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STOP THE WAR!

DR. W. J. LEYDS
KANTOOR.

THE TRAIL
OF THE
FINANCIAL SERPENT.

FULL REPORT OF THE SPEECH IN THE HOUSE
OF COMMONS

BY

JOHN BURNS, M.P.,

TO WHICH IS ADDED A LIST OF THE LEADING SHAREHOLDERS IN THE
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STOP THE WAR!

THE TRAIL OF THE FINANCIAL SERPENT

Speech by JOHN BURNS, M.P.,

In the House of Commons in the Debate on the Address, 6 February, 1900.

MR. JOHN BURNS (Battersea): The right hon. Baronet the Member for the College Division of Glasgow, to whom I always listen with interest and sympathy, was under the impression that the House of Commons in this, the time of peril, ought to be engaged in a better and more dignified task than criticising the causes and the preparations for this war. He indicated that it was not a satisfactory thing for foreign nations to see the British House of Commons almost squabbling, as he said, about details while our soldiers were at death grips with the brave, plucky, magnanimous, and heroic Boers. I do not share that view.

THE JUSTIFICATION OF DEBATE.

I believe that the proof of the real greatness of the British people is tested by the fact that the House of Commons is doing its legislative duty here as our soldiers are doing their duty in South Africa. In a specialised nation like this it is appropriate that the soldier should fight while the House of Commons is discharging its legal functions in discussing what led up to the war. I think it is a proof of the character and dignity of the House of Commons that while we are engaged in a war of this character, we are not excited like other assemblies or flying at each other's throats on the question as to who began the war and how it ought to be conducted. I will say for the House of Commons that I have never listened to a discussion extending over so many days in which the typical equanimity of the British character was more splendidly displayed than during the whole progress of this debate. And while we are discussing here the minds of the people are working, and the man in the train and the omnibus with almost equally placid demeanour is thrashing out the issues and problems of this struggle; and I regard it as complimentary to the House of Commons and to the British people that we all have the moral courage to do our duty, taking no notice of the blind and ignorant criticisms directed against us by a few newspapers outside, owned by blackguards and edited by ruffians who clamoured for this war. I say that we are fulfilling the best traditions of the House of Commons, and we are incidentally imitating the great ones before us—Chatham and Fox, and the Duke of Richmond and Gordon, who went further than the House of Commons is now doing by taking the side of the American colonies against their own countrymen when they were wrong.

MUZZLING THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Then we are told by the other side that we ought to be silent; that the muzzling order should be imposed, that the House of Commons should be inarticulate, and that we should be dumb dogs all. In whose interest and for

what? In the interest of some pinchbeck Pitt, some embryonic Cromwell who has not yet appeared, and whose vain ambitions and plunging policies are to override a free assembly. One man is to be invited—and I hear it with shame—from the Liberal side, to do what Pitt did a hundred years ago, without Pitt's justification. Wild Imperialism succeeded by militarism is to pave the way to autocracy. Pitt backed up the stupidity of the King by assuming power which the House of Commons only should have assumed, and by refusing the overtures of Napoleon Bonaparte when he humbly sued for peace, the House of Commons being practically silent, involved the country in eighteen years of war and a national debt of a thousand millions. That was because the Opposition did actually what the present Opposition has virtually done in recent years, abdicate its function of opposing the Government.

SILENT TOO LONG.

Out of a mistaken sense of patriotism men have been silent in this House at the suggestion of a clique too long. The financial elements, the military caste, the society set, have dictated African policy too long, with fatal results. In the initial stages of this war they should not only have been eloquent against it but indignant against all the causes which led up to it. It is stated that the country is disgusted with this debate, which is doing no good and possibly doing some harm. I do not believe it. If it be true, the country must be awakened by protest, and that protest I cheerfully make. Let me first deal with one fact in the speech of the hon. and gallant Member who has recently spoken. He said that the only effect of this debate will be to stimulate the Boers and give them an incentive to fight.

THE INCENTIVES OF THE BOERS.

