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THE TRANSVAAL FROM WITHOUT

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“NOBLESSE OBLIGE.”

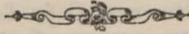
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The Transvaal from Without.



We are all familiar with the claims and grievances of our own people in the Transvaal. Shall we as true English lovers of justice and fair play give for a moment an ear to the other side.

Let us begin by taking a rapid survey of the story of Dutch and British Colonisation in South Africa. From the very first it would seem Britons and Boers have been rivals.

As early as 1620 we read that two Englishmen named Andrew Shilling and Humphrey Fitzherbert, commanders of vessels bound for the East Indies, hearing that the Dutch intended to establish a Colony at the Cape in the following year, planted the British Standard there, and took possession of it in the name of James, King of England, because they thought it better that the "Dutch or any other nation whatever should be his Majesty's subjects in the place, than that *his* subjects should be subjects to any other." But the action of those two men was not ratified by the Home Government, and the Dutch were allowed to settle peaceably at the Cape.

To quote from Mr. Frederic Harrison :

"The records of this first Colony remain ; the names of the settlers, their wives and children. It is curious to read in documents two centuries old the names we see in every newspaper to-day, Pretorius, De Beers, Kruger, De Villiers, Cloete, Botha, Steyn.

These Dutch Settlers all came together, and from closely allied families ; they were mostly rough farmers and peasants, with a few men of birth and breeding. But from the first they formed a close family, passionately attached to the old Country, to their ancestral habits, to their religion, to their Bible, their only book. They intermarried, they increased rapidly, they thrive in goods, cattle and children ; they clung to their old Dutch ways and belongings, language and blood. They were and they are amongst the most intensely conservative and self-contained race on earth. They wanted nothing from anyone outside, they changed nothing, and loved nothing outside their African homes, except it were the old race in the dear lowlands beneath the Northern Dykes."

In 1688 their numbers were increased, and their progress was advanced by the arrival of a body of French Huguenots, driven from France by the persecutions of Louis XIV. "some of the best blood and noblest spirits of France," skilled craftsmen, merchants, &c.

The Huguenots were in time (in the 3rd or 4th generations) completely blended with the Dutch in one Africander race. Piet Joubert is the 5th in descent from the first Huguenot of that name.

At the latter end of the 18th Century when revolutions were everywhere in the air—when the Prince of Orange had been driven out of Holland, and a Republic established there, the Colonists, who had latterly been very unjustly governed by the Dutch East India Company, became unsettled and rebellious.

Great Britain had long recognised the value of the Colony as a

calling station on the way to India, and now being at war with France "she feared that so valuable a possession (which fourteen years before she had attempted to seize) might fall into French hands"

She therefore sent a powerful fleet nominally to *protect* the colony for the Prince of Orange. But the colonists "did not want to be protected and showed fight." However Cape Town was captured by the English. This was our first conquest of the Cape in 1795 after a Dutch rule of 143 years. In 1802 at the Peace of Amiens we reluctantly ceded the colony again to Holland; but in 1806 another fleet was sent from England and the Cape was taken by force a second time. In 1814 this conquest was ratified by a payment to the Prince of Orange of £6,000,000.

During the three years before 1806 the Boers had under the Batavian Republic enjoyed "good government combined with ample liberty." They were much crestfallen to find themselves once more under the British flag. Nor were their fears unfounded "Our officials did not understand them; they made no allowance for a race of brave free men inhabiting a country which by the might of their own right-hand they had won from savages and wild beasts and who were given into the hands of a strange government without their consent or desire.* "They considered the Boers ignorant, narrow, bigoted, and they had no sympathy for them." The Boers on the other hand pictured Englishmen as "arrogant above all other mortals, as insatiable in the pursuit of wealth, as regardless of the rights of others and as viewing everything with an eye jaundiced by natural prejudice."

Our own wise historian Dr. Theal says "In the blemishes of the colonial character there was nothing that education of a healthy kind would not rectify and against them could be set several virtues possessed in a high degree. The colonists were an eminently self-reliant people and seldom lost heart under difficulties. In tenacity of purpose they were without equals. Their hospitality was admitted even by those who were determined to see in them nothing else that was praiseworthy and their benevolence towards persons in distress was very highly developed. There was no part of the world where a well-behaved and trustworthy stranger more readily met with assistance and genuine friendship. But as beforesaid, the British rulers failed to understand them and after 1814 "secure in their title they began to tighten the reins. The Dutch language was suppressed in Courts of justice and official acts though five-sixths of the people understood no other tongue."‡ Petitions in the language of the country and complaints about bitter grievances were not even acknowledged. The Boers were even debarred from sitting in juries on account of the language. The Colony was taxed beyond its means to pay the high salaries of the British officials. But the worst grievance of all was that the Hottentots acknowledged to be the very lowest of the aboriginal races were enrolled as police to coerce the "liberty loving Afrikander." Small wonder that a race hatred sprang up between Boer and Briton. Small wonder that in 1815 a number of Boers were driven into rebellion. And then comes the greatest tragedy of British rule. The five ringleaders were hanged on the never-to-be-forgotten gallows of Schlachters Nek and the wives and children were *compelled* to look on. "The crowd of fellow South Africans who stood by them believed, hoped against hope

* Olive Schreiner, "An English South African view of the situation,

‡ F. Hamsoi, the Two Boer Republics.

to the last moment that a reprieve would come. Lord Charles Somerset sent none, and the tragedy was completed.”* One of these five men was a Kruger. The place is still called Schlachter’s Nek or Butcher’s Ridge to this day. Every South African child knows the story.

“It would be difficult to find in any part of the World” writes Dr Theal “a people with so much cause to be discontented as the old inhabitants of Cape Colony for many years after 1827.”

Sad to say some of their worst enemies were the English Missionaries who, deeply prejudiced against them, swallowed all the idle tales of the blacks, and published the most outrageous calumnies against the Boers which were readily believed in England. Reitz says “Under the pressure of powerful Philanthropic opinion in England our unfortunate people were more bitterly persecuted than ever and were finally compelled to defend themselves in courts of law against the coarsest accusations and insults. But they emerged from the ordeal triumphantly and the records of the Criminal Courts of the Cape Colony bear indisputable witness to the fact that there were no people among the slave owning classes of the world more humane than the Afrikaner Boers”

The emancipation of the slaves—in itself of course a most excellent measure—was carried out in such a way that it inflicted a grievous wrong on the Boers as Dr. Theal says “a vast amount of distress might have been prevented by effecting it in the manner the Colonists proposed.” We should remember that during the first British occupation slave traffic had been particularly brisk. Slaves were imported in large numbers in English ships and sold to the Colonists by Englishmen. And further we must admit that when we retook the Colony in 1806 the slaves were already on the road to independence for as, Dr. Theal tells us “The Batavian government, being opposed to the system, allowed very few to be landed, and had it lasted a couple of years longer, every child born thereafter would have been declared free.”

We may remark in passing that the slaves were by no means the cruelly oppressed and persecuted people one is apt to imagine. “The testimony of everyone competent to form a correct opinion concurred that in no other part of the world was bondage so light. Except in planting and harvesting the labour of the negroes was easy, and they certainly did not feel themselves degraded by compulsory service. They were the most lighthearted of mortals. The English governors were of opinion that they enjoyed more comfort than labourers in Great Britain, and that the Dutch laws gave them sufficient protection against ill usage.”*

The slaves were emancipated; so far well and good; but no adequate compensation was received by the Colonists and the result was widespread ruin and destitution. “Some families never recovered from the blow, aged men and women who had not before known want went down to the grave penniless, and in hundreds of the best households of the country the pinch of poverty was sorely felt.*” The Hottentots were allowed to ravage the Boer farms as an “immense herd of gipsies robbing and destroying.” The state of affairs became intolerable to those of the Boers who most dearly loved their independence.

Led by the wise and brave Piet Retief one of the heroes of South

* Theal “South Africa.”

