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OFFICIAL REPORTS

OF

General J. H. De la Rey

AND

General J. C. Smuts.

TOGETHER WITH

**OTHER DOCUMENTS RELATING TO THE WAR
IN SOUTH AFRICA,**

Recently received by the Boer Representatives in Europe.

TRANSLATED FROM THE DUTCH.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

LONDON:

THE NEW AGE PRESS, 1 & 2 TOOK'S COURT,
FURNIVAL STREET, E.C.

1902.

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Printed and Published by the New Age Press,
1 & 2, Took's Court, Fumival Street,
London, E.C.

PRICE TWO PENNIES

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REPORT OF GENERAL J. M. DE LA REY (Assistant-Commandant-General of the Western Districts of the S.A.R.) to HIS HONOUR THE STATE PRESIDENT OF THE S.A.R.

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REPORT OF GENERAL J. H. DE LA REY (Assistant- Commandant-General of the Western Districts of the S.A.R.) to HIS HONOUR THE STATE PRESIDENT OF THE S.A.R.

IN THE FIELD, December, 1901.

I am of opinion that lately much light has been thrown on our dark circumstances, and consider it my sacred duty to spare no pains to send you this Report, in order to acquaint you with the situation of our Republics and the Colonies, in expectation of the further steps which my Government and that of the Orange Free State may take.

My Government and that of the Orange Free State are prepared—and have acquainted Lord Kitchener of the fact—to struggle for their right until the bitter end, and so far there is no question with us to conclude peace, unless the independence be recognised of the two Republics, as well as that of our Colonial brethren, who have cast their lot with us.

I.

A Heap of Ruins.

Our land is one heap of ruins.

Nothing remains but the walls of buildings, except where even these were blown up with dynamite. Nothing has escaped this destruction. The properties of neutrals as well as of Burghers killed in battle, and of those who are now prisoners of war, and of the widows and orphans—everything has been destroyed.

Neither churches, nor parsonages, nor schools have been spared.

In my division the villages of Wolmaransstad, Bloemhof, Schweizer-Reineke, and Hartebeestfontein, which have NOT been occupied by the enemy, have been totally burnt.

It is exactly the same in the Eastern Districts of the South African Republic, where General Botha is at present.

II.

Wanton Destruction of Cattle—

All our cattle have been taken away from us. In cases where they were unable to transport them, the beasts were collected by thousands and shot dead or killed with swords and knives. The untended horses are chased into kraals, and there shot in one heap, and where they are running wild, they are fired upon by Maxims and so killed.

III.

And of Crops.

Since the seed was sown it has either been destroyed or eaten by the cattle. And wherever it has grown, laagers are pitched at different places, and soldiers and Kaffirs are sent out by hundreds to cut what has been sown, or to destroy it wholly.

IV.

British Treatment of Women and Children.

The treatment of women and children, defenceless creatures, is really the darkest page among the many dark pages of this sad war. At first hundreds of our women who were living in the villages were taken prisoners, and sent to the commandoes. We formed women's camps at several places, where our women and children were taken care of. But soon the enemy changed his conduct. Our women, who had been taken prisoners, after the homesteads had been burned, were sometimes carried along with the columns on trolleys for weeks. At night the women were placed around the laagers as a protection against a night attack from our side. When the women realised what was the object of the enemy they tried to escape, but were pursued. They were even fired upon. Sometimes they were caught again, and then they were removed to greater distances, and placed in tents. But from the camps hundreds of sweet messages reach us, telling us not to worry about them, but to continue the struggle for our country.

Lord Methuen's Treatment of Mrs. De la Rey.

Many women have already lost their lives either from wounds or from the misery they have endured. My own wife was ordered by Lord Methuen to leave her home and everything she possessed. She has been wandering about the country for over twelve months with six small children. My mother, an old woman of 83, who has been a widow for nine years, has been carried away as a prisoner. All her cattle have been taken away, and her house burnt. She has been removed to Klerksdorp.

Here are a few names of women who have been killed :—

In the district of Rustenburg, at Rietfontein, the wife of Stoffel

Fourie, and a Miss Diederiks, have been killed under the veranda of their house by a bomb from a Maxim gun. At that time there was not a man near the place. At the farm, Groenfontein, the wife of L. van der Merwe was shot through the head, and thus wounded left alone in a shed, and her homestead laid in ashes.

In another district, at Schweiser Reineke, a daughter of Sonikus was shot dead, and another severely wounded—(the sworn declarations being added to the statement).

In the district of Potchefstroom, Gatsrand, the wife of Hans Brits was killed in her wagon by a cannon shot.

V.

Field Hospitals Destroyed.

As regards the RED CROSS, our wounded are suffering terribly. I had established several Field-Hospitals, but in most cases these were not respected by the enemy; they took the wounded prisoners, and burnt everything, and took away all medicines and appliances. As things are now, all wounded, however seriously, take flight as soon as the enemy approaches.

I have made a request for medicines on payment, but hitherto all my appeals have been in vain.

In the course of the war all Doctors have left us. In my own division I have only one Doctor, viz., Dr. van Reuvenkampff, a Russian, who is really very faithful, and has done much for our people. As far as I am aware there are only two Doctors left in the Orange Free State, with the Burghers, viz., Drs. Fourie and van der Poel. We are, however, attended to by persons who, at the beginning, were acting as assistants to the Doctors, and they are doing some good work.

VI.

There is still a very great number of Burghers under arms. May God in his great power keep them faithful till the end.

VII.

The Boers and Khaki.

As regards clothing, we are partly dressed in skins; others wear pieces of captured wagon covers or tents, but the great majority are dressed in khaki, taken from the prisoners of war. It was impossible for me to prevent my men doing so, for they say: "The English have not only burnt our clothes, but also those of our wives and children." At the same time, the taking of clothes is done against the express order of the authorities.

VIII.

Wanton Destruction of Machinery.

All mills, threshing-machines, other machines, ploughs, and harrows have been destroyed by the enemy, or blown up by dynamite.

IX.

How the Boers are Armed.

We have still a few guns left. Most of our Mausers have been exchanged for Lee-Metfords. I have several thousand men who are armed with Lee-Metfords. As for the bullets the supply will only cease as soon as England discontinues sending ammunition to South Africa. I am at the present moment just as well supplied as I was a year ago. It is the same with Generals Botha and de Wet.

X.

How they are Fed.