What more incentive do they want from the military point of view? Fifty or sixty thousand peasant farmers, market gardeners, and undisciplined troops are fighting under the greatest stimulus men can ever have—a deep religious motive, a patriotic impulse, and a love of liberty. They have kept at bay the skill of our generals and the heroism of our troops. They want no more incentive than their continuous successes, and I would advise military men, who talk without perspective and proportion more fitting Laffan's Plain than of actual warfare, to remember that the Boers want no further incentive than that supplied them by the baffling of our generals and the blundering of the Colonial Secretary for the past four years. It was not as high as a church or as wide as a door, but, like Mercurio's wound, it was enough. This debate has evoked from the Under Secretary of State for War one of the most charming speeches I have

ever listened to in the House of Commons, and it has enabled us to have departmental preparations and facts put before the country. What is more, it has enabled two or three Liberal Imperialists to state the case from the point of view of jingo expansion more clearly and ably than the Government were capable of doing themselves. This is interesting if disappointing, and illustrates too clearly their departure from Liberal traditions.

THE RISK OF FOREIGN WAR.

Then we are also told that every day that this debate goes on there is a stronger probability of the country being involved in external trouble. I am not a jingo nor a Liberal Imperialist, but this I do say, that badly as England has done in a wrong cause against the Boers, and we have done badly mainly on that account, the Germans could not have done better, and the French would, in my opinion, have done infinitely worse. France met defeat in Madagascar; Italy met its fate in Abyssinia, and in West Africa and the Cameroons, where I have been, can be seen what Germany is capable of doing, where climate and strange conditions prevail. If foreign countries went so far as to presume on our difficulties in South Africa to attempt an invasion, in which I do not believe, let me tell the House of Commons, as knowing the man in the street, that there would be a prompt dismissal from the front benches of the incompetent Ministers and of the military mandarins in Pall Mall, who are a disgrace to their office. These gentlemen lack adaptability, promptitude, and seem incapable of meeting difficulty with resource. In a real national crisis prompt, able, and adaptable leaders would be found. The Army would be demilitarised, and put on a basis that would enable it to repel invasion. The civilian and mechanical instincts of the people would make short work of those who fill office but cannot inspire confidence, who can exercise empty authority but wield no power.

THE BRITISH EMPIRE IN NO DANGER.

When I hear men talk about the British Empire being broken up I do not believe a word of it. It is not true. It would not happen even if we lost South Africa, as Empire depends on other qualities than military loss or failure. That kind of clap-trap was indulged in when we lost the American colonies, but from 1780 up till 1900 has been a period of unexampled prosperity, and so long as our people are industrious and our merchants honest the British people will go on. This debate amongst many good results must have the effect of dismissing from the public mind the violent misrepresentations of Paul Kruger, General Joubert, and of the Boer people generally which had been indulged in.

THE "DAILY MAIL" AND THE BOER.

Daily papers like the *Daily Mail* represented the average Boer to be a cross between Charles Peace, the burglar and murderer, a West African negro, with a dash of Jack the Ripper thrown in; and when the readers of that mendacious, and shallow and ignorant print read this description of the Boers every morning, they thought that these oracular productions and definitions of the Boer character came straight from the very fountain

of truth itself. Did the gullible readers think that the proprietors of the *Daily Mail*, which has been mainly responsible for egging the people of this country on to this war—that Alfred Harmsworth had 500 shares in the Chartered Company; that Cecil Harmsworth was also a "chartered libertine," and that another Harmsworth was one of the Rhodesian gang? Did they think that Tudor Street and Carmelite Street were poisoning the well-springs of information, playing the low-down game of the *Johannesburg Star*, and every one of the corrupt and rotten papers that have excited the man in the street to clamour for war against his better judgment and better inclination? Fortunately the people are sobering, reverses have chastened them, and respect for their opponents has begotten fair play. I am one of those who have seen the Boer in this House when he occasionally visited us and in other places, and know something of him.

A GOOD WORD FOR MY BROTHER BOER.

It is creditable that men like Lord Methuen, Sir George White, General Symons, and, indeed, all who have come into contact with the Boers either here or in the colonies, have admired the strategy, chivalry, devotion, courage, and humanity of every man who follows the Boer flag. We have a right to say that. Respect for a brave foe is the first step to know how to vanquish him, and when beaten how to treat him. Members will find when the settlement arrives how their harsh words will stand in the way. We have been told in this debate by Members opposite that the debate is useless. Yes, but what about the speech of the Under Secretary for War—the debate produced that—or of the speeches of the hon. Members for Plymouth and Carnarvon? The hon. and legal Gentleman is far too great a man to be worried and troubled by the hon. Member for Walsall, who took the opportunity of attacking him in his absence. This debate was necessary if only for that speech, in which we got out the evidence of the War Office and how bad a defence could be in the hands of such a good advocate.

