a talented clergyman accept a call to your church, isn't it?"

"On the contrary, he writes that he feels moved to come among us because our parish offers him such a wide missionary field."

"Dear father," wrote the young man who had gone to Arizona as a member of a party of government surveyors, "you told me when I left home that I ought to lay by a portion of my salary every month for a rainy day, but I haven't done it, because it never rains here. Please send me \$35."

"Well," said Susan the next morning, "I did just as you told me to ascertain whom I should marry, according to Hallowe'en rules, and I saw a whole mob of men in my mirror."

"That's all right," replied Blanche. "You are a Chicago girl. You will marry them all."

## A MODEL COUNTRY.

Some Commendable Features About New Zealand—How the State Railroads are Conducted.

In many particulars New Zealand takes a foremost place among the countries of the world. With the exception of two private railroads the government controls the railroad transportation of the country, and such a thing as a rebate or discrimination in favor of one shipper against another is unknown. The principal upon which New Zealand roads are operated is that they shall only make profit enough to pay the interest on the debt incurred in building them, and as rapidly as any surplus accrues the rates shall be reduced. In other words, they are not run to make money, but to serve the public, says Ainslie's Magazine.

The public administration of roads also takes cognizance of special circumstances in the condition of the people. When there was a great drought in New Zealand, and the sheep had died by hundreds of thousands in the grazing districts, the government reduced the rates on the movement of sheep in order to assist the settlers to restock the country. Special rates are made to facilitate the development of the export business.

The railway department has organized a regular system of free school children's excursions. The children of one district, on some appropriate holiday, are carried in large trainloads to another district. Children, for instance, in the up country are carried to the seashore, that they may see a harbor and vessels, and all the insignia of commerce, and get a taste of the variety of metropolitan life. Town children are carried up into the country to the foot of the mountain and among the waterfalls, that may hear the tui bird ring his silver bell and feast their eyes on the glories of New Zealand scenery.

The labor legislation in New Zealand is, in some of its provisions, the most enlightened in the world. There is no eight hour law, but the eight-hour day is general as a custom. The factories are under sanitary and other supervision, and a half holiday is enforced by statute, but it is not a universal Saturday half holiday. The tradesman can choose his own day for closing, but close half a day each week he must, and the practice is that the stores remain open on the day on which the factories and workshops close, so that artisans may do their shopping.

New Zealand showed the same good sense in its dealing with arbitration. Its compulsory arbitration law is, on the whole, the most remarkable legislative novelty which New Zealand has to show us.

There had never been any compulsory arbitration law anywhere else in the world, nor any state arbitration of any sort in New Zealand when William P. Reeves, then minister for labor, succeeded in inducing Parliament, in 1894, to pass the bill which he had prepared. New Zealand was still sore from the shock of a terrible strike in 1890, and was trembling in apprehension of threatened strikes.

Mr. Reeves' study of the efforts at arbitration in other countries had convinced him that voluntary arbitration was a sham, and that compulsory arbitration was the only possible solution. The law, which was passed after three years of struggle, has been a brilliant success. For five years New Zealand has been free from strikes and lockouts which have destroyed so much property, done such injury to business, and created such ineradicable social cancer everywhere else in Christendom.

The law is becoming as popular with manufacturers and employers of labor as with the workingman. Business men find themselves now able to make contracts for two years ahead, without fear of strikes. It is one of the essential provisions of the law, that, pending the settlement of a dispute, the workmen shall not strike and employers shall not lockout. In fact, compulsory arbitration proves to be not so much a weapon in the hands of the side against the employers, or the employers against the workmen, as a means for carrying out the will of the majority of both employers and employees. These desire arbitration, and by means of the compulsory arbitration law they can get it.

New Zealand is far ahead of the other

colonies of Australasia, and, in fact, of any other country in the world with which I am acquainted, in its treatment of the unemployed. It has a well-considered plan in actual operation, by which the unemployed are gathered up in cities, at government labor bureaus, and are forwarded to one point and another, where they are wanted on government railroads or other public works. At these points they are not kept in camps to be scattered again when the work is through, but they are assigned farms, and their work is so arranged that they work alternately for the government and on their own land. The government advances them funds to clear their land and to build themselves homes. In all parts of the colony, the penniless out-of-work is by this system being converted into a thrifty land owner.

It is not to the unemployed alone that the government gives land. It has entered upon a deliberate policy of breaking up the large estates which were formed in the early days. It purchases these estates if the owners are willing to sell; if not it condemns them. The land is then improved with roads, properly surveyed, and is resold in small farms.

A specimen case is that of the estate of Cheviot, of 80,000 acres, which, under the old regime, supported a single family. The estate was entirely devoted to the grazing of sheep, but New Zealand statesmanship thinks that a man is better than a sheep. This estate has now been divided into a hundred or more prosperous little farms, and where was once only one family, there is now a population of 2,000.

New Zealand's latest experiment is not its least important. It now treats its worn out workmen and women not as paupers, but as pensioners. Everyone who has been in the colony 25 years, and is a citizen, and has an income of less than \$170 a year, is entitled to a pension of a shilling—a quarter a day. This is not merely a tenderer form of charity than that which obtains in other countries; it is a distinct recognition of the honest toiler's right to a share in the wealth he has created.

### Reward of Merit.

It is safe to say that no family paper in existence has ever had the run of prosperity that the Family Herald and Weekly Star, of Montreal, has enjoyed. It deserves it all, too, for no other newspaper has ever attempted to give such real good value for so little money.

This year the publishers of the Family Herald have certainly excelled themselves, and in offering the two pictures, "CHRIST IN THE TEMPLE," and "HOME FROM THE WAR," along with the Family Herald and Weekly Star for one year for one dollar no one will deny that it is the biggest dollar's worth ever offered. The Family Herald and Weekly Star are going to do a bigger business than ever, and it is a case of merit.

### Reflections of a Bachelor.

Heaven is like home; it is open after the other place is shut.

If the devil had eaten the apple himself, where would we all have been now?

Love is a lot of baby-talk; nobody understands it but the one that is talkin' it.

A woman's ideas are generally half her husband's, half her minister's, and the rest her own.

Very few women like to think the Lord knows as much about their husbands as they think they do themselves.

"But the moths have got into the gown," she protested.

The manager of the costume-storage department shrugged his shoulders.

"What would you have?" he asked. "The open-work fabrics are all the rage now."

Aunt—Why is it, Fritz, that you always bring Elsa here when I want to sing. She does nothing but scream.

Fritz—Yes, but then you stop singing and papa gives me 10 pennings.

"Here, hold on? What are all ti people running into the stores for?"

"Heavens, don't you see the millionaire's son coming down the street on his automobile?"