As regards victuals, although the enemy has tried to trail the sword of hunger across the South African Republic and the Orange Free State, the all-good God has decreed otherwise. Mealies that have been standing on the field since last year, and give nourishment to man and beast, are still sufficient. The wheat harvest over the whole country (taking into consideration the general destruction) is splendid. We have, therefore, still a sufficiency of meat and mealies. If ever famine should overtake the South African Republic and the Orange Free State, Cape Colony and Natal will be visited by the same scourge.

XI.

During the last year we have lost many horses through illness.

XII.

The Sphere of Operations.

The fighting operations now extend from near Cape Town, as far as the Northern borders of the South African Republic.

As the enemy tries to make the world believe that our warfare is irregular, I deny this most strenuously. I refer further to the replies of President Steyn and Commandant-General Botha to Lord Kitchener.

XIII.

The Organisation of the Boers.

In each district of the South African Republic, as well as of the Orange Free State, Landdrosts (magistrates) have been duly

appointed. Where the villages are in the occupation of the enemy, District-Landdrosts have been appointed.

Each military division has a military court.

Marriages are solemnised. Civil affairs are settled.

Almost every other district has its fighting-general, whenever the Commandant-General or the Assistant-Commandant-General are unable to be present.

XIV.

The British Arm the Coloured People.

If at any time it should be said that the enemy does not arm the coloured people against us, I want to give you an example to the contrary. On the 29th of September, 1901, a women's laager, in the district of Rustenburg, was attacked by a Kaffir commando, while Kekewich was at one side. On that occasion two Burghers were killed and five wounded. Among the wounded was Stoffel Fourie, son-in-law of His Honour the President. He got three bullet wounds, but is now convalescent. A daughter of Jan Eloff received two bullet wounds.

On November 29th, ten coloured people under arms were shot by us.

General Beyers reports from the Northern districts that he is being continually attacked by English and Kaffir commandoes simultaneously.

In my district the tribes of Montsua and Mosheth have been armed against us.

The garrisons of the villages in the Western districts are almost exclusively Bastards.

XV.

I enclose herewith a few declarations on oath as regards the treatment of prisoners of war by the enemy. From other declarations it appears that our wounded on the battlefield have really been murdered by the enemy.

I have forwarded those declarations to Lord Kitchener.

XVI.

The Boer Government.

The losses among the members of the Government of the Orange Free State have been made good.

The Executive of the South African Republic Government is now as follows:—

S. W. Burger, Acting State President;

Louis Botha, Commandant-General, and Acting Vice-president;

F. W. Reitz, Secretary of State;

L. J. Meyer, Acting Non-Official Member Executive, vice A. D. Wolmarans;

J. H. de la Rey, Acting Superintendent of Natives, vice P. A. Cronje;
Mr. Krogh, Acting Keeper of the Archives, vice J. M. A. Kock.

XVII.

Still a Free People.

You may perhaps feel downcast after reading the above about our circumstances. We beseech you not to give way. To-day we have nothing more to lose but our existence as a free nation, and to the last man we are prepared to shed our blood for this. After a struggle of more than two years we still exist as a free people, as established in our alliance made at Paardekraal.

XVIII.

Almost all our Ministers of the Gospel are prisoners of war. In the Free State there are still ten Ministers with the Commandoes.

XIX.

The British Occupation.

The sole territory occupied by the enemy is the villages that have not been burned and the railway-lines.

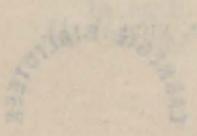
His power over the country districts extends only as far as his guns can shoot. We are fighting almost every day. We have fought very heavy battles.

Since I have been commanding the Western districts, viz., from July 7th, 1900, till November 4th, 1901—I have no official accounts since that date—my losses have been as follows:—

Killed	170
Wounded	380
Total	550

Six of the killed have been murdered by Kaffirs.

J. H. DE LA REY,
Assistant-Commandant-General of the Western Districts
of the South African Republics.



**SOME SWORN DECLARATIONS ATTACHED TO THE
OFFICIAL REPORT OF GENERAL DE LA REY.**

I.

Shooting at Prisoners.

JAN HENDRIK VISSER made the following statement on oath:—

I was taken prisoner by the English on Sunday, the 18th of August, 1901, at Witspoort, in the district of Lichtenburg. My weapons were taken from me by four Englishmen, and I was ordered to hold their horses while they aimed at our men. When our men came in sight I left the horses and stood aside. Our men then retreated, and I returned to the English. I laid myself behind an ant-hill. The English also were lying behind ant-hills in an oblique line behind me. When they found that they could not escape one of them aimed at me and hit me in the head.

So help me God Almighty.

(Signed),

J. H. VISSER.

Sworn in my presence at Mooifontein on the 20th of August, 1901,

(Signed),

IGN. S. FERREIRA,

State-Attorney.

II.

Murdering the Wounded.

MELT GEORGE STANDER makes the following statement on oath:—

I was present at the battle near Selous River, Rustenburg, on the 30th of September, 1901. I was standing about twenty paces from Commandant Boshoff, when he was wounded just above the stomach. Four of his men tried to lead him away, but they were also wounded. When I withdrew with the other Burghers from the position, he was still alive. That very evening I again saw Commandant Boshoff, but then he was a corpse. His head was battered in, and he had also a wound in the lower part of his body.

So help me God Almighty.

(Signed),

MELT STANDER.

Sworn in my presence this day, the 29th of November, 1901, in the field district of Lichtenburg.

(Signed),

IGN. S. FERREIRA,

State-Attorney.

III.

Lies Nailed to the Counter.

JAN CHRISTOFFEL GREYLING KEMP, declares on oath :—

I am a Fighting General in the Districts of Rustenburg, Krugersdorp, and Pretoria. I was commander at the battle of Vlakfontein, District Rustenburg, on the 29th of May, 1901. I was in person among the Burghers during the fighting. The declarations made by British soldiers, that the wounded of the enemy were killed by our Burghers, after having been disarmed, are absolutely without foundation.

So help me Almighty God.

J. KEMP,
Fighting General.

Sworn before me on the 29th day of November, 1901, in the field, in the District of Lichtenburg.

IGN. S. FERREIRA,
State-Attorney.

IV.

MELT GEORGE STANDER declares on oath :—

I was present at the battle of Vlakfontein, District Rustenburg, on the 29th of May, 1901. The declarations made by British soldiers, that the wounded of the enemy were killed by our Burghers, are without foundation.