Africa "they decided to sell home, farm and all that remained over from the depredations of the Kaffirs and to trek away from British rule." The manifesto of Piet Retief runs thus:

"We despair of saving the Colony from those evils which threaten it by the turbulent and dishonest conduct of vagrants who are allowed to infest the country in every part; nor do we see any prospect of peace or happiness for our children in a country thus distracted by internal commotions"

"We complain of the unjustifiable odium which has been cast upon us by interested and dishonest persons under the name of religion, whose testimony is believed in England to the exclusion of all evidence in our favour; and we can foresee, as a result of this prejudice, nothing but the total ruin of the country." "We quit this Colony under the full assurance that the English Government has nothing more to require of us, and will allow us to govern ourselves without its interference in future."

"We are now leaving the fruitful land of our birth, in which we have suffered enormous losses and continual vexation, and are about to enter a strange and dangerous territory; but we go with a firm reliance on an all-seeing, just, and merciful God, whom we shall always fear and humbly endeavour to obey."

It is interesting to read now the English Governor of Cape Colony describes these trekkers in his dispatch to England. He calls them "a brave, patient, industrious, orderly and religious people, the cultivators, the defenders and the tax contributors of the country" and he adds that they were leaving the country because, owing to recent measures their lives and their property were in danger.

A little wisdom on our part, a little sympathy, an effort at conciliation and these valiant people would have remained in the Colony and have become our staunch allies, gradually blending with us into one race. But as our own historian says: "There was no sympathy whatever shown towards them by the authorities in England, in fact there was a decided antipathy, which was fostered by the so-called philanthropic societies, then at the height of their power. The most outrageous stories concerning the colonists were circulated by men who bore the title of Christian teachers—and nothing was too gross to be believed in England—until the word Boer (Dutch for farmer) came to be regarded as a synonym for an ignorant and heartless oppressor of coloured people. It was useless for the Governors to report differently or for the Courts of law to pronounce the stories libellous, the great societies condemned the Boers and the great societies represented and led public opinion in England."*

Froude says: "Because the Dutch are a deliberate and slow people, not given to enthusiasm for new ideas, they fell into disgrace with us, where they have ever since remained. The unfavourable impression of them became a tradition of the English Press, and unfortunately, of the Colonial Office. We had treated them unfairly as well as unwisely, and we never forgive those whom we have injured."†

And so the great Trek began—one of the most remarkable undertakings in the world's history and perhaps only paralleled by the Exodus of the Children of Israel. Cape Colony was then bounded by

* *Theale*, South Africa. † *Froude* "Oceana"

the Orange River, so North of the Orange River the Boers imagined they would be free, especially as it had many times been announced that Great Britain had no wish to extend her possessions in Africa.

They went boldly forth into that unknown country as yet unexplored by any European. They knew that the natives were constantly being slaughtered and the land overrun by Zulus and Matabele under the two fierce chiefs Dingaan and Mosilikatse—they knew that on all sides they would be exposed to perils from wild beasts, but they risked everything rather than remain under hostile British rule. On they trekked with waggons, wives and children, attacked by wild beasts and wandering hordes of savages, decimated by fever, by famine and by drought. Among the trekkers was Paul Kruger, then a boy of ten, just old enough to drag his musket.

The first party numbering ninety-eight perished entirely, every soul excepting two small children. Another party “trekked on till a feeble remnant, stricken with fever at last reached the coast of Delagoa Bay.” A third large party was led by the able Hendrik Potgieter. Halting by the banks of the Vet River Potgieter found a native Captain living in great fear of the terrible Mosilikatse. Delighted to be taken under the protection of the white men this man readily sold them the greater part of the country which he claimed. Potgieter and his friends set out in high spirits to return to their families, but on regaining their waggons great was their consternation to find that many of their friends had been horribly massacred by Mosilikatse’s warriors. Thereupon ensued the direst struggle with the ferocious chieftain. A handful of Boers, armed only with their old flint-locks defeated those fierce Matabele who enormously outnumbered them, and drove them back across the Limpopo.

Piet Retief fared worse. He began negotiations with Dingaan the Zulu chief, who received him kindly. Retief wished to know if Dingaan would be inclined to dispose of the country now known as Natal. Dingaan said he might have the country, but he must first prove his friendship, by recovering a herd of about 700 cattle recently stolen from their tribe. Retief agreed to this condition and safely recovered the cattle without bloodshed. He and his friends were again received with every demonstration of friendship and were invited into the centre of the kraal to take refreshment, and to take leave of the Chief. Suspecting nothing, they went in and left their guns outside. Suddenly Dingaan cried “seize them,” and immediately the Zulu soldiers rushed on them and broke their skulls with clubs. A few days later ten thousand Zulu soldiers fell upon the most advanced Boer encampment and massacred in the most hideous and revolting manner 41 white men, 56 white women, 185 white children, and about 250 coloured servants. The Boers, attacked again by the cruel Dingaan, defeated him in spite of overwhelming odds—themselves but a few hundred, the enemy many thousand strong. This victory is one of the most memorable in the history of South Africa. The Boers, in fulfilment of a vow, built a Church, and set apart a thanksgiving day in every year to celebrate it.—December 16th, Dingaans Day.

As they had driven Mosilikatse north of the Limpopo, so they drove Dingaan into Zululand, and they now settled down in Natal, in the Transvaal, and in the Orange Free State. In Natal the Boers founded Pieter Maritzburg (named after two of their leaders,) and other towns and villages. As one of themselves has said “the land was purchased with

their money and baptised with their blood." But they were not allowed to enjoy it long in peace. After six years our Colonial Office began to interfere. The Government decided on a military occupation of Natal, alleging that the Boers were still British subjects and had no right to set up an independent Republic. It is not unimportant to notice here that the Boers had taken a legal opinion on this very point before they determined to trek, and had been assured by the Cape Attorney General Mr. Oliphant, that outside British territory they would be free from British rule. However, the Colonial Office thought otherwise and sent a military force to land at Durban. The Boers, after a brave fight under the gallant Andreas Pretorius, had to see their young Republic extinguished, and had to face another weary war, or submit once more to British rule.

Great Britain annexed the country, and in 1845 founded the British Colony of Natal.

The Annexation only took place under strong protest. The Volksraad of Maritzburg addressed the following letter to Governor Napier: "We know that there is a God, who is the Ruler of Heaven and Earth and who has power and will to protect the injured, though weaker against oppressors. In Him we put our trust and in the justice of our cause; and should it be His will that total destruction be brought upon us, our wives, our children and everything we possess, we will with due submission acknowledge to have deserved from Him, but not from men. We are aware of the power of Great Britain and it is not our object to defy that power; but at the same time we cannot allow that might instead of right shall triumph without having employed all our means to oppose it."

The Boer women of Maritzburg informed the British Commissioner that sooner than subject themselves again to British sway they would walk barefoot over the Drakensberg to freedom or to death. And they were true to their word.

Sir Harry Smith, afterwards Governor speaking of the emigrant Boers said; "They were exposed to a state of misery which he had never before seen equalled, except in Massena's invasion of Portugal. The scene was truly heartrending. They trekked over the Drakensberg to the Orange Free State, where some remained, but others wandered northwards over the Vaal River. We have no space to deal with the Free State, nor will we dwell on a topic which must be a most painful one to all English people who care for the honour of their Country—I mean the way in which we deprived the State of the Kimberly Diamond Mines—a transaction which Mr. Froude calls "the most discreditable in the annals of English Colonial policy."

We must pass on to the Transvaal—

By the Sand River Convention, in 1852, the British Government fearing at that time that the Boers would join Moshesh, the Basuto Chief, against them, sought their friendship by guaranteeing emigrant farmers beyond the Vaal, the right to manage their own affairs, and govern themselves according to their own laws. It was mutually agreed that the sale of firearms to natives should be strictly forbidden, an agreement which I fear we must admit we were guilty of breaking, when we afterwards sold arms in large quantities to the Kaffirs.

In the following year 1853 the great hero Pretorius died. After

his death things went badly in the Transvaal. "The country was ill-governed, the distant Boers declined to pay taxes—the exchequer naturally became insolvent."

