

The Mafeking Mail.

SPECIAL SIEGE SLIP.

No. 106

Sunday, April 1st, 1900.

171st Day of Siege

LATEST NEWS.

Free Staters Collapsed.

Boers Surrendering with Artillery.

The following telegram has been received from Reuter, Capetown, March 19th:—

The enemy has disappeared from Norval's Pont.

Four hundred Free Staters have surrendered and a general collapse has taken place of the Free State forces in the South.

General Carew has returned to Bloemfontein from Springfontein, having effected junction with Gen. Gatacre at Norval's Pont, and heliographed to Gen. Clements.

The rebellion in the North-East of the Colony has collapsed.

Belmont reports that Boer deserters have come in, bringing a Maxim and two nine-pounders.

The runners who came in this morning state they were in hiding between this and Ramathlabama when they heard a few shots at Oaklands; the firing gradually increased until Ramathlabama was reached, when it became heavy and continued vigorously until dusk, the rattle of the Maxims being distinctly heard. The runners appear to think the Boers retired towards evening; they saw one or two riding off in the distance.

HARRASSING THE ENEMY.

Last Thursday Col. Plumer made a reconnaissance from Sofilele, via Lobatsi and Kalafin to near Zee-rust. Yesterday he reconnoitred to Ramathlabama, to demonstrate and discover the enemy's position. During the afternoon his guns were heard from here, and when the Boers moved their guns out against him a feigned attack was made by our garrison on Game Tree, while at the same time the attention of their big gun was

drawn on the Brickfields by our guns. This kept the enemy's artillery hesitating as to which direction it should go, while a large number of Boers were occupied in supporting Game Tree against our, supposed, attack.

NATIVE REPORTS.

Two messengers arrived from Saane's. He told them he had heard no news since last week, when he sent in. Native drivers went to Mamusa to fetch young Cronje's wagons. As they were passing his farm young Cronje's wife told them to go back as Cronje was in a tight fix, and she did not think they would be able to reach him, so they returned. When they got to Rietfontein they heard that news had been received there that young Cronje had been captured by our troops in the Transvaal, opposite Vryburg.

Some Boers came from the South during the week, but Mok-hothu not being at home, the Natives have not yet heard corroboratively about young Cronje's capture. There are fourteen Boers at Rietfontein and about twenty at Buku's farm. They give out that they are there guarding against cattle looters, but Saane thinks they are a lot of cowards, who, being too much afraid to join the fighting, think it better to stay in the veld and pretend they are watching for cattle raiders.

Both these parties belong to young Cronje's commando, but they do not tell where he is.

The rebels are gradually leaving their homes and trekking into the Transvaal, and there will soon be more Loyalists than Rebels at Rietfontein.

Since taking Bloemfontein the British have taken many other places North and East of that town, from Boshoff up to Rhenoster Spruit.

The Free State Government is said to be at Vereeniging.

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