So help me Almighty God.

Sworn before me on the 29th day of November, 1901, in the field, in the District of Lichtenburg.

IGN. S. FERREIRA,
Acting-State-Attorney.

V.

PETRUS JOHANNES KEMP declares on oath :—

I was present at the battle of Vlakfontein, District Rustenburg, on the 29th of May, 1901. The declarations made by British soldiers, that the wounded of the enemy were killed by our Burghers, after having been disarmed, are absolutely without foundation.

So help me Almighty God.

P. KEMP.

Sworn before me on the 29th of November, 1901, in the field, in the District of Lichtenburg.

IGN. S. FERREIRA,
Acting-State-Attorney.

VI.

JOHN DANIEL VILJOEN DU TOIT declares on oath :—

I was present at the battle of Vlakfontein, District Rustenburg, on the 29th of May, 1901. The declarations made by British

soldiers, that the wounded of the enemy were killed by our Burghers, after having been disarmed, are absolutely without foundation.

So help me Almighty God.

J. D. V. DU TOIT.

Sworn before me on the 29th of November, 1901, in the field in the District of Lichtenburg.

IGN. S. FERREIRA,
Acting-State-Attorney.

VII.

MARTINUS HERMANUS SWART declares on oath:—

I was present at the battle of Vlakfontein, District Rustenburg, on the 29th of May, 1901. The declarations made by British soldiers, that the wounded of the enemy were killed by our Burghers, after having been disarmed, are absolutely without foundation.

So help me Almighty God.

M. H. SWART.

Sworn before me on the 29th of November, 1901, in the field, in the District of Lichtenburg.

IGN. S. FERREIRA,
Acting-State-Attorney.

VIII.

Armed Natives.

JOHANNES ALBERTUS KUHN declares on oath:—

I am one of General van Zyl's volunteers. On or about the 16th of September, 1901, our commando was at Zoetlief, District Vryburg, British Bechuanaland.

After the commando had left I remained behind near my house, together with two others. After having breakfasted we were about to depart when suddenly we saw about 100 armed Kaffirs about 100 steps from the house. I ran to my horse, but the Kaffirs got there before me. When I found that I could not reach my horse, I ran to the bush to hide myself and my gun. However, the Kaffirs discovered me, and they told me they would kill me. I replied: "Why, I have not been fighting at all." In reply the Kaffirs fired at me, about fifteen shots in all, but they did not hit me. Then an English officer, a certain Dunbar, came up to me and said they were not to fire, as I had surrendered. After that Dunbar took me with him. He rode a horse, and I walked alongside of it, and we went in the direction of our house. When I had walked about 40 steps I got a bullet through my shoulder-blade, which came out at the breast. I am positive that I was shot at by one of the Kaffirs. I still went on walking as far as the house. An English surgeon then approached me, and said to someone I did not see, after having attended me, that it was useless to take me away as I was not going to live, and so they left me behind.

Next day General van Zyl came back again, and took me away with him.

So help me Almighty God.

(Signed),

J. A. KUHN.

Sworn before me on the 23rd day of November, 1901.

(Signed),

IGN. S. FERREIRA,

Acting-State-Attorney.

IX.

Shooting of Prisoners.

DANIEL FRANCOIS ROUX makes the following statement on oath:—

I was sent out as a scout with three other Burghers at Doornbult, in the District of Lichtenburg, on July the 19th, 1901, when we were pursued by about twenty Englishmen. We were obliged to retreat, and the horse of my companion (Badenhorst) having been shot dead, I remained behind with him. We defended ourselves until the English were quite close to us. When I had surrendered an Englishman came towards me and aimed at me with his revolver, but he missed. Then another came and placed his rifle against my forehead. I raised my arm to remove it, and the shot passed through my right arm. Then they threatened again to shoot me.

So help me God Almighty.

(Signed),

D. F. ROUX.*

Sworn in my presence at Driekuul on August 15th, 1901.

(Signed),

IGN. S. FERREIRA,

State-Attorney.

X.

JOHANNES JAKOBUS BADENHORST makes the following statement on oath:—

On July the 19th, I was sent as scout with three other men to Doornbult, in the District of Lichtenburg. We were surprised by about twenty Englishmen. My horse was shot dead under me, so that I could not make my escape. My comrade Roux remained with me, and we defended ourselves to our last cartridge. Then we raised our hands in token of surrender. Notwithstanding this, an Englishman shot at me, and wounded me in the thigh.

So help me God Almighty.

(Signed),

J. J. BADENHORST.*

Sworn in my presence at Driekuul on August the 15th, 1901.

(Signed),

IGN. S. FERREIRA,

State-Attorney.

* Both of these prisoners were afterwards rescued by the Boers.

XI.

TOM ANDRIES MATLAPIN :—

I am a servant in the house of Mr. P. Rood. This morning I was at a place called Rouxkloof. I was taken prisoner by a body of Englishmen and coloured people. I saw the enemy fire at Frederik Roux, Louis Roux, and Johannes Rood. They were surrounded by the enemy, and then they raised a white flag. After they had surrendered they were shot dead by the enemy. Frederik Roux having already been shot, one of the enemy pierced his chest with a sword. The three men were shot dead together, after they had been taken prisoners.

(Signed),

ANDRIES, his mark.

Sworn in my presence this day, the 18th of October, 1901.

(Signed),

J. A. VAN ZIJL,

General van Zijl's Volunteers, in the field.

XII.

Zoet en Smart, October 31st, 1901.

At the request of Commandant J. F. de Beer, of Bloemhof, I held on October the 21st, a post mortem examination on the bodies of killed burghers. I found that the men whose names follow had been dead and buried for three days :—

(1) Louis Roux. He had a gunshot through the left side of the chest which had perforated the shoulder-blade. There was another wound in the ribs. A bullet, probably an explosive one, had passed through the left lung, and come out through the spine. Any of the bullets would have been sufficient to cause death.

(2) Frederik Roux. He had two bullet wounds in the centre of the chest, terminating in the spine. Either of them was sufficient to cause death. He had, besides, a wound as if made by a sword, commencing in the hollow at the top of the chest, passing along the gullet, through the mouth, and ending in the left nostril.

