

LETTER FROM THE FRONT.

BLOEMFONTEIN, April 3, 1900.

I delayed writing you last week as I was waiting until I got into the city to see the sights, for I would then have something to write about. My desire was gratified on the 15th.

Well, since last writing you we started out to take Bloemfontein. We left Oosthuizen on March 10, at 5 o'clock in the morning, and after marching for three hours halted and got our breakfast, which consisted of nothing but a hard biscuit and some very hot water. After a rest of about three-quarters of an hour we once more started off to complete our journey for the day which we did about 12 o'clock, having covered a distance of about 17 Boer miles or equal to 19 English miles, and as there was no water for man and beast, we thought we would stop for the night. Three hours after we halted we had what they called a dinner on active service consisting of some goat meat and vegetable soup, but you would need a strainer to find the vegetables. We have got now so that we can eat or drink anything. About 6:30 we all lay down on the veldt and were soon fast asleep, for we were tired out after our day's march and could have slept on a clothes line if we had to. We knew, also, that we had to go on to-morrow for another long march and we needed all the rest we could get. However after a few hours we were aroused had a big breakfast, and started off again. We did not halt until we had covered about 8 miles of our day's march.

When I say we did not halt I mean we did not halt for any length of time, but you must remember we always halt ten minutes in every hour. After dinner we once more got on the move and finished the day's march about 1 o'clock. They then told us we had covered half the distance. Of course you will understand we were not in the advance party, only the re-

serve. There were three brigades of us in the Highland Brigade, the Guards Brigade and the Nineteenth Brigade. We with the Cornwall, Gordons and Shropshires all composed the 19th.

We were not long here when we heard the roar of cannon and we knew that there must be a scrap going on somewhere near. A little later we found that French had engaged a large party of Boers to our right front, so we moved to the left, to our left rear, but as good luck would have it we were not needed. Our artillery, aided by the Mounted Infantry soon scattered the enemy, who fled in the direction of Bloemfontein. Our men and horses were too tired to follow them, so they let them fly as they knew they would get them later. The British victory, however was a dear one, for from one standpoint, for they lost 400 killed and wounded, while the Boer loss was between 700 and 800 besides a lot of supplies. Lord Roberts himself counted 103 dead Boers on one kopje, so you can see there must have been a lot killed. This cheered us up, for we knew that there were so many less to stop our taking Bloemfontein and we went to sleep feeling not too badly. The next day passed without anything unusual occurring, except some of the boys falling out, being tired of the journey. You could not blame them for it, for no man can march from 15 to 20 miles a day on half rations. Whole rations, at any time are not too much. I must say with pride our Island Boys stood the test like men, every one of them.

We had now covered the whole of the distance except seven miles. We actually marched fifty five miles in three days, and we were glad on the morning of the fourth day when we were told we were within seven miles of Bloemfontein. Great was our surprise, when we had gone a little distance, to find that French had got into the city with very little resistance and that they had all surrendered in Bloemfontein. Not long after we could see the towers on Government House loom up in the distance.

Our march, after that, was an easy one, for it was commencing to become quite interesting. Everything that caught our eyes was new to us, for it was the first Free State city we had seen since we came to South Africa and truly it is no disgrace to any country, for it would puzzle you to find a city of between five and six thousand inhabitants that could boast of such fine buildings and such a pretty site. We were not marched right into the city but camped about 800 yards in rear. The city is situated in a valley with big kopjes in front and rear of it. I tell you that if it were the British who held it, it would take 40,000 Boers to get within four miles of it for it is an ideal spot for a fortification.

Our camp was in such a position we could see the whole of the city from our tents. We had to go to the edge of the city for water but they have laid a water pipe right to our lines since we came—and now we can get lots of beautiful water. Of course we were not long here when our officers went to the city and bought us lots of stuff to eat, and for the first time for a whole month we had a good square meal. Col. Otter also sent an officer into the city to buy up some things for us with the money given him by the people of Canada who buy us extra rations. I can tell you they were very acceptable and now we are not fasting too badly for it.

Food stuff is very dear, for you must remember this was the Free State headquarters and as no provisions came into the place for about five months and the Boers getting all they could you can imagine how short the stores would be. Prices ran about like this: bread 1s. to 1s. 6d. per loaf; golden syrup 2s. 6d. per tin; preserve 2 to 3s. per tin and very scarce at that; butter 2s. 6d. to 3s. per lb.; condensed milk 2s.; meals 3 to 5s.; liquor 10s. per bottle; Basses ale 6s. per bottle; cigars 6s. to 1s. 6d.; tobacco none—except Boer tobacco; sugar 2s.; tea 5s.; coffee same, and so on.