MR. CHAMBERLAIN'S SPEECH.

Then it was necessary to have this debate if only to hear what case the Right Hon. the Colonial Secretary could make out for the position he has taken up. I listened to that speech. It was a kind of speech which might have been delivered at a meeting of medical students, after they had passed their examination, in the Empire Theatre on a Saturday afternoon. No argument for the war—wave the Union Jack. No defence or justification of his policy—sing "Rule Britannia." A few mistakes committed (by other people)—double the army in South Africa. And then an eloquent peroration about "seeing this thing through" in the language of the pot-house, and in the spirit of the prize-ring.

MR. SPEAKER: The language of the hon. Gentleman is hardly consistent with the dignity of debate. Such expressions as "the language of the pot-house" should not be used in referring to the speech with which the hon. Gentleman is dealing.

MR. JOHN BURNS: If you take, Mr. Speaker, exception to the phrase, I withdraw

“language of the pot-house” and substitute
“language of the Stock Exchange.”

BUT FOR MR. CHAMBERLAIN.

I venture to say that if the Colonial Secretary and the Colonial Office had conducted the negotiations which led up to this unfortunate war in the tone and temper of the gentlemanly speech of the hon. Member for Dover, instead of being in the death-grips, as now, with them, President Kruger, President Steyn, and General Joubert would have been interesting and attractive figures in Her Majesty's Jubilee procession in 1897. But it was not to be. What does the Colonial Secretary say? We are to have no second Majuba. Is that the kind of taunt to placate an enemy who deserves by his splendid fighting qualities to be treated well. Is it the kind of thing to say, that magnanimity is a mistake? Why, we shall hear next that meanness is a virtue, charity a crime, and national honour only a mere convention.

TWO BUTCHER'S BILLS.

Then the Colonial Secretary talks about victory. I do not yet see it in sight—although like all men I would like to—when we know that we have lost 10,000 men, killed, wounded, missing, or prisoners; or when this lamentable fact is brought to light, that in three years in the Crimean War we had 851 officers killed and wounded; whereas in three months of this war we have 615 officers killed, wounded, missing or prisoners. It is not for us to boast of victory after four months' war, or to talk about magnanimity being a mistake, in face of tragic facts like these. It is not for us to talk about no repetition of Majuba, which was a military blunder on our side, and for which no fault could be found against the Boers.

WHAT WE OUGHT TO DO.

What we have got to do in our struggle with the Boers, whilst prosecuting our military aim with their ability, resource, and common sense, is to avoid provocation and boastful threats, and what we have a right to do when war ceases is to make it possible for our enemy to enter into negotiations for a lasting and permanent peace, which shall be beneficial to both sides. I am not to be dismayed from expressing my opinion by very easy taunts from the other side. I do not believe that war, even in a good cause, should be so readily invoked as it has been in this struggle, where incompetence has been followed by bloodshed, and rashness by desolation. I would refer the Colonial Secretary to Edmund Burke's words on a similar occasion, when the dread arbitrament of war was lightly invoked. Then he said—

“A conscientious man would be cautious how he dealt in blood. He would feel some apprehension at being called to a tremendous account for engaging in so deep a play without any knowledge of the game. It is no excuse for presumptuous ignorance that it is directed by insolent passion.”

The right hon. Gentleman taunted the Opposition for voting for the Amendment. Now, I do not altogether agree with it, but, illogical though it be, I want to swell the majority against this war, consequently I am not a prisoner to phrases. I am going also to vote for the Amendment of the Irish Members, and would support any Amendment that

challenges, denounces, or condemns the war, or its causes, or in any way makes for peace, which both the Boers and we will desire before this conflict ends. I am not concerned with being taunted with being inconsistent and illogical.

THE WAR UNJUST AND IMMORAL.

I take up higher ground, and accept the challenge of the right hon. the Colonial Secretary. I maintain as against him that this war is unnecessary, unjust, and immoral, because I recognise the Boer Republics as independent States, owing us no suzerainty except in one particular which has not yet been infringed. There is no difference between Boer and Briton that warrants war. I say we had no right to dictate, no right to demand, only the privilege to persuade. It is because I believe that that I say this war is unnecessary, unjust, and immoral. I take up this attitude and shelter myself behind the language of the Colonial Secretary, who said on May 8th, 1896, 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, with which successive Secretaries of State standing in this place have repudiated all right of interference, would have been a course of action as immoral as it would have been unwise.”