(3) Johannes Rood. I found a bullet wound commencing at the right temple, terminating above the right ear. Also a bullet shot under the left arm leading in a slanting direction to the right thigh, and three more slight wounds. Any of the bullets would have been sufficient to cause death.

(Signed),

H. M. SCHLIESENGER.

Physician and Surgeon.

XIII.

Escaped from a Concentration Camp.

On this day, the 16th of November, 1901, appeared before me at Vergenoegd, District Zeerust, South African Republic, PETRONELLA JOHANNA VAN STADE, who declares on oath:—

I am the wife of Adriaan van Stade, a resident of this place. On the 11th of June last I was taken prisoner here together with other women, and conducted to Mafeking. On arrival there we were placed in the Women's Camp in tents. We received the following daily rations: Meat, rice, flour, and jam; also coffee and sugar. We were satisfied with our food. This lasted for two months. First our meat rations were reduced to 2lb. per week. Later on the coffee and sugar, and so it went on until the first of this month, when I escaped, and our rations were then for eight days, as follows: A plateful of flour, 2lb. of rice, $\frac{1}{4}$ lb. of coffee, and 1lb. of sugar; meat 2lb. per week for every adult. Children under 12 years of age got half rations. The doctors treated us very roughly. Sometimes they assaulted us when we applied for medicines. Many a time we were told: "If all those in camp perished it would not matter." As for firewood, they allowed us 30lb. of green wood per week. We were obliged to dig for roots in order to enable us to make fires. They did not give us any clothes, unless we were in the direst want of them, viz., when we were almost naked. Clothes that had been collected for us, by our Minister, Rev. van der Spuy, in Cape Colony, were not given to us, but to the families of those Burghers who had surrendered to the enemy. The same happened with the victuals sent for us. By "us" I mean the wives of those Burghers who are still in the field. The cases of mortality in the camp were very numerous. Last month we had 580 deaths, mostly children. I have these statistics from my brother Johannes Smit, who has assisted in making the coffins. The British authorities supply the coffins, and cause the graves to be dug, but we ourselves must attend to the funeral. The cases of mortality varied from 20 to 30 a day. With the exception of the distribution of clothes, no distinction is made between us and the wives of the "hands-ups." Whenever we go to make a complaint, we are roughly treated, and most of the time we are told to go to H—. Our complaints were never investigated. We were told that the women that had escaped had been murdered by the Kaffirs, and further that our own officers did not want us any more, and also that General de la Rey had said that he would shoot all women that ever escaped. Before I escaped, several other women had done so, and it was reported that they had been murdered by Kaffirs. However, I decided to run away. Myself and Aletta Smart escaped from the camp on the 7th inst., at night. We arrived here after wandering about for two nights and two days. But for the reports that are being circulated, as to the murdering of escaped women by Kaffirs, many more women would

try to escape. All of them are very dissatisfied as to their treatment. We got nothing but tinned meat. At first it was good, but afterwards it was very bad. Once we were warned not to eat the meat, as the animals had died from lung disease. The tinned meat is very unhealthy, and causes diarrhœa. Before I escaped, two women from Lichtenburg ran away, who were, however, arrested and brought back by Kaffirs. They were then punished, with eight days rice-water. They got no other food, and were moreover put in a separate camp. I had a child when I was taken a prisoner; it died in camp. Most of the children die of measles. The food is supplied and distributed in camp. Many a time we have to wait from early in the morning till late in the afternoon before they give us anything, and many a time they tell us that we are no better than —.

P. J. VAN STADEN.

Sworn before me on the date and at the place aforesaid.

J. G. CELLIERS,

Fighting General for Lichtenburg and Marico.

WITH 200 TRANSVAALERS IN CAPE COLONY.**REPORT OF ASSISTANT-COMMANDANT-GENERAL J. C. SMUTS,***State-Attorney of the S.A.R.***Expedition of Transvaalers to Cape Colony, Aug.-Sept., 1901.**

The expedition which left the South African Republic under my command at the end of August, 1901, consisted of 75 men under Commandant van der Venter, 69 under Commandant Kirster, 70 under Commandant Bouwer, and 100 under Commandant Dreyer; altogether with my staff about 340 men. I myself left Gatsrand, District Potchefstroom, with Commandant Dreyer on the 1st of August, while the others, under the temporary command of Commandant van der Venter, met at Vetrivier, District Hoopstad, Orange Free State, about July 20th.

It took us about a month to get through the Free State, and we met with many difficulties, as the enemy was well aware of our destination, and did all he could to thwart our efforts. In the Northern Free State, with the small number of men at my disposal, I had to deal with no less than seven columns of the enemy, varying in strength from 500 to 1,000 men. In the Southern Free State it was more difficult still. Beginning at the Western border, I found a row of forts and garrisons all along Modder River, and they extended along the Waterwerken and Thaba 'Nchu, as far as the Basuto borders, in the East of the Free State. Not without much difficulty and much loss did we reach the District of Rouxville at the end of August. Commandant van der Venter had passed the British lines at Thaba 'Nchu. I myself crossed the Modder River near Abrahamskraal. From Springfontein I was driven to the North to about 20 miles from Bloemfontein, but I succeeded in escaping the enemy. My total losses were as follows:—In a night attack at Vetrivier three Burghers were killed, five wounded, and seven taken prisoners, among whom were Field-cornet Truter and Field-cornet Wolmarans. Commandant van der Venter was attacked near the railway line at Brandfort, and lost four killed and seven wounded, of whom two fell in the enemy's hands. Near Reddersburg 20 Burghers were taken prisoners by a superior force of the enemy.

At Zastron, I found Acting-Chief-Commandant Kritzinger, to whom I transferred Commandant Dreyer with his Burghers, while Commandant P. Wessels was transferred to me. At the end of November Kritzinger was still in the Orange Free State. I gather from English reports that Commandant Dreyer fell with nine men in the enemy's hands near Jammerberg Drift. I found Great Orange River pretty empty, but occupied by an uninterrupted chain of block-houses, forts, outposts, and columns. After several vain

efforts to pass them in the direction of Aliwal Noord, I crossed the river in the night of 3rd-4th September near the Basuto border, and arrived in the eastern part of the Herschel-location. During the whole night of September 4th, I had to fight my way through Herschel across unknown and very dangerous ground, and my losses were one Burgher killed, and three taken prisoners, as well as about 30 lead-horses, with which we were then well provided. On the 5th of September I arrived in the Wasbank Mountains, east of the Stormbergen, and went to the South in the direction of the Indwe coal-mines, and East London. I arrived on the 7th of September at within 20 miles east of Dordrecht, when I found that all other poorten and passes through these dangerous mountains were in the possession of the enemy, and I was obliged to turn to the North. At Noordenaarspoort I had a very narrow escape. I went to reconnoitre this position with Captain Adendorff and his brother (of Wessel's commando), and with my Adjutant, Johan Neethling, when we were surrounded by a great number of the enemy. Captain Adendorff was killed; his brother and Neethling were both seriously wounded. The latter fell in the enemy's hands, while I alone crept through the enemy's lines without harm.