In 1877 Sir Theophilus Shepstone was sent to Pretoria to inquire into the state of affairs. He settled matters summarily by proclaiming the Transvaal British Territory and hoisting the Union Jack. It cannot be denied that the Transvaal under British rule made considerable improvement in financial and commercial prosperity; but this gain did not satisfy the Boers for the loss of their dearly cherished independence. We must remember that owing to the absence of large towns and large industries lack of money was not in fact as serious as it seemed. The population being pastoral its wants were few and were supplied by the barter of commodities.

"Sir Theophilus guaranteed a liberal home rule, a free legislature, and municipal privileges, and returned in the belief that all would settle down in time."†

His successor Sir Owen Lanyon was unfortunately a very different man "incapable of even attempting to conciliate the people of the country."* "He introduced censorship of the press, suppressed meetings, nominated a packed council and two Chambers but gave no franchise, held no elections, and granted no self-government."† Can we wonder that the Boers again found British rule distasteful and that it became a common saying among them that England never kept her word?

The Volksraad protested against the annexation, the President protested—out of a possible 8,000 Burghers 6,600 protested but all in vain.

Bishop Colenso said: "The sly and underhand way in which the Transvaal has been annexed appears to be unworthy of the English name."

When it was represented that this Annexation was a breach of the Sand River Convention, Sir Bartle Frere replied that if they wished to go back to the Sand River Convention they might just as well go back to Creation. Delegates went to England but gained nothing.

At last things came to a crisis. At a great meeting at Paardekraal the Boers resolved to commit their cause to Almighty God and to live or die together in a struggle for independence.

On Dingaan's Day 1880, the flag of the Republic was hoisted once again. On that same day blood was shed. A party of burghers under Commandant Cronje went to Potchefstroom to have a proclamation printed. The burghers were fired on by the English soldiers there and Cronje returned the fire. The repeated reverses of the British arms in the campaign that followed, at Bronkorst Spruit, at Laing's Nek, at Ingogo, and at Majuba, are a matter of history. We all know what followed. Although reinforcements of our troops had arrived in such numbers as to render further resistance hopeless, Gladstone decided to come to terms with the burghers without further bloodshed. He concluded with them the convention of 1881 whereby the Transvaal regained its independence subject to the suzerainty of the British Crown.

Perhaps no act of statemanship has ever received more adverse criticism than this. But we must agree with Sir William Harcourt that

* *Theal* "South Africa,"

† *F. Harrison*, "The Two Boer Republics"

it is a "memorable record of that righteousness which exalteth a nation." The Boers since this have always honoured and revered the name of Gladstone.

Mr. Chamberlain at that time was his most loyal supporter and we cannot do better than use his words. "The Boers" he said "are not naturally a warlike race; they are a homely, industrious, but somewhat rude and uncivilised nation of farmers living on the produce of the soil; they are animated by a deep and even stern religious sentiment and they inherit from their ancestors, the men who won the independence of Holland from the oppressive rule of Philip II. of Spain their unconquerable love of freedom and liberty. Are not these qualities which commend themselves to men of the English race, are they not virtues which we are proud to believe form the best characteristics of the English people? Is it against such a nation as this that we are called upon to exercise the dread arbitrament of arms?"

The 1881 Convention did not give back to the Boers the entire independence guaranteed in 1852, and therefore they were dissatisfied. So in 1883, with the approval of the British Government, a deputation headed by President Kruger, went to London, in order to have the Convention revised.

A new Convention, the London Convention of 1884, was drawn up by Lord Derby, granting the Boers absolute independence, with regard to the internal affairs of the Country; the word suzerainty was purposely omitted and we only reserved to ourselves the power of vetoing any treaty, with any foreign power, other than the Free State. The title of the Country was altered from "Transvaal State" to "South African Republic," which we may take as a proof of the independence conceded.

But a few years later "the Transvaal found its independence menaced by a new force." In 1886, it was discovered that most valuable gold fields existed there and no sooner was this known than the news was followed by an enormous influx of miners, speculators and adventurers of all sorts, bringing the usual demoralising influences in their train. Large towns sprang up like mushrooms on the bare veldt. The Boers who had hitherto followed pastoral and hunting pursuits now had to face one of the most difficult problems in the world, the Government of this strange, motley and ever-growing mining population which had sprung up suddenly in their midst, and which had introduced vice and crime hitherto unknown in the Transvaal.

In ten years Johannesburg grew from a little group of scattered huts to be the "largest, wealthiest and most modern town" in South Africa.

To use the words of Olive Schreiner: "It is sometimes said that when one stands looking down from the edge of this hill at the great mining camp of Johannesburg stretching beneath, with its heaps of white sand and debris mountain high, its mining chimneys belching forth smoke, and its 70,000 Kaffirs and its 80,000 men and women, white or coloured, of all nationalities, gathered here in the space of a few years on the spot where, 15 years ago, the Boers guided his sheep to the water, and the Boer's wife sat alone at evening at the house door to watch the sunset, we are looking upon one of the most wonderful spectacles on earth. And it is wonderful;

but as we look at it the thought always arises within us of something more wonderful yet—the marvellous manner in which a little nation of simple folk, living in peace in the land they loved, far from the rush of cities and the concourse of men, have risen to the difficulties of their condition; how they, without instruction in statecraft or traditional rules of policy, have risen to face their great difficulties and have sincerely endeavoured to meet them in a large spirit and have largely succeeded. We do not say that the Transvaal Republic has among its guides and rulers a Solon or a Lycurgus, but it has to-day among the men guiding its destiny, men of brave and earnest spirit, who are seeking manfully and profoundly to deal with the great problems before them in a wide spirit of humanity and justice.”

If we can realise the enormous difficulties in Kruger's path we shall admit that the wonder is *not* that he made serious mistakes and failed to satisfy each individual but that he was able to cope with the legislative question with any measure of success. And that he succeeded in attaining a very large measure of success can not be denied, for it is a matter of common knowledge that the government of the Witwatersand compares favourably with that of every other mining area in the world.

The British subjects in Johannesburg formed the most difficult part of the problem. It was the old story over again—Briton and Boer failing to understand one another. Mr. Bertram Mitford, the South African novelist, writes: “The tragedy of the whole thing is that the two great white races there so little understand one another. The Englishman in Johannesburg does not see the Boer at all. He steps into the train at Capetown and gets out in the English-speaking city of Johannesburg. He comes in constant contact with Hollanders and officials and is irritated by little grievances at every turn. He goes home, after having made considerable money on the Rand, full of hatred of the Boers and yet all the time really knowing nothing of them. The Boer, on the other hand, has a traditional hatred of the Englishman, but the hatred, at least up to the time of the Jameson raid, was wholly traditional and in no way personal. I know the Cape Dutch and the Boers well. I have lived intimately with them for many years. I have associated with them in innumerable ways. I have found them generous, hospitable, kindly people, fond of their homes. No doubt there are young blackguards and young rowdies amongst the Boers as there are amongst Englishmen, but to paint the average Boer as cruel or as a mere scoundrel is to anyone who knows him simply absurd.”

With regard to this misunderstanding between the races and the causes of it we have the same testimony from Mrs. Lionel Phillips, wife of the so-called King of Johannesburg. She says the English “come out there and instead of studying the idiosyncrasies of the Afriander they assume a condescending and arrogant attitude towards the people of the land and expect them to act and behave as if they were English. But as they are not English they naturally do not come up to the stranger's expectations and are consequently relegated to outer darkness.”

Some of these British subjects had the truly British notion that such valuable gold mines ought without the shadow of a doubt to

belong to the British Empire, or rather, probably, to the Chartered Company. It was gall and wormwood to them to remember that had it not been for the action of our Government in 1881 we should have been in possession and the name of Gladstone has been held odium by them.

It is not to be denied that the Uitlanders had grievances, but all impartial authorities who have examined the question thoroughly are unanimous in stating that these grievances have been grossly exaggerated.

The chief grievance alleged by them is that they are debarred from representation in the Raad. They refuse, however, to undertake the obligations of citizens—a condition on which the franchise depends in every country in the world. Speaking in October, 1899, President Kruger “pointed out that repeated efforts had been made by the Republic to place strangers coming into the country on a basis of equality with the burghers; but, on being asked whether they would defend the country against its native enemies, the English had refused, and had forced their own Government to insist upon their exemption from military service and after this they were left alone.” The next great grievance is the system of taxation; they complain that the mines are too heavily taxed. But with this grievance I think we can have little sympathy, as we know from good authorities that there is no country in the world in which mining can be so favourably carried on and colossal fortunes made so rapidly. There are grievances about the monopolies, about the police, etc., etc. But perhaps the strangest of them all is the grievance that English is not the language of the schools, though it is not generally known that there are several state-aided schools, in the Transvaal, in which English, is the sole medium of education.