If he was right then, as he was, I am justified now.

HOW IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN AVOIDED.

I contend that this war might have been avoided, and to that extent was unnecessary. What is more, if the most elementary precautions and patience had been taken the cause of war could have been removed, if what others saw had been seen by the Colonial Office; the crisis we are now in was foreshadowed by many. But before I deal with that point I want to bring to light a prophecy, not by myself, but by the *Saturday Review* on March 6th, 1897. That journal took the view that—

“The return of Mr. Rhodes to South Africa will, we are afraid, mean the outbreak of further trouble. Is he to be permitted to do damage right and left now that he stands self-convicted of conspiracy against a friendly State. . . . Dr. Jameson, his victim, has suffered slightly for his participation in the plot. Is then the arch-conspirator, Mr. Rhodes, himself to escape scot-free? We are not disposed to be vindictive, but we do think that it is criminal to allow Mr. Rhodes to meddle further in the politics of South Africa. If Mr. Chamberlain countenances Mr. Rhodes's return to active political life and reappearance on the South African stage as a prominent though non-defined character, the results will be on his own head.”

Well, it was because the Colonial Secretary had allowed Mr. Rhodes to go back to South Africa, and did not deprive him of his Privy Councilorship, of which he ought to have been deprived; because he allowed Earl Grey to dodge the Committee and slip away out of the country; because he promoted Sir Graham Bower, and retained Mr. Newton; because Willoughby and White had been reinstated whilst the correspondence between Mr. Hawksley and the Colonial Secretary showed how the instigators of the raid, the real cause of the war, had been treated—it is because of all these blunders and entanglements that we are involved in this lamentable war

HOW TO HAVE PUNISHED THE RAID.

Following the *Saturday Review*—and I have always taken a strong line against the Chartered Company—on the 6th January, 1896, only a week after the raid, I suggested that the charter should be revoked, that Lord Roberts should be sent out to South Africa with 15,000 men, that all chartered rights should be sequestered, that all commissioners, high and low, especially low, should be dismissed and sent home, others shot or sent to prison, that Mr. Asquith should be invited to be Civil Commissioner in South Africa for five years, that a guarantee should be given to the South African Republic of the autonomy for which they were fighting and which they deserve. Now why did I suggest that? Because I knew, as the man in the street knew, the composition of the financial gang which has engineered this war, and whose methods and agents were well known to everybody but the Colonial Office.

IN PRAISE OF MAJUBA.

On the question of independence of the Transvaal I stood with Mr. Gladstone, no act of whose political life deserves more credit than his magnanimous, prescient, and dignified conduct in 1881. I stood with Lord Kimberley, Lord Derby, Lord Salisbury, Sir Evelyn Wood, Mr. Balfour, Mr. W. H. Smith, and the Lord Chief Justice as to the freedom and independent sovereignty of the Boers. We have evidence after evidence that beyond suggesting improvements in franchise, tariffs, and other matters, which President Kruger could or need not accept, we have no right to do what we have done, and in doing which we have been involved in this terrible and regrettable war. But it may be said that I want to see British subjects in South Africa treated better. Of course I do. I want to see British subjects under British dominion—no, not dominion; that is an arbitrary word—I want to see every British subject treated, wherever he is, as a true man ought to be. But the times are out of joint, when we have Conservatives invoking the cruel arbitrament of war to enforce a franchise on the aliens in the Transvaal, of whom they had such a poor opinion when in this country that they introduce Bills into this House to exclude them altogether from residence in England.

HOW TO REDRESS THE GRIEVANCES OF THE UITLANDERS.

The Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs and other Tory Members insisted that the real question before the House was whether the Government were justified in espousing the grievances of the Uitlanders. I say by diplomacy, yes; by representations, yes; by war, no, a thousand times no, because you have no right to dictate to the Transvaal on its internal affairs. But you did dictate, and demand and persuade with such effect that Paul Kruger climbed down considerably, and with such rapidity that the Colonial Secretary himself was astonished at the rapidity and amount of the concessions. And I venture to say that if he had continued to squeeze the sponge it would not have been necessary to grasp the sword. If he had been more tactful and conciliatory, and had known better the traditions of our old diplomacy, we might have done with the velvet glove of conciliation what he is trying to do with the iron glove of war. If the

ingenuity for war had been used for peace, this conflict could have been avoided.