After that I went to the North to cross the East London railway line near Penhoek (Cyfergat coal-mines), but I soon found myself surrounded by a number of the enemy's columns in these dangerous mountains. Unfortunately, Commandant Wessel and I got here separated, and I was, therefore, compelled to force a way with hardly 200 men through the overwhelming force of the enemy. The latter did his utmost to force me back against the dangerous Groot River Line, and made every effort to break through to the South or to the West. From the 9th till the 11th of September I continually fought in the day-time with the enemy, who was always attacking me from different sides. At night I had to roam about the mountains to escape his ambushes. On September 12th, I was totally, nay, hopelessly surrounded at Penhoek, but after a severe battle, which lasted from 11 a.m. till 10 p.m. I succeeded in driving back two columns, with losses on their side of 51, on my side of ONE killed. I crossed that night both the Dordrecht and East London railway lines (the latter at Putterskraal), and off-saddled the next morning near Smith River, after men and horses had fought and marched for FORTY HOURS without food or sleep. The horses suffered more than the Burghers, not only from their great exertion, but also from the severe cold and continual rains in these Stormbergen, which will never be effaced from our memories.

The next day I went in the direction of Tarkastad, and arrived at the Bamboesbergen, where we had, if possible, a severer struggle than in the Stormbergen. Night and day we were obliged to fight and crawl along, surrounded by the enemy's superior force, while men and beasts almost perished from the terrible rains and cold. In the night of 12th September a dozen of my men lost their way, and were prevented by the enemy from joining me. However,

under Field-cornet Pretorius, they have established a separate commando, and judging from English reports they have done very good work. I am still expecting to come back as a numerous commando.

My exit from the Bamboesbergen was through Elandsrivierpoort, but on September 17th I found there an English guard of a few hundred of the Seventeenth Lancers. I attacked them immediately, and within a couple of hours 73 were killed, about 50 taken prisoners, the others took flight, the camp with Armstrong gun and hand-Maxim captured, set fire to and destroyed.

We rode away with two cart-loads of guns and ammunition, which the enemy mistook for wounded; we captured 300 horses and mules, while our losses were only one killed and five wounded, three of whom we had to leave behind. Not only, therefore, were my own wants provided for, but I was able to supply the wants of other commandos. As I was still surrounded, I proceeded immediately in the direction of Maraisburg, but on September 19 found myself surrounded on four sides. I was, therefore, obliged to make some sham movements in order to confuse the enemy. From there I went in a southern direction, with Grahamstad as my destination. I did my utmost to get through to the south, by crossing the different chains of mountains—(Groot, Winterberg, Wittebergen, and Baviaansrivierbergen), but only succeeded after great efforts and with the loss of about 100 horses. I then got through the English lines of defence, and passed through Bedford, Fort Beaufort, and Grahamstad. The pursuit of the enemy had now become so bitter, that I was compelled to cross the Port Elizabeth Railway line and the Grootvischrivier to Groot Zuurberg. Owing to our experiences, both bitter and sweet, this crossing will be remembered by myself and my brave band until the day of our death. On September 29, we arrived at Groot Zuurberg, where we ate a tempting-looking wild fruit, which proved to be highly poisonous. When I with half of my Burghers were struggling against death the enemy attacked us. We happily beat him back, but remained for dead on the battlefield till the next morning, when we struggled along, while some of the Burghers were still so ill that we had to fasten them to their horses in order to get them away. We crossed these terrible mountains where the enemy, on account of the character of the terrain, had a very good chance to hem us in; nor did he spare any efforts to do so. Behind us were Gorringe and the defence forces of Alexandria and Uitenhage, and another large column to our west, while at our left were impassable mountains, and almost all defiles and passes in the enemy's hands. On the 1st October we arrived at the Addobosch of Uitenhage, to the South of Zuurberg. On the 2nd October one of the defiles was forced, when the enemy lost one killed and 13 prisoners, while brave Field-cornet Borrius lost one eye. On the 3rd October, after vain efforts to proceed in the direction of Port Elizabeth, we were obliged to fall back on Zuurberg. We had gone up the

mountain half-way along a dangerous precipice and off-saddled there. To our great surprise Gorrings's column came along the very same path a few hours later to within 30 steps from us. They were immediately attacked and hurled down the precipice with heavy loss. Men and beasts crushed each other to death, pursued by the embittered Boers. From verbal reports from a few members of this column, who were later taken prisoners, their losses in killed and wounded were 200 men and 700 horses. The flight of the enemy was a terrible sight. The fighting continued till late in the evening without any losses on our side. The next morning we left the mountains, and proceeded in a northern direction. I was obliged owing to scarcity of forage to separate Commandant Bouwer from the other commandos, and to go in advance in the direction of Graaff Reinet. Hardly had he left than the officers, who had remained behind, discovered a column of the enemy near them on the top of the mountain. They tried to attack them in the night of October 6th, from two sides. They were the defence forces of Alexandria and Grahamstad, the latter of whom had fixed their camp on the top of the mountain, and the former under Groot Zuurberg Pass. My Burghers, however, prevented the planned attack by a counter-attack, with the result that both camps were captured: about ten of the enemy were killed and wounded, 30 made prisoners, and 70 splendid horses captured. Loaded with ammunition, etc., we followed Bouwer to the North. Meanwhile that same day, Commandant Bouwer himself had beaten about 100 men of the defence forces of Somerset East, at Springvale: he killed and wounded a few, took 20 prisoners, and chased the remainder to Somerset. A considerable number of horses was captured here. He then proceeded towards Pearston, and after a few small skirmishes with scouts and defence forces of the enemy he arrived at the Camdeboo mountains in the Aberdeen District. Bad luck, however, pursued the defence forces of Somerset. On October 13th, van Deventer and Kirsten arrived near Doornbosch, where the said forces and a number of Cape Mounted Rifles were entrenched. They attacked our Burghers, with the fatal result that all their forts were captured and 210 taken prisoners. Several were killed and wounded, while on our side we had only three slightly wounded. Here and there we captured 220 splendid horses. Our men then went north, and crossed the Graaff Reinet Railway line near Bethesda Siding. On October 21st they were encamped near Steilhoogte on the Zondagsrivier, when owing to treason, Colonel Lukin suddenly attacked them at daybreak. Fortunately, we only lost one killed and one wounded: Field-cornet Smith, who was captured by the enemy, as well as ten of the weakest Burghers. Then they went west in order to cross the railway at Victoria West. After many interesting movements, which misled the enemy, they succeeded on October 30th. Afterwards they went quietly, and at their leisure, to Calvinia, caught 17 men of the Victoria defence forces, of whom one was killed,

