

AUTHORISED EDITION.

Dr. W. J. LEYDS

KANTOOR.

TWO YEARS OF WAR —AND AFTER.

TWO SPEECHES

DELIVERED BY

THE RIGHT HON.

JOHN MORLEY, M.P.,

AT

ARBROATH, on OCTOBER 31st, 1901,

AND AT

FORFAR, on NOVEMBER 4th, 1901.

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TWO YEARS OF WAR—AND AFTER.

1.—ARBROATH (*October 31st, 1901.*)

MR. MORLEY, *who was very cordially greeted by his constituents,* said:—Mr. Provost, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—The extraordinarily genial way in which my friend the Provost has presented me to you moves me, because, while he and I in all matters of local business have got on excellently, I have always understood that in the larger matters of national and Imperial interests the Provost and I did not entirely see eye to eye. So I thank him specially for the very generous and kind words in which he has been good enough to present me to you. He says that I made to him an observation just now that I was two years older, and so was he. Yes! ladies and gentlemen, it is two years and a week or two since I last stood in this place and addressed you in Arbroath. It was, I think, in the first week of September, 1899. My last words to you in Arbroath were to exhort you to be true to the principles of solid and sober judgment that have won for Britain her true glory and most abiding renown. I appealed to you to have no part nor lot—forgive me if I say what may jar upon some of you—no part nor lot in a war which I then believed with only too good reason to be swiftly bearing down upon us. Well, these two years have unveiled many of the secrets of time and national destiny. There is no man among us, whatever his view may be about the sources and the origin of the war, whether he thinks, as many do, that it has been a just and unavoidable conflict, or whether, as I think, that it has been an affair of hideous infatuation—in either case all would admit that neither of us foresaw, or could have foreseen, all the momentous consequences of what was then so fatally approaching. We could not have foreseen the magnitude of the operations; we could not have foreseen the far-reaching bearings of what has followed. Look at South Africa itself.

The Two Years' Course of the War.

Two years ago we saw there a flourishing self-governing colony of our own, with two races, the Dutch and the British, living side by side, with constantly strengthening ties of amity. We saw across our own border two Republics, one of them independent, one of them enjoying an independence qualified and limited by agreements. Now look at it to-day. In this island we deplore thousands of generous lives quenched, and all the hopes bound up in those lives violently extinguished. We have seen our treasure poured out like water upon the sand in South Africa. In the two Republics that are now extinguished, thousands of Boers lie in their graves; thousands are

restrained in distant lands, their homes destroyed, their lives blasted. In the Cape Colony itself we see an extraordinary state of things. One war has grown into two wars. A war against the enemy outside our border has added to itself a civil war within our borders. In Cape Colony the doors of their Parliament are closed. The public money is expended without the sanction of the Constitution, and the Colony is now under the yoke, for good reasons or bad—I only want you to examine the difference in situation—that colony is under the yoke of what is called martial law, of which I will say something to you in a few minutes. I was much struck with an expression, and I will borrow it, of a young Conservative M.P. of great promise, great acuteness, and who knows this South African ground—I mean Mr. Winston Churchill. He said at the beginning of the war blood flowed freely and it was a healthy wound; but now it was no longer a healthy wound, but a sluggish festering wound, eating into the flesh and draining the strength. Well, that is an image, gentlemen, that I much recommend to your consideration.

Two Peoples Paying the Penalties of the Unwisdom of Their Rulers.

Now we are in the third year of the war. I ask you to put this question to yourselves, you who were here two years ago—Has anything happened during those two years to make me or you repent the judgment which we then pronounced upon the prospect of the war then approaching? In talking of the Cape Colony I do not want to leave out our British fellow-subjects in the Cape Colony. I think they were misled, but still, however that may be, they, too, have suffered. As was said the other night at Edinburgh, the rich have been made poor; the poor have had to suffer starvation. There has been mischief on every side. Nobody has profited. The military prowess of this country has been exalted, its old colours, its own valour, its old constancy and persistency, but when you come to count up the substantial results I ask you again whether anything has happened to make you and me repent of the judgment that we pronounced two years ago. You have seen, as I said to you in my election address, you have seen a mighty and a powerful people and a very small people, neither of whom—neither we nor the Boers—had any real substantial grounds of quarrel, neither of them with anything substantial to gain from the other, and now to-day both of them paying the penalties of the unwisdom of their rulers. I would like to ask you—it may be a perilous question—whether there is any candid man in Scotland this day who will say of the present condition of things that, if it could have been foreseen two years ago when I stood on this platform, the war would have been permitted; whether the opinion of this country would not have said, Let us move slowly, let us be quite sure as to all the conditions of the struggle on which you invite us to embark. If we had seen such a horrible, hideous transformation as I have in bare outline sketched to you, is there an honest, a candid man in Scotland who would have deliberately urged our entry upon such a war?