Dr. Theal puts into the mouth of an imaginary Boer a good answer to the Uitlander grievances—

“Nearly all other Europeans are satisfied, and submit, without demur, to the Government of the country; it is only Englishmen who complain.

“In no other country in the world is a foreign language the medium of instruction in State-aided schools. Dutch is the language of the South African Republic and yet the English are taught in their own tongue up to a certain standard.

“The monopolies complained of and the high import duties on all articles that can be produced in the Republic are to encourage home industries. Other countries—notably the United States—have protective tariff for the same purpose.

“The system of taxation is not unfair. The burghers have military duties to perform without payment, which fully compensate for the smaller amount of money they contribute.

“The right of voting carries with it duties which the great majority of Englishmen would not perform. The privilege cannot be given without adoption of the burghers’ burdens as well as their rights.

“The police are the best that can be obtained, and it is unreasonable to expect from them the demeanour of those in London.” Grievances there were then, but were there none on the other side? Was not Kruger’s life made a burden to him by the insolent

behaviour of many of the Uitlanders and by the unspeakable insolence of the Uitlander press ?

Mrs. Lionel Phillips naively tells us that one evening, the President, having expressly come to Johannesburg at the request of the Uitlanders to inquire into some grievance, had arranged to address a meeting at the Wanderers' Hall. Just as he was beginning to speak some youth in the crowd below began to sing "Rule Britannia." When the President asked them to be still their response was a burst of laughter, and so he left the meeting without saying a word and drove off to the Landdrost's house in Government Square. That night the Transvaal flag over the Landdrost's house was pulled down.

On another occasion when our High Commissioner, Sir Henry Loch, came to Pretoria to inquire into some dispute, Kruger went to the station to meet him and "an incident occurred to embitter him still more against the British Uitlander. There was a scene of the wildest enthusiasm, thousands being there to meet the Queen's representative, and when he and Kruger got into the carriage (which also contained Dr. Leyds) to proceed to the hotel some Englishmen took out the horses and dragged it, one irrepressible person jumping on the box seat and waving a Union Jack over Kruger's head. When the carriage arrived at its destination Sir Henry, accompanied by Dr. Leyds, entered the hotel and the President was left sitting in the horseless carriage the yelling crowd refusing to drag the vehicle."

And it was these men, who did not conceal their desire to oust the Boers from the government of their own country, that Kruger was expected to welcome in his Volksraad ! Can we wonder at his hesitation ?

And now the Uitlanders began to weave their web of conspiracy against the Transvaal Government ; 2,500 rifles were smuggled into Johannesburg, mostly concealed in oil tanks. The plan was to rouse the population of the city into armed rebellion against the Boers, to seize the Arsenal, then no difficult matter (being at that time nothing but a collection of tin shanties) and to hold it until the British Government came to their assistance. They thus admit that their object was to embroil the British Government with the Transvaal and to cause war. The sacrifice of the lives of our brave soldiers they considered as of no importance in comparison with their own gain. We all know the story of the Jameson raid and how it was aided and abetted if not promoted and financed by the man who was allowed by our Government to remain Privy Councillor after his crime. Let us hear what Mr. Lecky says of Cecil Rhodes—

"When holding the highly confidential position of Prime Minister of Cape Colony, and being at the same time a Privy Councillor of the Queen, he engaged in a conspiracy for the overthrow of the Government of a neighbouring and friendly state. In order to carry out this design he deceived the High Commissioner, whose Prime Minister he was. He collected under false pretences a force which was intended to co-operate with an insurrection in Johannesburg. Being a director of the Chartered Company, he made use of that position, without the knowledge of his colleagues to further the conspiracy. He took an active and secret part in smuggling great quantities of arms into the Transvaal, which were intended to be used

in the rebellion, and at a time when his organs in the Press were representing Johannesburg as seething with spontaneous indignation against an oppressive government, he with another millionaire was secretly expending many thousands of pounds in that town in stimulating and subsidising the rising. He was also directly connected with the shabby incident in the whole affair, the concoction of a letter from Johannesburg conspirators absurdly representing women and children there as in danger of being shot down by the Boers and urging the British to come at once to save them. It was a letter drawn up with the sanction of Mr. Rhodes many weeks before the Raid and before any disturbance had arisen and kept in reserve, to be dated and used at the last moment, for the purpose of inducing the young soldiers in South Africa to join in the plot. What can be thought of the Minister, who knowing all this, said in the House of Commons that Mr. Rhodes had done nothing to affect his personal honour?"

Unfortunately the English nation "shamefully misled," as Mr. Lecky says "by a very important part of the British press" did not unanimously condemn the Raid as it deserved. Dr. Jameson was greeted in England as a hero. Then came the Committee of Inquiry at Westminster. We all know how incomplete and unsatisfactory that inquiry was, and how the Continent, regarding it as a travesty of justice, was scandalised that such a thing should occur in England, the country which had just shrieked with righteous horror at the injustice of the Dreyfus case.

Sir R. Reid, speaking in the House of Commons, said "his charge against the Government was that by their policy they had stimulated and inflamed the suspicion of the Boers. Another thing which largely contributed to increase their suspicions was that wicked and contemptible act the Jameson raid. Every Dutchman in S. Africa and a very large number of persons on the Continent believed that the raid was organised with the complicity of the Colonial Secretary. That raid was followed by a Committee of the House, which was a scandal dishonouring to the House and the Country."

Can we wonder that Mr. Reitz should thus write of it, "nor has the world forgotten how, at the urgent instance of Africander party in Cape Colony, an investigation into the causes of the conflict was held in Westminster; how that investigation degenerated into a low attack upon the Government of the sorely, maligned and deeply injured South African Republic, and how at the last moment, when the truth was on the point of being revealed and conspiracy traced to its fountain head in the British Cabinet, the Commission decided all of a sudden not to make certain compromising documents public."

Can we wonder that Kruger's suspicions were aroused and that he now began to arm in deadly earnest, foreseeing as it did in the future no second Jameson raid, but an *Imperial raid* attacking the independence of his Country. Much has been said about the Boer armaments dating from an earlier period, but in 1896, Major White thought them of so little importance that he said the "Boers had very nearly been caught napping at the beginning of the year." They now made no secret of their preparations. Captain Younghusband, who visited Pretoria, for the *Times*, early in 1896, reports that "Orders for batteries of field guns, quick firing guns, and Maxims and for sufficient rifles to arm every

Dutchman in South Africa, were being sent to Europe ; European drill instructors and artillerymen were being imported and forts were being constructed round Pretoria on the most approved designs." Mr. J. B. Robinson, the Rand Millionaire, tells the same story. I cannot refrain here from reading a short article that has lately appeared in the *Westminster Gazette*. Speaking of the proposed new inquiry into the cause of the Raid, it says : " There are some people who will be impatient at the digging up, as they call it of an old buried scandal. The Raid in their view, was an unhappy, but unimportant incident and the complicity of British statesman is incredible to us. The point is not whether it is credible to us, who are all jointly defendants in this action, but whether it is commonly believed in by our neighbours in Europe, and by our enemies in Africa.