HOW NOT TO REDRESS THEM.

Mr. Hawksley knows something of South Africa, and this is what he said on 31st January, 1900—

“No doubt Mr. Rhodes believed that reasonable diplomacy would bring the negotiations with President Kruger respecting the grievances of the Uitlanders—the real bedrock of the controversy between the disputants—to a satisfactory and peaceful conclusion. Also that Mr. Chamberlain’s Blue-books disclosed a policy of bluff and bully leading straight to war.”

And certainly he was not alone when he said that if it had not been for the Colonial Secretary’s despatches of June, 1899, the franchise would have been got without any trouble at all. Now, what was this demand for the franchise? Anybody would think that there had been heads cracked in some Johannesburg Trafalgar Square, or that some Johannesburg park railings had been torn down by infuriated Britishers. Well, we have had in this war gallant deeds done by the fighting 5th Northumberland Fusiliers. I know them well. They are our collier lads from Northumberland and Durham, and fine soldiers they are. When at home every man joins his trade union, and every man is a keen politician and an enemy of oppression of every kind.

THE OPINION OF WORKMEN.

But what do the Northumberland and Durham miners say of the franchise in South Africa? They say what the Cornish miners say—

“We are not here for votes; we are here for money. We do not want to politically depatriate ourselves. We want to go home to England and remain British subjects and exercise the vote there.”

When this capitalist war was brought about the Northumberland and Cornish miners very patriotically refused to fight against their country, but declined to fight against the Boers because they believed, with the best of the Uitlanders, that this demand for the franchise in South Africa is a bogus demand, and a fraudulent pretext of the financiers to cover ulterior designs, to buy up and use the votes of industrial nomads to increase their commercial power, to lower the social standard of the miners, to lower wages and to increase hours. A Cornish miner, when interviewed, said that—

“The five or seven years’ franchise did not trouble us.”

He said further on—

“We had no complaint about the hours; we went to make money; this is a capitalists’ job from beginning to end, and we have really no interest in it.”

OUR OWN UITLANDERS AT HOME.

But let us take a higher authority than Northumberland or Cornish miners. The “Reform Union League of South Africa” sent over to England a gentleman named J. R. Dodd—Tommy Dodd he was called out there—and as soon as he landed from the ship in the dock he rushed to the House of Commons to interview the Labour Members, to interest them in favour of the grievances of the Uitlanders. In this he was following the lead of the Chartered Company, whose agents ply their schemes within these walls. I can only say he caught a Tartar when I happened to be the first Labour Member to meet him. He

wrote an article in the *Forum*, in which he said that—

“From 1882 to 1892 there was no serious demand for the franchise, and no great anxiety for reform. The country was rich, and most of the new settlers were making too much money to care for reform. There was still, however, great need for the latter, and the administration was going from bad to worse, while the concessions granted for the construction of railways and for dynamite were sure to work havoc in later years.”

There is nothing in this to suggest harsh grievances and oppression to the working people. I asked him, “Have you had any meetings in the Transvaal?” and he said “No.” “Have you pulled down any park railings?” “No.” “What demonstrations, then? Have you fought for the vote as long as Englishmen did at home?” “No.” “Do you know that the Lords, in July, 1898, by 86 to 36, excluded aliens, and that 30 per cent. of your fellow countrymen in England either cannot vote for Commons or influence the Lords?” But he had not any proper answer to give.

WHAT THEY REALLY WANTED.

It was like my experience with another man from Johannesburg, where he had been for thirteen years, who came home, and whom I introduced into the House. The right hon. the Colonial Secretary was at the moment engaged in talking about the difference between the five and the seven years' franchise; but the Johannesburg man could not restrain himself and refused to stay any longer. He had been used to getting 30s. a day in Johannesburg instead of 30s. a week in this country, and he showed all the impetuosity of the *nouveau riche*. He said—

“We don't want to listen to the Colonial Secretary and his talk of the franchise; what we want is the confounded country.”