After we were here a day the Army Service Corps took over all the bake shops and flour and are now making bread for the troops. The citizens have to get an order from the military authorities for flour and bread. We are not allowed into the town until after 2 o'clock and then only five per cent of the regiment at one time and we have to have passes. Just here I must tell you a trick five of the Island boys played. All day it had been raining and we were wet to the skin. Just at dark a certain person, whom you know well, suggested that as all the blankets were wet, and we too, and as there were three inches of mud all over our camp grounds, that we steal down and get into a certain house, the people of which we had only just got acquainted with and there spend the night in comfort. They got to the house and told the plan, and the people being English, were only too glad to let them have a spare room. There they spent the whole night in their wet clothes, writing letters and smoking for they were too wet to lie down. They had a time fooling the picquets to get to town, and had to do what was against conscience—tell a few fibs, but they did the trick and arrived in camp in the morning all O. K., no one being any the wiser. I got a pass the second day and started to do the town, and, as in every

other part of the world, the first man whom I got into conversation with was a Canadian, from Ontario, who had been out here some 12 or 13 years. His name is Mr. Peterson, and I tell you he showed me all that was to be seen in the town. The first place we went to was the Church of England Cathedral, and it is one of the finest little churches you would want to see, beautifully finished inside, something like St. Paul's at home, with a beautiful white marble floor, beautiful pipe organ, walnut and mahogany seats and stained glass windows. There is also a convent in connection with it and about six nuns. Next we visited the Roman Catholic Church, it is also a fine building, and if you have ever seen Vernon River Church you've seen one like this, only it is not of red brick but some kind of white stone. There is also a convent and a school in connection with it. The majority of the church goes here are English church people. We also visited several other fine churches, you may call them Free State Churches if you like. Altogether there are about 12 or 14 churches in the town and several funerals—nearly every denomination has

a church of its own, and this surprised me more than anything for we were led to believe there were not many church people out here; but I doubt if you would find any city in Canada where you see as many churches for the population. We next visited what you might call a nice little museum. I spent a whole hour in this building and only wished I could spend a day, for to me it was really interesting. All the animals of South Africa and other parts of the world were gathered together, also hundreds of birds and insects and lots of other curiosities that I will perhaps never see again. They tell me it has taken years to get them together and that the most of them were brought by Paul Kruger some years ago in Europe. They even had all the old F. E. Island stamps and coins, and several other relics from our Island home. They have a collection of medals and I saw even the North West medal among them, so you see they have a fairly good collection of everything. Even our maple leaf adorns their tables. Next we went to a restaurant and had a lunch. The girl who waited on us, when we sat down, started a music box playing, and you

could not guess the tune it played, viz. "The Red, White and Blue." We looked at her in surprise and she said to me, "Three weeks ago we dared not play that." After we had satisfied the cravings of the inner man we started for the Parliament Buildings, and there a pleasant sight met my eyes. The Free Staters were piling in and handing up their arms, and I noticed they all seemed to be satisfied, I also saw the President's chair. The inside of the building is nicely finished, something like our own, but one thing that was very conspicuous to me was the Union Jack thrown over something in the middle of the chamber. When I asked my friend what it was he told me it was a statue of Kruger, and for once in his life he was over-ruled with the right colors.

Time and space will not permit of my telling of lots of things I saw there, for there might be volumes written about this building. Nearly all the public offices are in this building, also there are beautiful gardens all around it and several statues of great men, but as the inscriptions were in Dutch I passed them by. There is also a fine post office, market house and square. The outside of the market house has a big veranda attached to the main building, and all under it are tables like we see some in our own market. They have a market three times a week. The post office is now run by our men as well as the telegraph office.

There is also a very fine City Hall and Police Station, a Chief of Police and 12 policemen who get \$60 per month. They all live in the station and sleep there also. The city jail is in the outskirts of the town and is a stranger, used to the awful affair in Charlottetown instead of a jail it would put one in mind of a castle. It has two large fine towers one on each side of the main door. The keeper's house which adjoins it is equal to any of our nice houses; it is something of the style of Mr. James's Paton's residence at home.

We also visited Government House. It is a beautiful place also. Steyn had altogether three fine residences in the city and one a mile out of town. The principal hotel is called Masonic Hotel.

All the shops are two stories high and are not up to Canadian stores, although there are one or two departmental stores very fine indeed. The store that seems to do the best business is called the Colonial Supply House; it is run by an Englishman named Teasel. He employs about twenty five hands.

There are no sidewalks worth speaking about, but there is a water tap on nearly every corner. The streets are as wide as our own. All the houses are set in off the street, I mean the residences, and have gardens in front of most of them. They have no incandescent electric lights on the street. The principal trade of the town is in supplying the surrounding country with whatever they want. There are no manufacturing in the town of any importance.

The white man does very little labor here, except the tradesman and mechanic, for black boys do the most of it, and receive for their labor from 15 to 25 shillings per month and board. A carpenter gets about 20 shillings per day, and other trades about the same. A good mason or bricklayer gets a little more. Of course they find themselves.

The doctors here get £1 for each visit, and often times more. There are about ten of them in the town. Of dentists there are three, they get about five times as much as the dentists do at home, and they are away behind the times. There are two papers printed in the town as far as I could find out. They are printed out in English and half in Dutch.