Here unfortunately, there is no room for doubt, as regards Europe, we have only to ask ourselves what we should think if, say in France, a public inquiry had ended as the South Africa Committee ended in this Country. As regards the Boers, the controversy about the Transvaal armaments has at least brought to light this fact—that the chief part of the arming took place after the Raid and as the result, not only of the Raid, but of the inquiry into the Raid, and of the proceedings in the House of Commons, when the report of the Committee was discussed. There was published in the *Daily News*, last month a letter from Mr. J. B. Robinson, describing three interviews between himself and President Kruger, in the years 1896 and 1897. At the first of these interviews he assured the President that the investigation would be thorough and that those who were guilty would be discovered and punished. " I shall wait and we shall see " was the President's reply. The report of the Committee followed some months later and Mr. Robinson went again to Pretoria, solaced and supported by its fine sounding anathemas against Mr. Rhodes and the Raiders. " You see I was right " he said to the President. " Yes said Mr. Kruger, but what else is to follow these conclusions " ? Mr. Robinson bade him again exercise a little patience, Then came a disastrous cable, reporting the debate in the House of Commons and the handsome testimonial given by Mr. Chamberlain to Mr. Rhodes. Mr. Robinson paid a third visit and this time found the President in a violent temper. But let us quote from Mr. Robinson .—

" Do you think we are fools ? (he said) Do you think for a moment we do not know the true working of this raid ? Do you mean to tell me that you do not know that the men who organised and engineered this Raid, organised it for their own benefit and that they had decided how they would divide the Transvaal, how each of the parties was to have certain interests in this Country, and that many of the Reformers, who were put in gaol were perfectly innocent and ignorant of the schemes of the men who were in the inner circle ? He continued : There are only twelve men in that inner circle and they were to share the spoils and divide the Transvaal amongst themselves. They and their accomplices found the money for the Raid. Do you think that we are so innocent as not to know that Mr. Rhodes, metaphorically speaking, held a pistol at the heads of certain men in England and said to them " if you do not support me, I will denounce you and your complicity in the Raid." And now you are remonstrating with me about arms, it is true I am arming, because I see clearly that I must defend my Country." And

now the rumour began to spread that the Boers were arming not for the defence of their country from future attack, but for the furtherance of a huge conspiracy to overthrow the power of Great Britain in South Africa and to unite all the different states as one great Dutch Republic.

Now has this rumour any foundation in fact or is it a "nightmare?" Mr. Bryce has recently written: "The hypothesis that the Dutch all over *South Africa* were leagued for the overthrow of the British power is so startling that it needs to be supported by wide and weighty evidence. Is such evidence forthcoming? It has not been produced. The probabilities of the case are altogether against the hypothesis and support the view of a temperate writer in the *Edinburgh Review*, for October, who describes it as a 'nightmare.'"

When Mr. Chamberlain telegraphed to the High Commissioner, Sir Hercules Robinson to know what these military preparations meant, Sir Hercules replied "the movement so far as I can gather is defensive and not offensive. Boers generally believe that the recent raid was, if not instigated, at all events connived at by Her Majesty's Government and that an attack upon their independence will be renewed at the first opportunity."

The forts eventually built by the Transvaal Government were placed at Johannesburg and Pretoria (the towns which were to have been attacked by the raiders) and not on the frontiers. Is not this more suggestive of defence than aggression?

But since the war began and every one has been vainly seeking some justifiable cause for it (the Uitlanders' grievances having to a great extent faded on examination), the hypothesis of this great Anti-British conspiracy has been brought forward on all sides. We must therefore examine into it a little more closely.

"Nobody can seriously believe that the Transvaal with a population of about 80,000 could by itself overturn British rule. It is vital therefore, to examine whether, in the assumption that it aimed at such an object, it had accomplices in the Free State and Cape Colony."*

But the friendliness of the State to Great Britain, despite the episode of the Kimberly Diamond Fields, has been consistent and indeed proverbial. The late President Brand was knighted by the Queen for his services to England. When his successor, Mr. Reitz was elected President, he refused to accept the post, until it had been offered to his intimate friend, that great Englishman Sir George Grey. It is true that in consequence of the Raid it concluded a defensive alliance with the Transvaal, because it perceived that if the Transvaal were annexed its own existence would be threatened. But, that the treaty involved no departure from its traditional policy, was proved by the subsequent entry of the country into the South African Customs Union with the British Colonies, and finally by President Steyn and State Secretary Fischer, doing their utmost to avert a war between Great Britain and the Transvaal.

Dr. Hendrik Muller, envoy extraordinary of the Orange Free State, at the Hague writes:—

"The Free State has done its very utmost to avert war, by its inward policy, by its policy towards Great Britain, now and in the past and by its policy with regard to our sister Republic. We have not made war nor even taken up a spiteful attitude after the Basutos had been armed

*See Leaflet No. 13, published by South Africa Conciliation Committee,

against us in spite of the treaties, nor after the appropriation by England of the diamond fields, nor when arbitration about the rightful ownership of them was refused by England; nor on account of any of our bitter grievances against England, so clearly explained by our Chief Justice de Villiers, in the Nineteenth Century of March, 1897. For we desired peace, we desired to co-operate with England to the benefit of South Africa."

"But it has all proved of no avail. The policy of the present British administration has exasperated my people, the most peaceful in the world. There was and is no choice; my people have to fight or to die. For our independence is dearer to us than our life."

Now as regards Cape Colony. If a conspiracy existed it must have been formed either before the raid or after. But, if before, Mr. Rhodes must have been a party to it, for Mr. Rhodes was placed in power in 1890, by Dutch votes and kept in power by Dutch votes, until the raid. It is then after? But we find in 1897, at the time of the Queen's Jubilee that the Dutch being in power in Parliament, unanimously and spontaneously offered £30,000, a year, as a contribution to the defence of the British Empire and placed Simon's Bay, its most valuable harbour in the hands of the British Admiralty.*

It is an ugly thing that after such magnificent generosity on their part, we should pick a quarrel with our colonists and accuse them of disloyalty.

"Mr. Hofmeyr, the most influential and most trusted Dutchman, in the colony and the founder of the Africander Bond, has distinguished himself among the Colonial subjects of the Queen, in devising means to draw the parts of the Empire closer together, such as the Customs Union and the All-British Cable; has been twice a Queen's minister, and twice offered Knighthood.

"The Bond itself, instead of being as is ignorantly supposed a vast Anti-British Secret Society, is an organisation with a comparatively small number of members many of whom are British. During the negotiations and since the outbreak of war, the conduct of the Schreiner ministry has been consistently loyal. Before the war they declared themselves ready to act as mediators and were thanked for their services, by Lord Selborne, in the House of Lords. Since the outbreak of war they have laboured and to a large extent laboured successfully to keep the Dutch of Cape Colony neutral and have handed over to the Imperial authorities all their railways and military resources. These facts prove that the idea of this great conspiracy is a nightmare and a calumny.**"

The raid having failed, the organisers of it determined more resolutely than ever to bring about a conflict between Great Britain and the Transvaal. To attain this object their first step was to gain the sympathy and support of public opinion in this country. For this purpose they bought up practically the whole of the English South African Press.

Mr. J. A. Hobson, in an Article in the *Speaker*, writes:—

"South Africa presents a unique example of a large Press, owned, controlled and operated in recent times by a small body of men with the direct aim of bringing about a conflict which shall serve their business interests."

"When Mr. Rhodes failing to obtain forcible control of the Rand by the clumsiness of Jameson and the vacillation and cowardice of his confederates in Johannesburg, spoke of an appeal to constitutional means for gaining his ends, he knew well what he meant to do."

*See Leaflet, No. 13, published by South Africa Conciliation Committee.

"He designed to use the armed forces of the British Crown and the money of the British taxpayer to obtain for himself and his fellow capitalists that political control of the Transvaal, which was essential to his economical and political ambition."

"To do this it was above all things necessary to apply an adequate motive power to the minds of the British Government and the British people. For this work he found the Press by far the ablest instrument. Some considerable time ago he had acquired with Messrs. Eckstein and Barnato a leading interest in the *Cape Argus*, the evening paper at Cape Town. The Argus Company has now so far expanded its field of operations as to own also the *Johannesburg Star*, the *Bulwago Chronicle*, the *Rhodesian Herald* and the *African Review*. The *Cape Times*, the most influential paper in South Africa, has come under the control of the same body of capitalists, half its shares having been bought by Mr. Rutherford Harris, the well-known Director of the Chartered Company. Last year the *Diamond Field Advertiser* of Kimberley passed into the same control under significant circumstances."