The Preceding Negotiations.

Gentlemen, I freely admit the patriotic motives and intentions of his Majesty's Government, and I wish they would be a little more generous and fair in admitting that we who disapprove and dislike and freely denounce the mischief of the course that has been followed are animated by motives as loyal and patriotic as their own. It is not worth while, I think, really, for me to deny all these slanderous imputations. The truth is this. There has been a series of involuntary deceptions which imposed first of all upon the Government themselves, and then, alas! which have imposed upon the people of this country. (*A voice*: "Are they involuntary?") Well, I am for giving them the benefit of the doubt. We were told the other day, and let me say at this point I have not sought—on the contrary, I have carefully avoided making this great controversy, and a discussion so pregnant with enormous issues not only to this island but to the whole Empire—I have always endeavoured to avoid making that in any sense a personal or even a party issue. But I must make some reference to what has been said by an important and powerful man. They were told the other night in Edinburgh on behalf of the Government "we never contemplated taking the offensive." They never intended, that is to say, to bring on a war. I for one have never charged the Government with intending to bring on a war, and I do not believe for one instant that they did intend to bring on this war. But our charge is quite different. The charge is not that they contemplated the offensive. The charge is that negotiations were allowed to drift into a condition which made the offensive almost certain. That is the charge.

Not an Academic Question.

"If you never contemplated the offensive," I would say to the Government, "how was it that in the speech made at Birmingham on August 28th, 1899, the speech which brought me down on to this platform a week later, how was it, if the offensive was never contemplated, that the world was told that the issues of peace and war were in the hands of President Kruger?" That is the charge, gentlemen—that negotiations were pressed on at that period, manifestly leading to the possibility of an issue in war, without either warning the country, or taking those military measures which the possible approach of war made indispensable. Do not believe those who tell you that all this talk about the origin and sources of the war is academic talk, or an academic question. If you find yourself, as a nation, in a difficult position—I put it no higher than that—if you find yourself in a difficult position, it is not academic, it is common sense to look back and say, Where was it that we took that step which has landed us in this disastrous position? Therefore I make no apology to you for dealing for a moment with the point. The Government admit, indeed frankly admit, that they did not foresee the length of the war. They did not profess, as we are told, to foresee the future. They admit their want of knowledge of the real condition of things in South Africa. What an admission it is! They drifted along to the edge

of the black unfathomable abyss in ignorance of where it was that they were drifting to. Whose fault was it?

Lord Milner's Part.

As I have said, in so far as I have interposed in this controversy, I have been careful to avoid as much as possible reference to particular persons, but when it is confessed that the Government were in ignorance of the real condition of things, that they did not foresee what a task it was that they were asking this country with a light heart to undertake, I am bound to name Lord Milner. Is not this admission by the Government, made the other day that they were ignorant—this admission of their unpreparedness—is it not a condemnation not only of them but of their agent on the spot, whom now we are bidden implicitly to trust? I am sorry to say that there is in our own party ranks a number of men of eminence who have constituted themselves a kind of volunteer bodyguard to Lord Milner. Five or six years ago there was an agent on the spot, Lord Rosmead, who knew South Africa; who knew it well, who knew all the forces at work, who knew all the perils that surrounded the whole South African question. Now when Lord Rosmead received from the Colonial Office a despatch of a menacing character to President Kruger, and when he was instructed to convey the language of the despatch to President Kruger, Lord Rosmead, who knew Africa well, begged to be excused. He steadily declined to be the instrument of either of the two parties in South Africa, and he declined to be the voice of the prejudices, the passions, and the antipathies of either of those two parties. There is my test of the quality, the insight, the trustworthiness of an agent on the spot. If the man on the spot has shown himself right, I will assuredly bow to him with the utmost deference, but if he has landed us in the catastrophe—for I will call it nothing else, and I will give you some reasons by-and-by for using that high word—when he has landed us in a catastrophe, why, then, bodyguard or no bodyguard, I, for one, will not consent to see the South African situation through the eyes of Lord Milner and those eyes alone. Contrast the firm impartiality of Lord Rosmead with the mischievous despatches in which Sir Alfred Milner exhorted and besought his Government above all things not to neglect the opinion of those in the Cape Colony who were not for shrinking from extreme measures, and who warned the Government on no account, if they valued that opinion to let the proceedings drag.