Nearly every calling in life is represented here, and the law profession is simply crowded. Of drug stores there are five or six, and they have every thing they require, and I do not see much opening for any one thing in particular, although the people out here say a Canadian could make lots of money. Certainly every one seems to be well off, that is the white race.

Continued on the Last Page.

PRISONER RELEASED
Victim of Kidney Disease escapes from its clutches by means of Dodd's Kidney Pills. Sharbot Lake, April 30—Twenty years ago this month, John Nicholas Babcock first noticed the symptoms of Gravel and other Kidney troubles. Since that day he has never been free from pain until immediately previous to the report of his complete cure which appeared recently. He has been like a sentenced for life but his sentence is up-to-day.

He says: "After twenty years of pain caused by the Gravel and other kidney trouble, I am pleased to make it known that I have been completely cured by one box of Dodd's Kidney Pills. During these years I have spent hundreds of dollars without receiving any lasting relief."

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"He has. Instead of smoking his cigars now he chews them up."

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Thin, watery blood, and weak, exhausted nerves the real cause—Dr. Chase's Nerve Food the preventative.

Persons subject to thin blood and nervous exhaustion may well tremble at the mention of heart failure, as they have in their system the beginnings which lead to weakness of the heart. The vitality of the heart is amazing considering the immense amount of work it does, and so long as it is supplied with plenty of rich, red blood it plods on untriflingly, rebuilding its waste as the blood passes through. Once the blood gets thin and the nerves starved and exhausted the waste gradually becomes more rapid than the restoring process and finally some nervous shock or over-exertion causes the beating to cease and life departs.

Headaches, pains in the back and limbs, sleeplessness, weakness and irregularities of the feminine organs, palpitation of the heart and nervous disorders are sure indications of thin, weak blood. Dr. Chase's Nerve Food forms new red corpuscles in the blood, puts vital energy into the nerves, and stops the wasting process that would ultimately end in heart failure, nervous prostration or paralysis.

It is the world's greatest restorative for men, women and children. In pill form, 50 cts. a box, at all dealers, or EDMANSON, BATES & CO., Toronto. Book free.

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Buy your Seeds from GAY and thereby take the first step towards the same success as they themselves. We make a specialty of Vegetables Seeds, and we are acknowledged to be the largest growers of Vegetables on P. E. I. and this fact places us in a position not attained by any other seedsmen in the province.

Our Seeds to be had only direct from us in the Charlottetown market, or mailed or shipped to any address. Prices as low as any other firm.

Trees—We have a fine assortment of Ornamental Trees comprising, Horse chestnut, Maple, Lime, Mountain Ash, Elm, Weeping Trees, etc. etc. Also Strawberry Plants, Currant, Strawberry Plants etc. Berry Boxes wholesale and retail.

Plants—We are making great strides in this department of our business and have every facility and requirement in the shape of glass houses and extensive hot bed plant. This important branch will be advertised in detail later on.

As many flower and vegetable seeds require to be started under glass to bring them to maturity (with our short season of summer.) We believe it to the advantage of any business man, or farmer, to buy their plants from us, as seeds under glass must have constant attention from competent and experienced hands to have any degree of success. Note we devote special attention to the culture and necessary watering off, of plants before setting out in the open.

A sample lot of Palms, Ferns, Asparagus, Sprenger, etc etc to arrive shortly

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with large sailor collar, 75c, 1.00, 1.25, 1.50
Extra fine tweed and Serge, 1.75, 2.00, 2.50, 3.00
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Also separate pants for boys 25c, 35c, 50c, 75c

Boys' 2 Piece Suits.

In Serge, well-made, 1.00, 1.25, 1.50, 2.00,
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Good Serge, D B or S B, 2.00, 2.50, 3.00
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There is no place in Charlottetown can show such a complete line of Boy's Clothing, Caps and Furnishings as we do, Try us.

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It has Become the Popular Remedy in Every Home.

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Some suffer from sleeplessness, nervous ailments, neuralgia, rheumatism, dyspepsia, liver and kidney troubles; others, owing to an impure and poisoned condition of the blood are suffering from unsightly eruption and skin diseases.

Paine's Celery Compound is the only true and trusted medicine for the present season. It purifies and enriches the blood, builds up the weakened body, corrects digestion, gives mental vigor, brightens clear skin and sweet sleep.

Physicians are daily prescribing Paine's Celery Compound in Canada and hundreds of druggists strongly recommended it to their customers.

Try the effect of a couple of bottles of Paine's Celery Compound if you would build up physically and mentally for the coming summer. Paine's Celery Compound is the world's leading and curing medicine; "it makes sick people well."

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To be good repair must be done by an expert. Last season's work turned out from our shop shows what we can do.

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is to repair wheels of all kinds. It pays us to do them properly. That's why we do it. Give us your next job.

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Our Representative for P. E. Island, Mr. C. S. Sutherland, will start out with samples about 10th May when orders for fall or assorting will have careful attention from us.

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Charlottetown, April 28, 1900—1mo eod