"Since the Jameson raid the entire weight of the capitalist Press has been thrown into the scale of a drastic Imperialist policy, the constitutional means which Mr. Rhodes, with or without the express assent of Mr. Chamberlain had devised. So far as the Colony was concerned, this engine of education was directed to sow aspersions of disloyalty against the Bond and their British supporters and to drill into the public mind by constant dropping the notion of a Dutch conspiracy throughout South Africa."

"Defeated at the Colonial elections, the chief part of this Press energy was then directed to exasperate the British Colonists of South Africa and the British nation against the Transvaal, working up every misdeed or mistake of the Government and inventing others as they were required."

"But the inflammation of the credulous mind of South Africa was a task comparatively simple and of subsidiary importance. The chief object of the Press Conspiracy, to attain which every nerve was strained, was the conquest of the Government and the conscience of Great Britain.—The stories of Zarp atrocities and Boer assaults upon women did not even obtain wide credence at the Cape. But faithfully reproduced and duly endorsed by the most reputable Colonial papers, they passed by wire and mail to the great newspapers of London and were there received with an implicit confidence which must have brought a grim smile into the face of the Colonial inventor."

"What I am describing is nothing else than an elaborate factory of detailed mendacity for the purpose of stimulating British action. To those unacquainted with the mechanism it may seem incredible that with modern means of communication it has been possible to poison the conscience and intelligence of England. But when it is understood that the great London press receives its information almost exclusively from the offices of the kept Press of South Africa the mystery is solved."

How admirably the scheme worked we know but too well. The English nation fed daily by the poison of the daily papers had no appetite for the words of its truest guides.

On October 7th, Mr. Bryce wrote (to his constituents in Aberdeen) "There are three points affecting the situation on which I will touch, because they are of the utmost importance, they are largely misunderstood in this country and they have been strongly impressed on me by a recent visit to South Africa and a study of its history. The first point

is the attitude of the Dutch population throughout South Africa, the second is the question of British predominance, the third is the result to be expected from a war.

"First we hear it daily asserted that the present position is due to a general conspiracy among the South African Dutch to shake off the British connection and turn the whole country into a Dutch Republic. This is a gross error; in the mouths of some who know better it is a gross calumny."

"As regards the Dutch element in Cape Colony it has become more conspicuously loyal and friendly to Great Britain during the last ten years than it was in earlier days . . . Such irritation as there is to day is due to the methods of British policy during the last few months."

"The present attitude of the Orange Free State is adduced as evidence of this fancied conspiracy. There was in the Free State when I visited it in 1895, perfect concord between men of Dutch and men of English blood."

"That friendliness, despite the anger excited by the Raid had (from all I had been able to learn) remained unbroken as far as relations with Britain were concerned, until the citizens of the Free State became convinced some weeks ago that the aim of the war party at the Cape and in Great Britain was to pitch a quarrel with the Transvaal, to seize it and reduce it to subjection."

"Holding that conviction and believing that when one Republic had been swallowed up their own turn would come next, they have thrown in their lot with the Sister State. This is what everyone must have expected who knew how strong was their sense of kinship and how passionate their attachment to their own independence."

"As to the Transvaal . . . the refusal to enfranchise the Uitlanders, unwise and short-sighted as it has been, was due, not to any scheme for challenging the position of Britain in South Africa, but to smaller motives and particularly to a desire to keep the administration in the hands of the old burghers and maintain those Dutch traditions and customs for which they had fought and suffered"

"The second point is the predominance of Britain in South Africa, which is alleged to be in danger. That predominance needs no war to vindicate it—a war to be waged by the British Empire against a population which all told numbers less than half the population of Aberdeen. It is a patent and unassailable predominance. It rests upon our geographical position and our overwhelming power. *One thing only could threaten it, the disaffection of our own colonists.*"

"The third point is the result to be expected from a war in South Africa. It will be a race war and practically a civil war. Those who have lived together in the two colonies as friends and neighbours—many of them connected by family ties—will be severed into two hostile camps . . . When the Transvaal and the Free State have been conquered those who have fallen fighting for the Republics will be remembered as heroes by the Colonial Dutch. A bitter and undying resentment against the English will replace the loyalty and contentment which have been the surest foundations of British power. We shall for many years have a Colony to deal with, half of whose inhabitants will be hostile and disaffected. The memory of bloodshed and a war held to be unjust will fill an exceptionally tenacious race with a hatred for deeper and more lasting than the irritation which now exists—a hatred which may one day cost us our hold on South Africa."

"We can of course conquer the Transvaal and the Free State—it is merely a question of time and money—can if we like turn them into Crown Colonies and hold them by garrison. It is after the conquest that our real difficulties will begin."

"I returned from South Africa convinced that what would best secure its welfare and the Imperial future of Britain in the Southern Hemisphere was to avoid all question of racial strife. I said that what was needed to bring about a reconciliation and fusion of the races was tact, coolness and patience—above all patience."

"I feel this even more deeply to-day. It is in the interest of Britain herself and of the cohesion of our Colonial Empire not less than in the interest of South Africa and of peace, that I deplore the war upon which we seem to be entering and for which no sufficient cause has been shown."

But now there is a cry on all sides "We are not to blame in the matter, we did not cause the war, it was caused by the Boer ultimatum." But if the ultimatum caused the war, what was it caused the ultimatum?

What are the facts? Briefly these. After a long course of negotiations during which nine-tenths of the English claims were conceded, even the five years' franchise, everything practically conceded excepting the acknowledgement of our suzerainty, the claim to which we had ourselves abandoned in 1884, the Transvaal was warned by the British Government that final demands would be presented to them later on. In the meantime ten thousand soldiers were despatched to South Africa with an Army Corps in reserve. The air was full of the clamour of our military preparations. Our ultimatum was "to be presented as it were on the point of the bayonet." As the *Daily Mail* writes in September with perfect frankness, "when our preparations are complete and our forces are on the field the ultimatum will follow." What were the Boers to do? Were they to wait until the forces should arrive in such overwhelming strength as to compel submission to the most exacting claims? As Mr. Courtney said in Parliament "How can you expect them to wait until you come up with all your forces and then communicate your demands under conditions which require instant fulfilment?" It is as if two men are disputing, and one says "Tell me what you want," and the other says "Wait five minutes and I will come back and tell you what I want, and I will bring a loaded pistol with me." The Boers saw their dearly cherished independence threatened, and they determined to guard it or die in the struggle.

We know their Volkslied :

They drove the Burgher northward,
From Cape and Natal's shores,
To where the bushman wanders,
To where the lion roars,
He found the land a desert,
He won it by his toil,
The men who till will keep it,
Or die upon the soil.

War being forced upon them they began the attack because they could not afford to lose the *only* military advantage they possessed.

Mr. Reitz writes on Oct. 9th : "The British Government, misled by the Colonial Minister have been hurrying up reinforcements, while they continue to threaten and revile us and they seem to think we must be foolish enough to stand still and wait till they have had time enough to move sufficient troops in South Africa and upon our borders to be able to negotiate with us further. Backed as they are by all the forces the Empire

can command, we shall not wait any longer, even at the risk of being accused of being the aggressors. To-day we shall demand that the troops be withdrawn. I fear this will mean war, but not of our seeking."

And so we were led into war and by the very man who in May, 1896 spoke thus in the House of Commons. "To go to war with President Kruger in order to force upon him reforms in the internal affairs of his State, in which *Secretaries of State, standing in this place, have repudiated all right of interference*—that would have been a course of action as immoral as it would have been unwise."