The Claim to Infallibility.

There is a singular circumstance about all these things which interests all of us who are observers of human nature. It is the assumption that those who have made the most mistakes and the worst miscalculations in the past are the people who are most confident that they must be right as to the future. I suppose it is some new theory of human character and human life, that everybody is bound to be right some time in his life, and if you are wrong long enough that is the best possible preliminary for a claim to infallibility. The

Government are in that position. It is true, they say, that whenever our foresight and our knowledge could be tested we have shown blindness, short-sightedness, and ignorance. It follows from this, they say, that whenever we cannot be tested in the future you are bound to trust us implicitly and without asking any questions. This is very singular logic.

The Responsibility for the Continued War.

It was said a day or two ago in Edinburgh—and I call your attention to this because you and I are involved—it was said that the war would have been over after Lord Roberts got into Pretoria but for what?—the action of certain misguided persons—that is to say, the electors of Arbroath and the member for Arbroath, who led the Boers to believe that if they held on we should grow tired of the struggle. Well, now, if that proposition is not a mere platform gibe—and from the position of the speaker I will not suppose for a moment it is a platform gibe—it is the assertion that the prolongation of the war is due to people like us; I say that that shows, if it is more than a gibe, ignorance of the position of the problem we have to solve as deep as anything that has been said in the course of the whole of this lamentable transaction. I would like to read you a few lines from an interesting letter that appeared in the *The Times* the other day describing the condition of the Boer prisoners in Ahmednagar:—"At any hour of the day you may walk into the camp at Ahmednagar and see hundreds of men (Boer prisoners) sitting or lying vacantly upon their beds, men in the prime of life—lawyers, farmers, shopkeepers, merchants—condemned to helpless inactivity by stubborn fellow and other compatriots in the field. . . . The severity"—this is the point I call your attention to—"of our measures is said to have made surrender impossible. It is generally argued that if after Prinsloo's surrender the prisoners had been sent to their homes the war would at once have ended; that the severer measures then adopted marked the turning point in this struggle; and that the policy inaugurated by the farm burning and culminating in Lord Kitchener's Proclamation has alienated the survivors beyond all hope of settlement by peace." It is not, then, you here, it is not men like me, who are responsible, as we were told the other day in Edinburgh for the prolongation of the war, and all evidence from elsewhere confirms this. It is our own measures, it is our own severity—our ill-timed, ill-calculated short-sighted severity—it is this that has prolonged the war, and not poor words of mine applauded by you.

Regrettable Incidents.

To that point, the point of severity, I now pass, and pass most unwillingly. There is no man in England or Scotland to whom it could be more distasteful to dwell upon these things than it is to me, but I cannot shirk it. I pass to notice by way of illustration what, in my view, has prolonged this deadly mischief—to one or two of the incidents that have marred this struggle. It will be a happy day when

we can blot out of sight and out of memory these incidents to which I am going to draw your attention for a single moment. I am not going to dwell upon the miserable, the extraordinary, the unutterable meanness of such measures as putting upon half rations the wives and the children of the men who were fighting in the field. I am not going to dwell upon the device of putting upon the engines of military trains civilians who had done no wrong and committed no offence, but whose presence there, it was thought, might prevent the fighting Boers outside from wrecking those trains. This is justified because it is said the fighting Boers are brigands and ruffians and bandits. Well, but I would like to ask you now in Arbroath here to consider whether because somebody else is a bandit and brigand and ruffian it is a very just thing to put me, who am not a bandit, brigand, or ruffian, upon the engine of a train and jeopardise my life. That is one consideration. But there is a second. Suppose the train wrecker to be a brigand and a bandit, I do not believe he will much care if a quiet, respectable man like myself is put upon an engine and driven into those dangerous traps. But, third, who are the men who are put on the trains? They are the men who would not fight on commando. Therefore, the fighting Boers will not care a straw for such men coming to grief by the wrecking of trains. Take these three points into your minds, and, if anybody here is inclined to violence for its own sake, for any exhibition of force, for putting a peaceable and neutral citizen on a train in danger, keep these three points in your minds and say whether you do not think it is rather futile. Then there was the ignoble practice of flogging lads. What heroic exploits!