and 19 of the Fraserburg defence forces, and caught several good horses. North of Sutherland they met Caldwell with the 5th Lancers. They gave him a good beating at Brandkraal, killing and wounding ten, and taking 30 prisoners, in addition to many horses. Thus they arrived at the beginning of November in the District of Calvinia.

Meanwhile Commandant Boucher had been surrounded in the Camdeboo Mountains, and was forced to go to the south-west, pursued by Colonel Scobell. He found Commandant S. Pypers with the commando of Scheepers, who, on account of serious illness, had fallen into the hands of the enemy, near the Great Zwartberg, took him with him, and then proceeded through Oudtshoorn, Ladysmith, Swellendam, Worcester, Ceres, and Sutherland, to the District of Rhynsdorp, where he arrived early in November. Nearly every day he has had skirmishes with the enemy, and captured some of their scouts, but no important fights took place.

At the end of November van Deventer and Kirsten, together with a new local commandant, made an attack on the forts of Tontelbosch-Kolk, to the north of Calvinia; and although they could not capture the forts, they took about 400 horses from the enemy, which was worth while. I have now assumed command of all commandos in the Western Districts of Cape Colony, and am busy in organising them.

Our commando arrived in this District after much suffering, difficulty, and danger. Of the 200 men who had crossed Grootrivier on September 4th, four had been killed, 16 wounded—of whom six fell into the enemy's hands—and 35 had been taken prisoners, chiefly on account of their losing their way. Consequently our total losses were 45 men. But what have they accomplished?

They have killed and wounded 372 of the enemy; 429 taken prisoners and disarmed, in addition to capturing a gun and a Maxim, with many rifles and waggon-loads of ammunition, in addition to 1,136 horses and mules captured on the battlefields. Within two months they have travelled through every District of the Cape Colony, crossed the most dangerous mountain chains in sight of the enemy, and have enabled me to obtain complete information as to the military and political situation in Cape Colony.

Another fact of great military importance, which I can only explain as the result of the manner in which my Burghers have everywhere annihilated the local fighting forces, is the order of the authorities that all Town-guards and District mounted troops in Cape Colony were to be immediately disarmed. Taking into consideration that, according to official statistics of last June, 55,000 armed troops had been recruited in South Africa, I consider that this order must affect between 20,000 and 30,000 men. In my humble opinion, I consider that this expedition has

been, at least so far, a success, notwithstanding our heavy losses. The spirit prevailing among my Burghers is splendid. Although perhaps they have suffered more heavily than any other group of Burghers in this war, yet, to-day, they look hopefully to the future, convinced that neither difficulties nor the overwhelming forces of the enemy, however great, will prevent this struggle being continued till RIGHT triumphs over MIGHT.

Where all, both officers and men, have so distinguished themselves, it is difficult to mention anybody in particular. But I wish to acknowledge the great value of Commandant van Deventer's assistance in this expedition.

Shooting Boers in Khaki.

Further, I wish to inform you that Jac. Baxter, of Klerksdorp, a hero without fear or blame, got separated from his commando in the night of October 12th. The next day he was taken prisoner by Colonel Scobell, and immediately shot in a murderous manner, on the strength of a certain illegal Proclamation by Lord Kitchener, about the wearing of khaki clothes by the Boers.

According to the testimony of soldiers in many Districts, the noble manner in which this martyr of liberty has met his death, has inspired respect even from our barbarous enemy, and wrung sympathy from him. If I am not mistaken Colonel Scobell was our Prisoner at Selikatsnek. I fear that others of my Burghers who were taken prisoners were done to death in the same manner. They did not wear khaki for scouting purposes, but because otherwise they would have been compelled to go naked.

The general situation in Cape Colony is very favourable.

J. C. SMUTS,

Assistant-Commandant-General.

LETTER OF GENERAL LIEBENBERG.

However much the fighting Boers are bowed under the dreadful sufferings caused by the war, they do not lose their self-confidence.

The following letter addressed by General Liebenberg to the enemy is a striking testimony hereof.

In the Field,
District Potchefstroom, S.A.R.,
September 4th, 1901.

To the Commanding Officer of his Britannic Majesty's Troops,
Klerksdorp.

Sir,—

I have the honour to send you herewith—in connection with the Proclamation of Assistant-Commandant-General J. H. de la Rey, dated 16th August, 1901, in reply to that of Lord Kitchener, dated 7th August, 1901—an appeal to all Burghers of the South African Republic, who are hiding without leave among the English at Klerksdorp, Potchefstroom and Ventersdorp, and, therefore, escape commando-service illegally, with the polite request to make all these Burghers acquainted with the enclosed appeal through your officers.

I can give you the assurance that I have read to all my Burghers in the field the aforesaid Proclamation by Lord Kitchener. Consequently, I venture to presume that you, from your side, will comply with my request. I have the honour to be,

Your obedient servant,

P. J. LIEBENBERG,
Fighting General.

Here follows a copy of General Liebenberg's Proclamation:—

PROCLAMATION.

To all Burghers of the District of Potchefstroom and surrounding Districts.