Can we marvel that the conscience of Europe revolted and that the Continental Press and I may add the American press became very unpleasant reading for English eyes; it is significant that only one European state approves our action and that State is Turkey. But a consideration that should weigh more with us than the opinion of our foreign neighbours is the opinion of those enlightened Englishmen whose words will guide posterity. It can hardly be denied that the greatest and most disinterested authorities on the South African question have unanimously protested against the war. Our greatest authority is unquestionably Dr. G. McCall Theal. Dr. Theal has long held the office of Historiographer under the Government of Cape Colony and has also been for many years Chief Clerk in the Native Affairs Department. A great scholar, Dr. Theal has made the different races in South Africa the study of his life, has written an exhaustive history of the country in 5 volumes of which he has made an excellent abridgement in the "Story of the Nations" series. Dr. Theal describes this war as the greatest tragedy of our times. He insists that we shall only enter the Transvaal over the bodies of its best and worthiest citizens, and that if we are determined to rob the Boers of their independence we shall win a wilderness. England will go down in the legendary history of the people now in the Republics as a latter-day Spain, and Mr. Chamberlain as a modern Alva. The Boer leaders are not angels, but they are men of common sense. "What they have sought, what they seek, is that while they respect British authority outside the Republics, Great Britain shall respect Boer authority within the Republics. They have never sought more whatever anybody may say. They have never sought and will not rest content with less." Speaking of the war he maintains that "only when the last shot has been fired will real difficulties commence." Mr. Bryce whose words are scarcely less important holds as we have been seen the same view. Mr. Selous the great traveller, who has known South Africa for nearly 30 years writes: "I believe in my inmost heart that it is not a just war, that it could have been avoided, that it can bring the country no honour and that it will be the cause of much future trouble." He tells us further that "nothing has lately been left unsaid that could help to prejudice public opinion in this country against the Transvaal Boers and thus assist the schemes of those who, under cover of the plea that they are only desirous of righting the wrongs of the British Uitlanders, really wish, at any cost, to do away with the independence of the Transvaal Republic, which has long been a stumbling block in the way of certain Imperial schemes or dreams."

As the "Speaker" says: "It is a strange commentary upon the power which a handful of millionaires can exercise over the opinion of a great nation that Dr. Theal, Mr. Bryce and Mr. Selous should be regarded as less trustworthy experts than Sir Alfred Milner, Mr. Rhodes and Mr. Beit."

Dr. Kitchen, Dean of Durham wrote: "For about fifty years I have

been a student of European History and I don't think I have ever met a more frivolous excuse for war than this or one more obviously fitted to be settled round a table by sensible people."

But perhaps the most remarkable of all the protests against the war is that of Sir Edward Clarke—(from the days of Disraeli to the present time one of the staunchest supporters of the Conservative party) who has now chosen to forego a probable Lord Chancellorship rather than turn a deaf ear to the voice of his conscience. Speaking in Parliament he has said that the more he has studied the circumstances of the case the more certain he is "that this lamentable war upon which we are now embarked is an *absolutely unnecessary war*." Further he maintained that for any British minister since 1884 to assert that this country had a suzerainty over the Transvaal was not only a statement made in *in defiance of fact*, but a *breach of national faith*. He said it was dreadful to think of the country entering upon a war which was a *crime against civilization*. "The grounds which had been put forward for refusing to continue negotiations with the Boers are altogether unworthy and insufficient."

Here we have the opinion of one of the most acute and subtle legal intellects of the present day.

In South Africa the great majority of the true born South Africans whether British or Dutch were staggered at the prospect of the war. Olive Schreiner took up her impassioned pen to write: "Let England clearly understand what war in South Africa means. The largest Empire the world has ever seen will hurl its full force against a small state of about 30,000 men including lads of 16 and old men of 60 without a standing army or organised commissariat."

"We may crush this little people with the aid of the Australians and Canadians, since the British Isles seem unable to crush them alone, we have numbers and wealth on our side; they have a conviction that their God fights with them."

Ours is a politicians war; theirs is a peoples. We may take the land and lower the little flag of his independence so dear to the Boer, but, we shall have placed a stain on our own that the centuries will not wash out. "Only the international speculators, who through his persistent misrepresentation, by means of the Press, has wrought the evil, will gain and fill his already over-filled pockets with South African Gold." And again she says "the war is an endeavour on the part of a small, but immensely wealthy section of persons to gain possession of the Transvaal Gold Fields, by means of shameless lies against the Transvaal Republic and its people. The English people are not to blame. They are misled. Hundreds of English South Africans, who like myself have not one drop of Dutch blood in their veins and are bound by ties of the profoundest affection to England, feel deeply the shame and sorrow of the situation."

Lady Robinson, sister of Sir Herbert Stewart, wrote:—"After the defeat of Majuba Hill, my brother Sir Herbert Stewart, when famished and nearly exhausted, was taken prisoner by the Boers. Nothing could exceed the kindness of their treatment, and their involuntary guest afterwards spoke of it in the highest terms. Were he living, he would be ready to testify to the merits of the friends he then made, and it is with the brothers and sons of these magnanimous enemies that we seem about to be plunged into an unnecessary war!"

But all protests against the war, were as voices crying in the wilderness, so deafened was the ear of England, by the clarion of the Stock

Exchange. What have we done? What are we doing? To satisfy the demands of a small body of financiers in one town of the Transvaal, demands which in a great measure had already been conceded, we plunged the nation into war and then to satisfy and soothe the uneasy conscience of the country and make the war appear inevitable, the vision was created of a vast Dutch conspiracy to overthrow our rule. We have been grievously misled.

"Have we counted the cost in blood and treasure? "To achieve our ends we shall, I quote from the *Westminster Gazette*," have sacrificed 10,000 men at least, spent £100,000,000, upset our whole Colonial system in South Africa and probably our entire military system at home. Every burgher will have cost about, £2,000 to subdue and what he will cost afterwards to govern, no one knows. For these objects we have so far exhausted our resources that we are on the verge of reimposing taxes on the food of the British People.

Is not this war of ours a remedy out of all proportion to the disease? Are we not as M. Boisevin suggests, cutting off a head to cure a headache? What are the grievances of that small band of Uitlander millionaires compared with all the bloodshed, agony, and torture caused by this fearful war. And remember that though we maintain that we are fighting the battle of all Uitlanders, no matter of what country, it is a remarkable fact that all Uitlanders, who are not British are against us as well as many of our own kith and kin.

In our Country, it has been computed that in every 5,000 of the population, one is at the front and how many of us are distracted with anxiety. But what must the sorrowing be among the Boers, of whom one in every five has had to fight, including boys of 13 and old men of 70.

A great cry goes from them "What have we poor South Africans done that England will not let us be?"

The Jingoës shout that this "cruel war is necessary for the holy cause of Imperialism." I quote from Mr. Boisevain, He says—"I read the other day of a proud English Mother, who, when asked what she intended to make of her little boy, answered—

"Butcher Sir! E's bound to be a butcher, why, e's that fond o' animals we can 'ardly keep 'im out of the slaughter house."

The same proud mother would say in the present year—"An Imperialist Sir! Why e's that fond of liberty and independence and self-government that we can't keep 'im from annexing, bullying, coërcing, boasting and longing for what is not his own!"

The Dutch, throughout South Africa have no hatred of the English, as a nation and they have always held in honour England's Queen. They maintain now that if the Queen and people only knew, all would be right. For that great and wise English statesman, Sir George Grey, they had the deepest reverence. It is said that, when he returned to the Cape, after an absence of many years, old Boers travelled 40 miles, in their ox waggons to have the pleasure of once more shaking him by the hand. And what did Sir George think of them? He said, in 1896, "I have lived among many nations and in many countries, I may with all truth say this, I know no people richer in public and in private virtue than the Boers." We rub our eyes with amazement when we read this statement, in the face of all the slanders of the enemy that appear daily in the papers

But what did Bishop Colenso write during the last Boer war (would that we would take his advice to-day!) "I hope that you will have been taught by experience to have a wise distrust of first telegrams, even official telegrams—until the other side has been heard. Here are the English papers, reaching us full of ravings about the treachery, cruelty, bloodthirstiness, etc., of the Boers; of which when the facts are thoroughly known and fairly considered, hardly a trace remains." The Boers, I repeat have no hatred of the English people (with whom they often intermarry), but they are exasperated by what they consider the cruel policy of our misguided rulers, misguided by those whose interest it is to overthrow the Transvaal Government. Who are these Uitlanders, for whom we are so lavishly sacrificing our brave soldiers and our country's treasure. They call themselves Englishmen, but their names betray them. The following are a few typical names of some British subjects, who are interested in the mines:—Alfred Beit, Werner, Eckstein, Michaelis, Barnato, Joel, Goertz, Rothschild, Albu. We read that most of the poor persecuted Uitlanders as soon as there was a rumour of war, settled comfortably to Cape Town to feast on champagne dinners and to discuss what compensation the Government would give them for the time that their mines lay idle. For these men then we have gone to war. For these men and for Cecil Rhodes, who looks upon the Queen's flag not as the emblem of freedom, liberty and justice, but as the greatest commercial asset in the world. For these men our gallant soldiers are daily lying down their lives. For these men the gaunt forms of anguish and desolation walk into ten thousand homes.