He was not so circumlocutory as Mr. Dodd, but more honest. Now who paid the expenses of Mr. Dodd? Look at his credentials and his letters of introduction. The fine Roman hand of Mr. Rutherford Harris will be detected there, as in nearly every grievance-mongering agitation, in the interest of gold and diamonds in South Africa. That is the spurious agitation of the discontented patriotic Britisher who wants to lose his nationality at home for a very doubtful nationality abroad! Again, what did Mr. Lionel Phillips, one of the Rhodesian conspirators, say?—

“As to the franchise, I do not think many people care a fig about it.”

HOW THE RHODESIANS USE THE FRANCHISE.

Let us see how the franchise is used by Rhodes, Harris, Fuller and Co. These gentlemen in the Lower House in Cape Colony, in August, 1899, obstructed and got rejected by two in the Cape House of Lords a 6d. in the £ income tax because the De Beers millionaires would have had to pay the tax equally with the poor people. But not only that, these people who call the Boer Government a corrupt oligarchy were so keenly interested in doctoring the registers of the Capetown Parliament that Rhodes' agents put on 7,000 false votes, largely forgeries, and in over twenty cases Rhodesian agents were convicted by the courts of offences against the electoral laws, and one agent got four months' imprisonment with hard labour. And then we are told that

the gentlemen who do these things have sympathy with the British working man, believe in the purity of government and honesty of administration!

FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF LABOUR.

We are informed that the Boers treat the white labourers badly, but the native labourer worse; but if anyone reads the labour papers which come from South Africa he will find that organised labour in South Africa—like the trade union councils at home—is unanimously of opinion that when the Transvaal comes under the Rhodesian domination, white labour will be reduced to what it is reduced in Kimberley, and that things will go from bad to worse, as is proved by the experience of every reliable witness who knows the conduct of the Rhodesian capitalists. As we go on we find instance after instance of intimidation, if white men refuse to arm or organise themselves for political purposes, subserving a commercial end in the interests of the mine owners in the various mines. When we go into the taxes, the eight-hour day, Sunday labour, wages, and freedom from interference, then I say the men who are engaged in the Transvaal are in an infinitely better position than those at Kimberley. The men in South Africa would lose rather than gain by any change taking place.

WHAT ABOUT THE NATIVES?

Then, coming to the natives, I have had the pleasure, and perhaps the pain, of being one of the pioneers of Africa—I went to West Africa for a year, and was there, although the right hon. Gentleman may not know it, an engineer in the employ of a company of which the Colonial Secretary was a highly compensated shareholder. I know how the natives are treated, and I will say there is a tendency in Africa, thanks in no small measure to our Civil Service and captains in the Navy, to do their best to inculcate kindness, that the natives' position in this respect is better than in other parts; yet it is not so good as many people think. At the best I have seen cruelty practised there which has filled me with shame for my country, and both Boer and Briton need not be too proud of their treatment of the natives in any part of Africa.

THE COMPOUND SYSTEM AT KIMBERLEY.

Then take the compound system. In the Wellington Barracks the death rate is 6 or 8 per 1,000 per annum, but when we go into the Kimberley compound, which is filled with people of just as strong physique as the soldiers in Wellington Barracks, we find, from reports of returning miners, the death rate runs from 40 to 70 per 1,000, almost the death rate of the Middle Passage. These men work hard at low depths, are liable to accidents, and when they come up they are not allowed out of the compounds, and the consequence is their only recreation is drinking, gambling, and fighting, with their attendant results in life and limb. Once a week they are subjected to strong purgatives to see that they do not secrete diamonds in their stomachs, and I now read that they go over each native with a sounding hammer to see whether he has a diamond hidden about him in his flesh.

WHY GRANT FRANCHISE TO LEGALIZE SLAVERY?

We are now told we ought to grant the franchise at the demands of men who desire that all South Africa should come in for that treatment. The franchise for what—Asiatic labour, slavery conditions for the natives, and continually lower wages and lengthening of the hours for the skilled white labour? What hypocrisy it is to talk about franchise when monopoly rule, and commercial serfdom prevails. The right hon. Gentleman the Colonial Secretary, who is so fervent for the franchise, and desirous of giving the Transvaal local government, who involves us in a war in October to enfranchise a lot of Uitlanders—mostly Jews, who if they got their vote would sell it—was, by a stroke of the pen in August, depriving of self-government one of Her Majesty's colonies, Jamaica, under the British flag, in the British Empire, whilst the Port of Spain, Trinidad, was protesting also against the arbitrary conduct of the Colonial Secretary in taking away its powers of local self-government and municipal administration. How can he reconcile war for aliens in Africa, and restricting colonial liberties at the same time?

