

WAR IN SOUTH AFRICA.

Interesting Particulars of the Struggle Between Great Britain and the Boers.

WHY LADYSMITH WAS HELD.

London, March 6.—Winston Churchill, telegraphing from Durban, March 4th, says:

I have had the pleasure of a conversation with General White on the defence of Ladysmith. The General, who seemed in good health, though worn by anxiety and privations, received me at his house, from the windows of which he has a complete view of the defences stretching around the wide circumference from one rocky hill to another, and beyond rose the frowning profile of Bulwana Mountain.

"He reminded me that he had arrived scarcely ten days before the outbreak of war. He had found certain arrangements in progress to meet the great and rapidly approaching crisis. He had full confidence in General Symons, who was a soldier of the highest ability, and, besides, a good, brave fighting man. Symons proposed to hold Dundee and Ladysmith, and underrated the Boers gravely. White, who had Colonel Ian Hamilton's experience in South Africa to fall back upon, viewed the situation in a more serious light. The story of what followed is told in the blue books.

"The General determined to ask the opinion of the Governor of Natal on the political result of abandoning Dundee. Thus appealed to, Sir W. Helyd Hutchinson said that grave consequences would result not only from a rising of the disloyal Dutch in the Klip country, and perhaps elsewhere in Natal and Zululand in that event. Dundee was actually abandoned, but the electrifying effect of Elandsplaagte to some extent neutralized the retreat of the British forces.

"But though White had doubts whether he should attempt to hold Dundee he had none about Ladysmith. This town, he said, was the first main objective of the combined forces of the Transvaal and the Free State. Here the lines of railway met and the Republican armies were to make their effective junction and score their first great success. The capture of Ladysmith, which the Boers never doubted for a moment, was to be a sign for a general rising of the Natal Dutch. To insure success 20,000 men under Joubert were directed against the town.

"White said he never wished to abandon Ladysmith or withdraw beyond the Tugela River. Had he done so he considered he may have been turned by superior forces and Pietermaritzburg and not Ladysmith would be the scene of the defence and struggle, for the possession of Ladysmith was an essential feature of the Dutch plan of campaign, and provoked them to devote all their energies to a siege instead of ravaging Natal as they might have done had White occupied a place of less significance, although perhaps of greater defensive strength.

"Moreover, the amount of military stores in Ladysmith magazines, the necessities of evacuating the civil population and of helping in the Dundee column made the abandonment of Ladysmith after White's arrival in Natal physically impossible.

"Passing to the actual defence of the town General White said: The knowledge which we had dearly bought of the long range of the Boer guns convinced me it was imperative that we should get guns to match them. The big guns of the naval brigade, which were brought up just before the cordon closed around us, enabled us to meet them on an equal footing."

THE MAN WITH THE PLAN.

"A little grey-headed man with a very compact, well-knit figure and a resolute look and very keen eyes. That is the hero of the hour, Lord Roberts the victor of Kandahar,

Dear Sir,—I was for seven years a sufferer from Bronchial Trouble, and would be so hoarse at times that I could scarcely speak above a whisper. I got no relief from anything until I tried your **MENARD'S HONEY BALSAM**. Two bottles gave relief and six bottles made a complete cure. I would heartily recommend it to anyone suffering from throat or lung trouble.

J. F. VANEUSKIRK, Fredericton.

the savior of Kimberley, the victor of Paardeberg," as he is described by Charles E. Hands, writing from Cape Town to the Daily Mail. The same correspondent continues:—

"Everywhere I seem to come across him, and whenever he happens to be people turn around and look at him as he passes and hurry back for another look, and are so impressed that they almost forget to cheer. And wherever he goes, with his alert step and his grave, strong look, confident purpose and resolution seem to spread around. He looks thoughtful; everything he does seems so thoughtful, so well considered, part of a definite scheme.

"I get a glimpse of him alone in a big office room. It is a very small matter to him which I want to put before him. I am thinking, but he does

nothing, he is bending down again over his papers, deep in calculation at the point where he left off.

"Lord Kitchener—for it is he—is engaged, they tell me, in re-organizing the transport service.

"The head manager had brought his sub-managers along with him just as Sir Thomas Lipton or Sir Weetman Pearson or any other would do if he had a big, new scheme to carry out. Business—big, business-like business."

CRITICISMS OF BULLER.

The aftermath of Spion Kop brings countless criticisms from correspondents at the front. Bennet Burleigh, in the Daily Telegraph, writes:—

"You can rely upon it that no one more than Gen. Buller deprecates the

mistake which led to the foolish evacuation of that key of the Boer position. When the general retreat was ordered, Buller waited by the single, part-pony, part-triple bridge until everybody was got safely across. The day previous he had critically re-examined the positions held upon the left; and been repeatedly under fire of the snipers. Indeed at least one of the generals and several of his staff had to get him to retire behind cover, as they thought he was unnecessarily risking himself."

The Globe's correspondent is particularly bitter about Spion Kop.