The Public Executions.

Now I come to another set of incidents. I mean the compulsion upon the neighbours, friends, kinsfolk of men condemned, rightly or wrongly, to capital punishment—the compulsion of these men to hear the sentence upon their friends, kinsmen, and neighbours read, and then afterwards to go and see the ghastly sentence carried out. I do not believe such a proceeding as that has been adopted by any civilised community or Government for many a long generation. Think what it is that these men are called upon—some fellow-prisoners from their cells, others from their homes in the town—they are called upon to go out in the morning and actually to behold as a deterrent what, I think, must be one of the most dreadful spectacles which can wring the heart of a man—to see his friend and his neighbour and his kinsman launched with violence and ignominy into the hangman's pit. We read of these things, and in the papers that report them it is said, "From all that can be gathered there is no doubt that the execution impressed the beholders to an extent which will never be forgotten." No! It never will be forgotten. The things that were done in the new Ireland that you are building up in South Africa are more like what was done in the old Ireland on the repression of the rebellion of 1798. Some of you ask me if the Government abhor all this. I do

not doubt they abhor it. Why even some of our Liberal friends who do not see these transactions as we do, even they admit that such proceedings are not so dignified as they ought to be. Gentlemen, I will not argue about the dignity of it. I want you to see the foolishness of what I will not hesitate to call this infernal atrocity. In this country, certainly in my part of the island, public executions have been abandoned. Why? Amongst other reasons because it was felt they were not deterrent. Well if they are not deterrent here why do you suppose they will be deterrent out in South Africa? All war kindles hateful passions. All civil war heats the furnace hotter still. But civil war, with an ingredient of race feud, race jealousy, race animosity, makes the cauldron boil and seethe at its fiercest. My charge is that all this odious severity has aggravated the essential mischief of the situation, and that for days, and years, and generations beyond the knowledge of any of us here, these transactions will not be forgotten. Would they be forgotten in Scotland? (Cries of "No" and cheers.)

The Concentration Camps.

One more of these incidents, in many ways the most distressing, the most shocking, the most poignant of all the circumstances of a horrible situation, I now come to—I mean the concentration camps. I am not going to carry you through all the controversy of vital statistics, as to whether it is fair to take the death rate for a month and calculate what the death rate for a year would be; whether it is fair to compare such a figure with the average death rate of children in Arbroath, or in Pretoria, or anywhere else. The fact remains that, with reference to these concentration camps, the death rate among children, measure it as you like, is excessive, is hideous, is appalling. When they tell us that we went into this war, as an eminent man did the other day—that we went into this war with a good conscience and clean hands—what sort of hands shall we come out of it with? Will our conscience be so easy, our hands so clean then? It is horrible. Now, I will beg you to notice this—that the concentration camps in which the women and children are placed are directly connected with that evil policy of devastation and farm-burning and general havoc to which I think I was the first, certainly one of the first, to call public attention, and which has been—this policy of devastation of which the concentration camps are an incident—one of the mistakes of this war, and mistakes are admitted even by those who are in favour of it. I think it has been one of the worst mistakes of all.

The Mistaken Policy of Devastation.

