

THE MORNING GUARDIAN.

TUESDAY, MARCH 7, 1899.

IN SOUTH AFRICA.

Since Britain has acquired Delagoa Bay, commanding the seaward entrance to the Transvaal a significant movement is taking place in the two Dutch republics of South Africa. They fear being swallowed up in a British confederacy in that quarter and are apparently taking measures to secure their independence. The Orange Free State is an independent republic. The country was settled by English and Dutch emigrants from Cape Colony and was annexed by Great Britain in 1848. They became independent in 1854 and have since remained so.

The Transvaal, or South African Republic, lies immediately north of the Orange Free State, being separated therefrom by the river Vaal. The first European settlers here were also of Dutch descent. This country was annexed by Great Britain in 1877 but the revolt of 1881 gained them the right of self government, under British suzerainty. Britain controls and regulates the relations of the Transvaal with any other states.

Just now the two Dutch republics are engaged in assimilating their constitutions, no doubt with a view to a closer union. Whether such an union can be permitted remains to be seen, because one of the contracting states is free and the other under British control. This is one of the questions now coming to the front in South Africa. The Orange Free State has but half as much area and population as the Transvaal, the two republics together covering about 165,000 square miles. Their united population, European and native, is about 700,000, of which about one third is of European blood.

It has already been told that the Charlottetown men who were wrecked on the Labrador landed at the lighthouse at Skerryvore, where they were detained two days, from Wednesday until Friday. It appears from later despatches that the reef on which the ship was wrecked is four miles from the lighthouse at Skerryvore. It was at 7 o'clock in the morning that the ship struck. There was at the time a thick fog and so much sea that the waves broke over the Labrador, and hence it must have been a difficult task to make their way to the lighthouse. They will have a thrilling story to tell when they write, or return to their homes.

It is related that among the incidents of the recent army investigation at Washington, the following occurred. The merits and demerits of the canned beef were being discussed and testimony heard pro and con. Samples of the canned stuff were in the room, unopened of course. Suddenly there was an explosion. The pent-up gases in one of the cans had burst the tin. The stench was such that it drove all hands out of the room, and even operated as an emetic afterwards. This was really the most powerful testimony offered at the inquiry. Some may think little of circumstantial evidence, but when it explodes so loudly and smells so strong it is very convincing.

The Czar's proposed peace conference is booked to meet at the Hague during the present month. The powers are treating the matter as quite a minor event. It was at first expected that special representatives of all the great nations would be sent to the conference. It turns out that what is being done is merely to depute their regular ambassadors at the Dutch court to attend. These are all men of the second or third rate as diplomatists as first-class men are never sent to Hague, owing to the small international importance of Dutch affairs. Britain will, in consequence be represented by Sir Henry Howard, and Germany by Von der Bricken, men of whom the outside world has yet heard but little. We were told recently in veiled terms that the Czar is crazy, and the manner in which his pet scheme is treated lends color to that report.

Don't forget to order a supply of canned goods at the reduced prices this week at Beer & Goff's.

The Toronto Liberals propose to give Sir Wilfrid Laurier a banquet shortly, no doubt partly in the hope of hearing something at first hands of the inside work of the recent Washington-Quebec conference.

The late big snowstorm in New York proved the superiority of the horse carriage to the horseless ones. The auto-mobiles, as they are called, were all forced to suspend running while the horses continued their work among the drifts.

This from the independent Conservative Toronto Telegram is worth pondering over by some of the more extreme opposition journals. We quote:—"No government is all bad, and no government is all good, and indiscriminate attacks on every minister must necessarily lessen the effect of criticism upon the acts of ministers who earn condemnation."

We print elsewhere a report of the deliverance of Judge Wurtele of Montreal in regard to compounding felonies. The judgment was referred to some days ago in our despatches and has attracted much attention throughout Canada. The practices which the learned judge and the law alike so shortly condemn are not confined to Montreal. Judge Wurtele says truly that persons who compound criminal offences are morally worse than ordinary criminals, and he gives strong reasons in support of that contention.

It now appears that the London doctors have concluded that la grippe is not influenza, though it resembles it in many ways. It is a separate disease as much as pneumonia and must have a name of its own hereafter. Grippe is only its vulgar name, but probably with a new-sounding appellation it may be quite as troublesome and fatal as it now is. Really the first thing to do is to find a cure for it. The tuberculous cow, contaminated water or want of drainage seem to be in no way responsible for the wide spread epidemic of grippe.

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CURRENT EVENTS.

Another Lot of Questions for Scholars.

Two more months and then the final test—Interest unabated—Directions for examination will be given in a few weeks—Some changes contemplated.

Questions for this week:

I. What is the difference between battleships and cruisers?

II. What trouble is at present threatening Spain?

III. What Dominion officials recently visited this province? What was the object of their visit?

IV. What portions of the Chinese Empire are in the French, British and Russian "spheres of influence" respectively?

V. Who are some of the most noted Chinese statesmen?

VI. Describe the troubles in the Austrian empire.

VII. Who is the Dowager Empress of China?

VIII. Is the Fashoda question settled? If so, how? If not, how may we expect it to be settled?

IX. Give a sketch of General Kitchener.

X. What change is it proposed to make in the place of the Nicaragua canal?

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