"No one knows," he writes, "who gave the order to retreat; the whole business is inexplicable. We met a staff officer on the way; he asked us what we were doing; he knew nothing of the order but presumed we had better continue on our road.

"And so ended a 17 hours fight. We gave the enemy a victory. The whole of Warren's division had retired. Call it what you like, it is a sad and deplorable business, there is no explanation, no one was more surprised at our actions than the Boers themselves; indeed, their officers openly expressed their surprise to our doctors."

The same correspondent relates

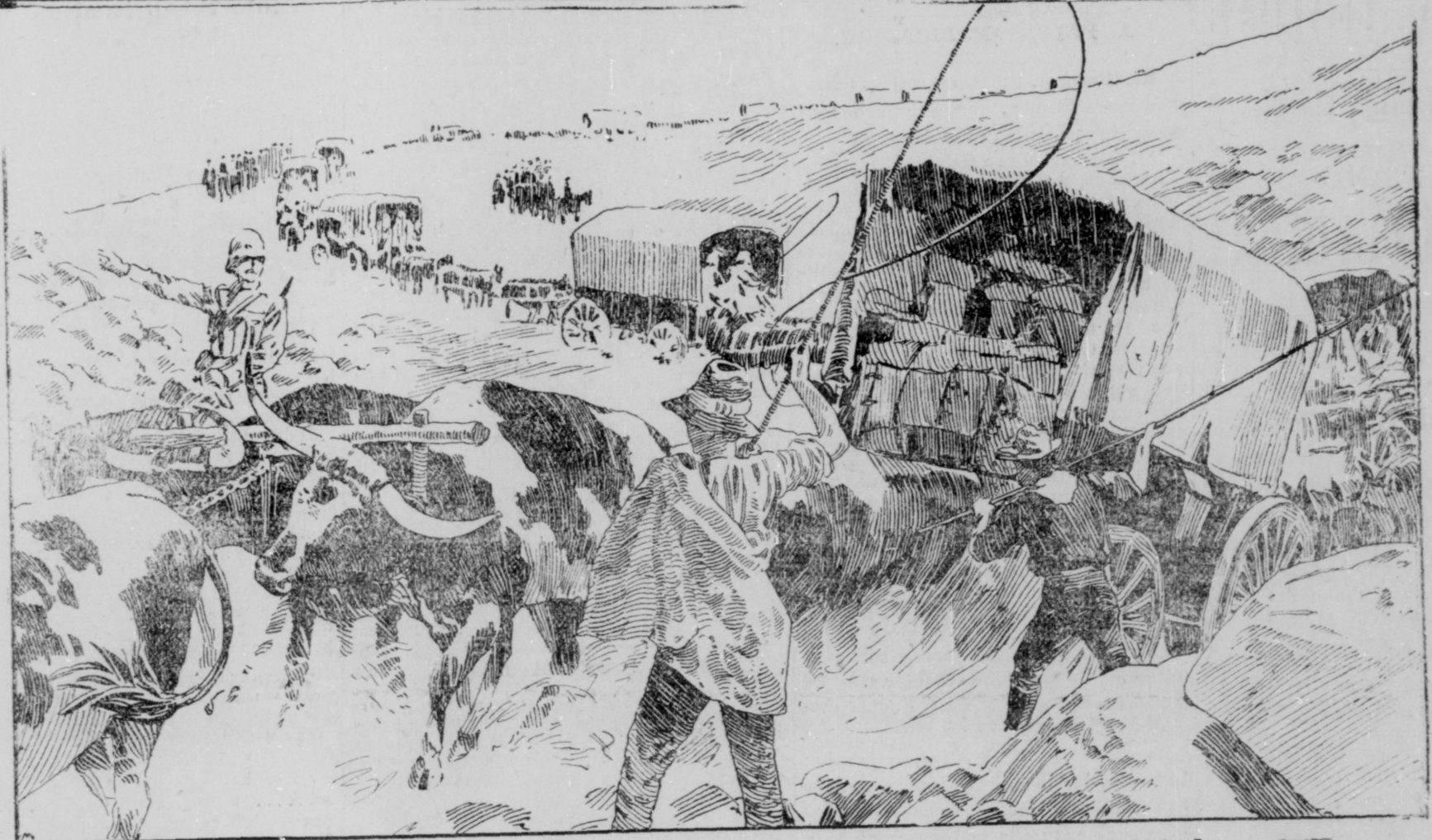
this gruesome incident which includes a serious insinuation against the Boers:—

"The Colonial Imperial Light Infantry went into action upon Spion Kop at 9 a. m. and remained upon the mountain till 8 p. m. Out of 850 men they had 39 killed and 90 wounded. Most of these volunteers were Uitlanders, and at least six of them, whose bodies were afterwards discovered, had been clubbed to death by the Boers. Two of those slaughtered in that way, Corporal Weldon and Private Daddon, were ex-Pretoria men."

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