Just look at it. We burn the farms. Why? To prevent the Boers from getting food, and then, having burned the farms, the women and children were on our hands. The policy of devastation carried with it, as I think you will all understand without further description from me—carried with it the policy of concentration. The women and children were on our hands. That was one result—and a hideous and ghastly result it has proved. But look at the policy of

devastation a little more widely. I want you to measure the common sense of these things. Do not let them call me sentimentalist. I want you to consider from the point of common sense this policy of laying waste and concentration. We relieved the Boer, the fighting Boer, of all responsibility for his wife and his children; secondly, we destroyed the chances of the fighting Boer giving up his commando and returning home, because we left him no home to return to. We quite forgot—our object being to prevent the Boers from getting food—the natives in enormous numbers, who remained and who grew grain, of which the fighting Boer has had ample benefit. The Boer has not wanted food. You have not cut off the supplies of the Boers. The whole policy of devastation has been, and is admitted really by those who are more impartial judges, if you like, than I am, to have been a mistake. It missed fire in its special object and it has done more than anything else to embitter and exasperate the quarrel and to make the chances of peace more remote, and I will say, too, if that matters, to burden the conscience of the people of this country with a heavy and terrible load.

Foreign Precedents.

And now the Government tell us an extraordinary thing. They say we have done nothing, and we shall not do anything, for which a precedent cannot be found. Where? Why, by Russia in Poland or the Caucasus, by Austria in Bosnia, and so on. Was there ever such a sinister parallel drawn in the history of this country? We had a great and high-spirited British Minister once, with whom plenty of fault may be found, I daresay—Lord Palmerston. I wonder what Lord Palmerston would have said of a British Government that justified its proceedings by the fact that Russia in Poland and Austria in Bosnia had done something of the same kind, or, perhaps, even worse. I ask myself sometimes whether Englishmen and Scotchmen are the same as they were in these days. Why, I am old enough to recollect an Austrian general who was severely assaulted and maltreated by some London draymen. Why? Because he was believed—I think that is the story—to have flogged the women of Hungarian insurgents. It is an old story now, but I never felt very sorry that the draymen broke the law against assault. But what have we come to when these are the precedents that are held up to you in order to induce you to acquiesce in the harsh and futile proceedings of which I have been speaking. Let us look at the effect of severity as a deterrent. What has the effect been? The more farms you burn, the more fierce has been the resistance. The more lands you laid waste, the more lads you flogged, the more rebels you hanged under what is called martial law, the larger the area to which martial law has had to be extended. Why, it was only the other day, when the Lord Chancellor himself claimed that the war was over, though there was still a “sort of war” going on—it was then, when this judicial opinion was delivered, that martial law was extended into Cape Town, because the state of things had become too dangerous to be dealt with by the ordinary law.

Proclamations and Martial Law.

I shall not weary you by going through the farrago of proclamations with which South Africa has been littered—proclamations, some of them ridiculous, some of them unlawful, all of them futile. There is the last famous proclamation of September 15th, its threatened banishment, and demands for the maintenance of wives and children. That proclamation, perhaps the most ridiculous of them all, has proved as futile as the others. Sir William Harcourt, on the very moment when that proclamation was brought under the notice of the House of Commons, at once put his hand upon it and said, "These men whom you propose to banish have as much of the rights of legitimate combatants, though you may call it a guerilla warfare if you like, as if they were the biggest battalions that you can put into the field." Gentlemen, you have read in the papers of the setting up of drumhead Courts, soldiers' jurisdiction, of military tribunals, of martial law in parts of the colony which before were perfectly peaceful. I hope you will first let me for one moment read to you a short extract as to what martial law is, and what its limits are. In a case of this kind—and I really do not apologise to you for reading it, because, in a controversy of this kind, it is all important that we should all of us know as closely and as accurately as we can exactly what is the law as to which we are talking. You know the newspapers—I would not on any account speak disrespectfully of them—but they have this advantage, that they are their own jury and their own witnesses. A newspaper is judge, jury, witness, and counsel, all in one. You admit that gives them a considerable advantage in any issue that is submitted to this country.

What Martial Law really is.

Now these are lawyers' opinions; the opinions of Campbell, afterwards a Chief Justice, and Rolfe, afterwards a Lord Chancellor. They were the law officers of the Crown in 1838, and this is their opinion to the Government of the day, as to the power of the Governor of Canada to proclaim martial law. I beg of you to take note:—"The right of resorting to such an extremity as martial law is a right arising from and limited by the necessity of the case. For this reason we are of opinion that the prerogative of the Crown does not extend beyond the case of persons taken in open resistance, and with whom by reason of the suspension of ordinary tribunals it is impossible to deal in the regular Courts of Justice. When regular Courts are open so that criminals might be delivered to them to be dealt with according to law, there is not, as we conceive, any right in the Crown to adopt any other course of proceeding. Such power can only be conferred by the Legislature, as was done by the Acts passed in consequence of the Irish rebellion of 1798 and 1803 and also of the Irish Coercion Act of 1833." There are agreeable and edifying precedents for you. That is what the law officers of that day said, and they added this:—"It is hardly necessary for us to add that in our view of the case martial law can never be enforced for the ordinary purposes of civil or even criminal justice, except in the latter, so far as the necessity arising