We are all thrilled with enthusiasm when we read of the gallant deeds of our brave men, but do we stop to consider the dark side of the picture? Who can read unmoved a letter like this from a sapper of the Royal Engineers, who helped to bury the dead at Magersfontein. He writes: "The first grave we dug was about 30ft. long and 3ft. deep. We put 53 Scotsmen into it, 34 of the Black Watch alone. It was something horrible, every man of us was crying all the time we worked." Mr. H. Morley, a Scripture reader attached to the 12th Lancers, writes from Modder River Camp after the battle. "I visited all the wounded after coming back from witnessing the field. It was a dreadful trial for me. The strongest nerve is not able to remain unmoved amid such sights and sounds, blood and bandages, groans and prayers. People talk of the glories of the war. If many of such people could only spend an hour on a battlefield, or in hospital immediately after a battle, they would see little glory. It is hellish to say the least of it."

I cannot forbear adding another description from the pen of Mr. Winston Churchill:—

"I have often seen dead men, he writes, killed in war, thousands at Omdurman—scores elsewhere, black and white, but the Boer dead aroused the most painful emotions. Here by the rock under which he had fought lay the field cornet of Heilbronn, Mr. de Mentz, a grey-haired man of over sixty years, with firm aquiline features and a short beard. The stony face was grimly calm, but it bore the stamp of unalterable resolve; the look of a man who had thought it all out, and was quite certain that his cause was just and such as a sober citizen might give his life for. Nor was I surprised when the Boer prisoners told me that Mentz had refused all sugges-

tions of surrender and that when his left leg was smashed by a bullet had continued to load and fire until he bled to death; and they found him pale and bloodless, his wife's letter in his hand. Beside him was a boy of about seventeen shot through the heart. Further on lay one or two poor Riflemen, with their heads smashed like eggshells; and I suppose they had mothers or wives far away at the end of the deep sea cables. Ah, horrible war, amazing medley of the glorious and squalid, the pitiful and the sublime, if modern men of light and leading saw your face closer simple folk would see hardly ever."

I am reminded of the words of John Bright, written at the time of the Crimean War. "This is war" he writes "every crime which human nature can commit or imagine, every horror it can perpetrate or suffer; and this it is which our Christian Government recklessly plunges into, and which so many of our countrymen think it patriotic to applaud!"

You must excuse me if I cannot go with you. I will have no part in this terrible crime. My hands shall be unstained with the blood that is shed. The necessity of maintaining themselves in office may influence an administration; delusions may mislead a people; Vattel may afford you a law and a defence; but no respect for men who form a Government, no regard I have for going with the stream and no fear of being wanting in patriotism, shall influence me in favour of a policy which in my conscience I believe to be as criminal before God, as it is destructive of the true interest of my country.

And now we are at war I ask you, have we found the enemy the monsters they were painted? No one can accuse the Morning Post or Daily Mail of any sympathy for them, but what is the verdict of their correspondents? Mr. Steevens, a man with all the fastidious taste of a Fellow of an Oxford College, writes that "the Boer is one of Nature's Gentlemen and behaves with a natural dignity and humanity whether winning or losing" and listen to Mr. Winston Churchill: "What men they were, these Boers! I thought of them as I had seen them in the morning riding forward through the rain—thousands of independent riflemen thinking for themselves, possessed of beautiful weapons, led with skill, living as they rode without commissariat or transport or ammunition column, moving like the wind and supported by iron constitutions and a stern, hard, old Testament—God who shall surely smite the Amalekites hip and thigh, And then above the rain storm that beat loudly on the corrugated iron, I heard the sound of a chant. The Boers were singing their evening psalm and the menacing notes struck a chill into my heart . . . so that I thought after all that the war was unjust, that the Boers were better men than we, that heaven was against us."

Our officers have testified to the extreme kindness shown by the Boers to our wounded and prisoners, and we have read how they have helped to carry our dead, and most reverently chanted their hymns over them.

The Rev. R. F. Collins, Chaplain to the forces, sent an interesting report of his visit to the battlefield of Spion Kop. In it he says "I venture to think it a matter of considerable importance to draw attention to the attitude of the Boers whom we met during the carrying out of

our duties . . . For my part I confess that the deepest impression has been made on me by these conversations, and by the manly bearing and the straightforward outspoken way in which we were met. There were two things I particularly noted. As there was no effort made to impress us by what was said (they spoke with transparent honesty and natural simplicity, and in nearly all cases the conversations were begun by us) so there was a total absence of anything like exultation over what they must consider a military success. Not a word, not a look, not a gesture or sign, that could by the most sensitive of persons be construed as a display of their superiority.

"Far from it; there was a sadness, almost anguish, in the way in which they referred to our fallen soldiers. I can best convey the truth of this statement, and show that there is no attempt at exaggeration in using the word "Anguish" by repeating expressions used, not once, but again and again, by great numbers of them as they inspected the ghastly piles of our dead. "My God! what a sight!" "I wish politicians could see their handiwork"; "What can God in Heaven think of this sight!"; "What a cursed war that brings these poor fellows to such an end!"; "We hate this war. This war is accursed. Every day on our knees we all pray that God will bring this war to an end;" It is not our war; it is the war of the millionaires. What enmity have we with these poor fellows?" "Would that Chamberlain, Rhodes, and the millionaires could see these trenches and graves;" "When will this unjust war end?" "We all hate war. We are men of peace. We want to go back to our homes and farms, to sow our seed and reap our fields, and not to make war. Good God! when will it end?" Our chaplain stated that during the three days needed for the burial of the dead, *the Boers ceased firing*, but not so the English (through inadvertence of course).

One of our officers, Lieut. C. E. Kinaham, prisoner at Pretoria writes thus to his father: "While we were in the Boer laager they treated us extremely well, and gave us food and tobacco. *All you read about the Boers in England is absolutely untrue.* They are most kind to the wounded and prisoners, looking after them as well as their own wounded and anything they have got they will give you, even if they deprive themselves. We came up to Pretoria in first class sleeping carriages, and the way they treated us was most considerate, feeding us and giving us coffee every time we stopped. They provided us with everything, from clothes down to a toothbrush. They always feed us, and we are constantly getting presents of vegetables and cigars from private people."

And there is nothing that need have stood between us and these men but the ill feeling artificially created by men seeking their own ends and not the national gain.

But with all the misery and mischief it brings in its train the war is upon us and our country seems to have the strange desire to see it through to the bitter end; but if we are true patriots, that is if we care for the honour of old England, shall we not unite with one voice to demand that justice shall be done to those two Republics which have fought so valiently for the independence they so dearly prize. The magnanimity which may have given rise to misunderstanding after our defeat cannot be misinterpreted if we are victors.

It would be an act both of wisdom and justice to give to each of

these States the right to live independently, each under his own flag. Nothing short of this will restore permanent tranquility to South Africa. In the words of one their people :

“Those people who expect that the Boers will soon forgive and forget this war and settle down quietly under the British flag, are most terribly mistaken. I think I know my own countrymen and I believe that if after this war is over, the independence of the Republic is destroyed the historic episode of Hamilcar making Hannibal swear eternal enmity to Rome will be re-enacted in many a farmhouse throughout the Transvaal and Orange Free State. The Boer women will teach their children to hate the very name of England, and bid them look forward to the day when their country will be freed from British domination.”

I know that the views I have now put forth are unpopular and that those who hold them are accused of lack of patriotism. But let us ask ourselves what is patriotism.

Is it true patriotism to be the willing tools of that syndicate of cosmopolitan speculators, that party Imperial raiders if you will, who care so little for the fair name of our country that they have wanted only caused it to be dishonoured in the opinion of the world.

Is it not a truer patriotism to cherish the fair name and fame of England, and to maintain that she should be as honourable as she is wealthy, as generous as she is brave.