WHEREAS Assistant-Commandant-General J. H. de la Rey has

issued a Proclamation on August 16th, 1901, in reply to Lord Kitchener's Proclamation, dated 7th August, 1901, containing a warning for all Burghers;

WHEREAS a certain number of Burghers of the South African Republic, of the District of Potchefstroom, and others, are still staying with the English;

WHEREAS these Burghers by so doing seek shelter and refuge with our enemy, in order to escape commando-service for the defence and maintenance of the Independence of our land and people;

NOW THEREFORE, I, Petrus Johannes Liebenberg, Fighting General of the Potchefstroom Commando, with the powers given to me by Assistant-Commandant-General de la Rey, appeal to the said Burghers—with the exception of those who are already guilty of high treason—to announce themselves on or before the 20th of September next, before their several Field-cornets. If this order is not obeyed, then after that date any Burgher staying with the enemy will be considered to have committed High Treason against Land and People, and will then be liable to the death penalty, and the confiscation of his goods.

Given under my hand, in the field, in the District of Potchefstroom, on this 4th day of September, 1901.

F. J. LIEBENBERG,
Fighting General.

Women's League, District Potchefstroom, S.A.R.
21st January, 1901.
To the President of the Great Congress, held at Worcester, Cape Colony, on the 6th of December, 1900.
Honoured Sir and Brother—
In the name of the undersigned sisters and of us all, resident in the South African Republic and the Orange Free State, we beg you and all those who took part in the congress to accept our heartfelt thanks for all you have done in our most holy cause. It was to us a great joy, comfort, and consolation to hear our brethren express themselves so freely against this unjust war. We are determined to fight to the bitter end, whatever happens. For ours is a just cause, and we know that the God of our Fathers will not allow the triumph of Mammon. This conviction gives us the strength to bear whatever our enemy thinks fit to make us endure. The sympathy which you have shown us gives us confidence in placing before you the facts which show the cruel and barbarous

THE CRUELTY OF THE ENGLISH TOWARDS WOMEN AND CHILDREN.

Mr. J. L. van der Merwe, who, before the commencement of the war was Mining Commissioner at Johannesburg, and a Transvaal State official of unblemished reputation, has since the invasion of the South African Republic by the British forces, constantly fought in the western districts under General de la Rey, and is, therefore, fully acquainted with all that has happened in that part of the country. The trustworthiness of a man of the stamp of Mr. J. L. van der Merwe gives a special value to the following report which he has forwarded to the Boer leaders in Europe with the cognizance of General de la Rey:—

The report runs as follows:—

In the month of January, 1901, my commando was operating in the country west of Potchefstroom, and I thus found opportunity of going near to the women's laager, which was encamped to the north of Klerksdorp. During my visit I found that the sad reports, which we had received from time to time were fully established. A short time before, in December, 1900, an Afrikaner Congress had been held at Worcester, in Cape Colony, where the question had been strongly advocated of a more humane treatment of Boer women and children, by the British military authorities. In connection with this congress, and in view of the recent experiences of the war, the women in the said camp at Klerksdorp had drawn up and signed the following address, which I was charged to forward; a mission which I executed without delay:—

Women's Laager, District Potchefstroom, S.A.R.,
5th January, 1901.

To the President of the Great Congress, held at Worcester, Cape Colony, on the 6th of December, 1900.

Honoured Sir and Brother,—

In the name of the undersigned sisters and of us all, resident in the South African Republic and the Orange Free State, we beg you and all those who took part in the congress to accept our heartfelt thanks for all you have done in our most holy cause.

It was to us a great joy, comfort, and consolation to hear our brethren express themselves so freely against this unjust war. Be assured that all of us are still animated with undaunted courage, and that we are determined to fight to the bitter end, whatever happens. For ours is a just cause, and we know that the God of our Fathers will not allow the triumph of Mammon. This conviction gives us the strength to bear whatever our enemy thinks fit to make us endure.

The sympathy which you have shown us gives us confidence in placing before you the facts which show the cruel and barbarous

manner in which defenceless women and children are being treated by British officers and men.

Wherever the enemy passed, destruction and misery followed in his steps. At first the enemy thought that this cruel oppression of women and children and the destruction of property would be sufficient to discourage our fighting burghers, and would force them to lay down their arms. But he soon found out his mistake.

The enemy commenced by burning down our homesteads and destroying other property. We were questioned by the officers in a rude manner as to our husbands and rifles. Rough soldiers visited our houses. All the necessaries of life were taken from us, and all the things which could not be conveniently carried away, such as flour, corn, etc., was scattered over the veldt. All vehicles of every kind which they could not take with them were also burnt. Pictures, furniture, and household utensils were first broken to pieces and then set fire to, together with our homes. We were not even allowed to take some blankets and clothes with us for ourselves and our children. Everything was thrown into the flames. The clothes of our men were taken away for the British troops. In some cases even the children were left naked.

In this condition we stood under the bare sky, without shelter, without food, exposed to the rain, the cold, or burning heat. This, however, did not yet satisfy the enemy. The crops, which, in the absence of the male population with the commandos, we had sown ourselves, were to be destroyed or burnt. All the implements of agriculture, such as ploughs, harrows, and others, wherewith we could have again provided for our existence, were carried away or destroyed. All the poultry was killed and the cattle removed. In one word, the whole country was turned into a desert. Ah! we find no words to describe these horrors!

The barbarity of the enemy went further still: they carried the women and children off as prisoners. Even old, grey-haired, and impotent women did not escape from their ill-treatment. We will state a few cases.

A certain number of women had been taken prisoners in and around Potchefstroom, and conducted to Welverdiend Station, a distance of about four hours' ride on horseback. The troops were accompanied on this march by some coloured women. The latter were allowed to sit on the wagons, but the Boer women had to go on foot, and were driven on by the Kaffirs. The consequence was that some fell down dead by the road, and that one woman gave birth to a child. On this occasion Kaffirs were used, and they equalled the English soldiers in cruelty and barbarity.

The women knelt before these Kaffirs and begged for mercy, but they were roughly shaken off, and had to endure even more impudent language and rude behaviour. Their clothes were even torn from their bodies. In some cases they had to suffer a harder lot still. The mothers were taken away from their children. The very small children were left behind because some were ill in bed.

The mothers were not even allowed to take leave of their dear treasures. When they begged the soldiers to take pity on their children the reply was: "Get along; they must all come to an end." Luckily, some women who were left behind took pity on the infants and nursed them. When the mothers were driven like cattle through the streets of Potchefstroom by the Kaffirs, the cries and lamentations of the children filled the air. The Kaffirs then jeered and cried: "Move on: till now you were the masters; but now we will make your women our wives." In this fearful state were the women obliged to march for four hours.