WHAT THE WAR IS FOR.

He cannot; this war is for territory, for gold, for capitalist domination masquerading in the guise of freedom and franchise. I believe while we are prosecuting this unrighteous war against these people we ought to prospect for peace; we ought to ascertain Kruger's mind as to what the ultimate terms should be. We can do so without loss of dignity and respect, and without loss of power or prestige. ["No, no!"] I am getting rather tired of this arrogant and everlasting "No." It will have to be settled some day, I am for feeling our way now. I can remember reading, as a schoolboy, with pride and pleasure, how Old England, from King Alfred's time, has been the protector of liberty and freedom. That is the quality that differentiates us from all other countries in the world. Except Ireland, Britain has been through centuries the knight-errant of the smaller peoples. Who set Belgium on its legs, gave Greece its independence, helped united Italy, and stood by Switzerland from time to time? England.

ENGLAND AS THE JANISSARY OF THE JEWS.

In this war England is not fulfilling her traditional task, the protector of the smaller nations, and the British Army, which used to be for all good causes the Sir Galahad of History, has become in Africa the janissary of the Jews, and at whose instance—a narrow financial section in and out of this House. I spent my Christmas holidays going through the books of the Chartered Company's shareholders, and I find that nearly every one who has spoken in this debate here, in the House of Lords, and in the country, has his patriotism strengthened and his speeches lengthened by the amount of his holding in the stock of the South Africa Company.

WHO HOLD CHARTERED? (See list on back page).

It would be interesting if we could have a share list brought up-to-date to see who are the shareholders—the Duke of Fife, the Marquess of Lorne, 350 generals and Army officers, and newspaper proprietors by the yard. Then we find the shareholders in the books of the Chartered Company are also

the men who figured as the Johannesburg prisoners; four of whom alone owned £12,000,000 of money, poor oppressed creatures; they were also the Jameson raiders; and we also find them directors of the Savage South African Show at Olympia. Why was that started? To acquaint the people on this side with the customs and idiosyncrasies of the natives of Africa? No, it is part of a scheme to inflame the minds of the people with regard to the war against their better conscience and their better knowledge. Then we come to the Rhodesian press, and we find all the newspapers were captured by the Rhodesian gang, and I am surprised and ashamed that a great paper like *The Times*, the greatest newspaper in the world, but the smallest organ for oppressed humanity, should have employed the Money-pennys and such people as correspondents. Wherever we go in this matter we see the same thing.

EVERYWHERE THE FINANCIAL JEW.

Wherever we examine there is the financial Jew operating, directing, inspiring the agencies that have led to this war. They were supreme at the South African Committee in 1897. I thought I had landed myself in a synagogue when I went to hear the Commission; when I went to hear the trial of the Johannesburg prisoners before the Chief Justice I thought I had dropped into some place in Aldgate or Houndsditch; and when we see how the delay of the inquiry was brought about, and how the prisoners were allowed to escape with light punishment, and how exalted personages obtruded themselves into the committee and smiled upon the chief culprits, we see the force which is moving this country on to war. And for all this intrigue on the part of smart society for money, the nation incurs the debt of war.

THE TRAIL OF THE FINANCIAL SERPENT.

The trail of the financial serpent is over this war from beginning to end. I consider it my duty to the labour constituency I represent to say that I have a right to protest against this war. The Highland Brigade with typical valour and character share the brunt of battle with Welsh, Irish, and Englishmen, of the most serious struggles which have ever been compressed into three or four months of hard fighting; those men have shown they were heroes, but it is heroism wasted for ignoble ends. You should have gone to the relief of the Armenians against the Turk if you wanted war merely for war's sake. The crime of it all is that these brave lads from Inverness and Glasgow and the Rifle Brigade are fighting for an unrighteous cause, a cause which brings no military credit, will deprive a brave people of their freedom, and ultimately land us in conscription. The Highland Brigade, for example, who had so nobly done their duty by the side of men of other nationalities, were too good to waste on Mr. Rutherford Harris and Mr. Beit. I protest against the incompetency displayed in the arrangements for the war, the hollowness of its object, the immorality of its aim, the stupidity with which the negotiations were conducted, and, above all, the want of taste, tact, and temper too frequently shown by the Colonial Secretary, the result being that we have been dragged into a war that has besmirched the fair name of the country. (Cheers).

SOME NOTABLE SHAREHOLDERS IN THE BRITISH SOUTH AFRICAN CHARTERED COMPANY.

The following table is compiled from the list of Shareholders deposited in the Library of the House of Commons:—

Duke of Fife	8850	W. A. MacArthur, M.P.	300
Duke of Abercorn	8600	Lord Elcho, M.P.	3500
Marquis of Lorne, Kensington Palace ...	5	Mr. Bemrose, M.P.	100
Sir Francis Knollys, Marlboro' House ...	94	Lord G. Gordon	420
Hon. F. J. W. Ponsonby	6	Lord C. W. B. Bruce	300
Lord Farquhar	8000	Sir H. Meysey Thompson, M.P.	100
Lord Gifford, V.C.	10000	Scott-Montagu, M.P.	50
Lord Rothschild	10000	Lord Elphinstone, M.P.	50
Leopold Rothschild	7546	Sir J. Kitson, M.P.	3000
Earl Grey	9000	Sir J. D. Poynder, M.P.	400
Earl Coventry	220	Rochfort Maguire, M.P.	49000
Lord Penrhyn	10000	John Penn, M.P.	980
Lord Overtoun	250	G. B. Hudson, M.P.	430
Lord Alwyne Compton, M.P.	5000	F. G. Banbury, M.P.	325
Wootton Isaacson, M.P.	3000	Sir S. Montagu, M.P.	200
Baron de Worms	355	Sir S. Baker, M.P.	37
Earl Dysart	880	Sir C. Dilke, M.P.	1200
Lord Crawshaw	1060	Herman Hodge, M.P.	3
Lord Calthorpe	2000	J. W. M'Clure, M.P.	1
Lord Greville	1	W. H. Myers, M.P.	745
Lord Kelvin	8	J. Tuite, M.P.	20
Lord Maitland	54	Col. W. Murray, M.P.	100
Lord Clark	1000	Mr. Asher, M.P.	100
Lord Herries	3	A. J. Newton, Lord Mayor, C.I.V., etc.	200
Lord E. G. Cecil	50	Rider Haggard	720
Baron Kesteven	2	T. C. D. Haggard	1528
Sir T. Sutherland, M.P.	5300	W. M. D. Haggard	960
Harry Marks, M.P.	500	Sir Somers Vine	100
Lord Stratheden and Campbell	6	Duchess of Montrose	2000
Lionel Holland, M.P.	100	Sir Hercules Robinson (original Dec. 1893 list—sold out that year)	2100
Sir John Lubbock, M.P.	25	Colonel Gould-Adams (Dec. 28th, 1893, list—sold out that year)	900
Sir Donald Currie, M.P.	5000	Sir J. Sievwright	4500
W. E. G. Macartney, M.P.	30	Sir F. Carrington	45
Marquis of Londonderry	500	P. S. Methuen (original)	3000
Earl Chesterfield	300	Gen. Sir F. W. Grenfell	29
Hon. E. Hubbard, M.P.	100	Major Plumer	3
Burdett-Coutts, M.P.	242	Lt.-Col. Carrington	5
Lord Wantage	5000	Lt.-Col. Rimington	5
A. Baumann, M.P.	400		
G. Beith, M.P.	1200		
J. Ross, Q.C., M.P.	100		
Mr. Conybeare	54	Total	180,000

Eighty Peers, Commoners, Imperial and Consular Officers, Equerries, and Society Bankers, of which above is a sample, have held since 1892 180,000 shares. Top price, £1,500,000; lowest, £550,000.

In addition to the above, 350 Generals, Major-Generals, Colonels, and officers in the army, many of them serving at the front, figure in one Vol. only, 1896.

A good number of Clergymen and the female relations of M.P.'s also hold shares.

Reg. No. 1896.	Daily Mail.
21,485	Alfred Harmsworth 500
21,805	Cecil Harmsworth 40
21,617	R. L. Harmsworth 100
21,609	George Harmsworth 400

It is fair to say that the Legislative, Military and Society Shareholders have held over 250,000 £1 shares, which were saleable at over £2,000,000, at top prices. This is in one South African Company alone—the Chartered. It would be interesting to find out the holdings they had in each of the 74 auxiliary companies, of which the Chartered is the parent.