About six miles north of Potchefstroom lived the wife of Thomas van Graan, who, since February, 1900, had been in exile with General Cronje. At first she had received permission to remain with her children on the farm. Quite unexpectedly, a British force arrived in the neighbourhood, and at the farm. The soldiers kicked open the doors, and broke the furniture to pieces. In a violent thunderstorm Mrs. van Graan was placed, with her little children, in an uncovered wagon. These unwarranted proceedings were taken because it was supposed that Chief-Commandant de Wet had spent a night at the farm.

A great number of women along the Mooi River were also victims of the cruelty of the English. A woman, whose child was dying, was removed by force, notwithstanding her heart-rending entreaties. At a farm on the banks of the Vaal a woman refused to follow the soldiers. She was dragged along for a considerable distance over the veldt, until at last they were obliged to leave her behind. Two young girls, this was also along the banks of the Vaal River, whose mother had already been carried away, were in danger of being violated, but managed to take shelter with a neighbour. The soldiers followed in pursuit, but the girls refused to open the door. They were in great danger, but the saving hand of God protected them, and they escaped this ignominy; one of the girls made her escape, and walked a distance of six hours' ride. The sufferings of these women must have been excruciating: words are failing us to describe them.

On the Witwatersrand there was another fearful attempt at violation. In the struggle the woman's neck was twisted in such a manner that it will never come right again. Her daughter rushed to her assistance, but the ruffian drew his sabre and cut open her breast.

We could add many other instances to these, but we think you will now have an idea of the cruel and barbarous manner in which the British officers and soldiers behave towards defenceless women and children.

We, therefore, implore your further assistance and your prayers for us to God.

Relying upon these, we remain, etc.,

(Here follow the signatures.)

To the above I add a few cases, which have come to my personal knowledge:—

An unmarried woman, named Venter, 50 years old, and an idiot, did not try to escape when the enemy approached the wagons and set fire to them. When later on old Murray and other burghers came to the spot, they found her burnt body. Her hands and mouth were filled with grass, a proof that she had tried to escape from the fire, but the poor woman could not walk. The burghers buried her, wrapped in a horse cloth. Could not the soldiers have taken her out of the wagons before they set fire to them?

Old Mr. Mussmann and his wife, respectively 80 and 70 years old, living at Schweizer-Reneke, were both ill in bed, he suffering from rheumatism, she with dropsy. They were both thrown into an uncovered waggon and driven away over the bare veldt and its stony roads.

The wife of Louw Swanepoel, of Leeuwfontein, in the district of Lichtenburg, had been stricken down with paralysis for more than two years. She could neither walk nor talk. She was taken out of her bed and removed to Mafeking; she died on the way.

The wife of C. Borman, of Wolmaransstad, two days before her confinement, was on a cold winter night placed in an open waggon, and driven off. She was confined during the journey.

Debora Winke was fleeing, with some other women, when in another direction a fight took place. The enemy then directed his fire against the women in order to force the burghers to stop their attack, with the result that Debora Winke was seriously wounded, and soon afterwards died. Her little baby was also wounded. There were no burghers among the fugitive women.

Widow Joubert, of Paardeplaats, in the District of Klerksdorp, was wounded in the knee while sitting in her cart; the same ball struck her child.

The house of Sonikus, of Schweizer-Reneke, was bombarded: one of his daughters, aged eighteen, was killed, another wounded: the latter was afterwards removed with the other members of the family.

During a certain action the English fired in opposite directions on inhabited houses—(at Driefontein, Gatsrand). A young girl named Dreyer was seriously wounded in the arm. There was no reason whatever for the troops to fire on those dwellings.

While no men, only women, were at the farm, Modderfontein, Gatsrand, the enemy bombarded the house. Maria Roux was killed outright; Betta van Deventer, Hannie Lindeque, and Annie Lindeque were dangerously wounded.

The wife of du Toit, director of the Telegraph Office at Klerksdorp, was taken out of her bed, at ten o'clock in the night, and dragged to prison with her two children; the latter were given in charge of a Kaffir prisoner of war, and placed in a separate cell. Early next morning, before anyone could hear of it, the mother

and children were sent to Natal. The reason given by the English for this treatment was that she had written a letter to her husband, who was among the combatants, but the crime she really committed was that at the prayer meeting she had publicly sent up prayers for her people.

In virtue of Lord Kitchener's proclamation, on the evening of September 15th, 1900, at Klerksdorp, 500 women and children of burghers still on commando were driven in open cattle-trucks; the night was rough and stormy. Among the women was the wife of General Liebenberg with her children, the wife of Mr. Pienaar (Mining Commissioner), the wife of the Rev. Strassheim, and many others of the prominent inhabitants of Klerksdorp and the neighbourhood, with their children. Next morning the train started; the whole company, including the people who had come to bid them good-bye, first sung a psalm, whereupon the eldest daughter of General Liebenberg displayed a Transvaal flag, which she herself had made. An English officer advanced and tore the flag from her hands, amid loud protests of the women. As soon as the train had started, the same young lady brought out another flag, which she waved, while all the women and children in the cattle trucks sang the national anthem, until the station of Klerksdorp was lost to sight.

During the time that Nurse Rothman was with the Red Cross Hospital at Hartebeestfontein, ammunition was smuggled into the town, with the knowledge of the English. The latter found in this fact a reason for accusing Sister Rothman of having infringed the rules of the Red Cross. The hospital, formerly a fine building, a Government School, was burnt to the ground, and the medicines and fuel carried away for the use of the enemy. Nurse Rothman was driven in an uncovered waggon to Klerksdorp; arrived close to the village, the major came to meet her in a splendid carriage, but the young nurse refused to enter it with him. She was offered a position at the Klerksdorp Hospital at £15 a month, which she also refused indignantly. After much correspondence she was allowed to return to her task among the burghers; for the journey they put at her disposal a small cart drawn by two lean donkeys; no medicines nor bandages were provided, neither did they give her a Kaffir servant. Six miles outside Klerksdorp the donkeys could go no further: she was obliged to unharness them, and walk, in the dark night, a distance of two hours' ride, until she arrived at our outposts. Nurse Rothman, at the beginning of the war, nursed many sick and wounded Englishmen with the greatest devotion at Mafeking; she has received several letters from members of their families expressing their gratitude and heartfelt wishes for her happiness and success in the good work she is doing.

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