from actual resistance compels its adoption." Gentlemen, if you do me the honour to read these words to-morrow morning or at any later date, recollect that this was an opinion given by two law officers of the highest authority upon the Proclamation issued by the Governor of Canada, which in essential was entirely analagous to proclamations of martial law and proceedings under martial law of which we hear so much to-day and of which we are likely to hear much more in days to come. Whatever may be said of the other difficulties of the situation in South Africa, however complex other difficulties may be, at all events we should insist that a civil administration of justice shall be set up in the Cape Colony so that these offences shall be dealt with according to this legal opinion, and in other legal respects shall be dealt with on the ordinary principle of civil Courts and civil administrations, and that the law of the sword shall cease.

The Future.

Now, gentlemen, look to the future. We have looked back over two years past. What sort of two years are there ahead? On what is any settlement of this destroyed country in South Africa to be founded? It is very plain that from every word used by responsible persons it is to be founded upon the principle of ascendancy. Show me if you can a sign or symptom of a design within any reasonable or measurable distance of time to treat the two races equally. Do not you perceive—I shall be disappointed if you do not—that the war has now completely changed its character? It was originally a war for the defence of the civil rights of certain of our countrymen in the Transvaal dominions. Well, that was the first war. Do those of you—if there are any in this hall—who approve of this war as a proper war for securing civil rights—do you go further to-day, and say you approve of a war for asserting the mastery of one race over another? Yet that is the language used by more than one Cabinet Minister. But now suppose I put the third aspect of the matter to you. Suppose you approve of the war for the civil rights of the Uitlanders in the Transvaal; suppose you approve of the war for breaking and pulverising the Boer power—do you approve of the third kind of war which is now approaching, a war which I can only describe as a war of extermination?

A War of Extermination.

It may horrify you to hear such a word, but just as you drifted into the first war, and then drifted into the second war, so this second war is drifting and degenerating into nothing less than a war of extermination. It is degenerating into a war for the extermination of the Boers in the Orange Free State, though it may have been a war that we went into with a good conscience and clean hands. (*A voice* : "In self-defence.") That may be true, if my friend likes, although I am quite willing to have an evening with him on that point. Granted that you went into the first war for reasons of self-defence, are you now prepared to justify the war which is, as I tell you, drifting and degenerating into a war for the extermination of these people?

That is the point. (*A voice*: "If necessary.") Ah! if necessary. Exterminate if necessary! That is what it has come to! Who are these men? I will tell you, not in my own words, but in the words of a person of far greater authority. These are the words describing these men the other night at Edinburgh:—"We are ready to pay some meed of admiration to the brave men—for brave men they are—who have against such odds, with a tenacity and courage that are worthy of their race and their history, maintained their resistance against our overwhelming forces." Those are the words of the Colonial Secretary, and yet there is a gentleman in the hall of Arbroath here who says that these men, described in that language of the Colonial Secretary himself, are to be exterminated "if necessary." I do not believe that my good friend voted for me at the last election. I am afraid not. To him, and to anybody who justifies extermination of a people fighting for their own land, I say plainly that any such purpose, and any such result, is a monstrous iniquity—I would not like to try it on in Scotland. Suppose that you had got into a war with England, and that we had come down and laid your lands waste, and fastened up your women and children into concentration camps, and hung men whom we called rebels and flogged lads, and then said, "Now, we mean to have you down on your knees—unconditional surrender and unconditional submission. If you do not agree we will exterminate you." If I know anything about Scotland you would say, "Exterminate us if you can."

Confiscation and Wholesale Execution.

I was glad to notice that at present all the demands, made almost unabashed, for wholesale confiscation and wholesale execution do not recommend themselves to the King's Government as either likely to conduce to the termination of the war or to a satisfactory peace at the end of it. I am glad of that, but I confess—and I say this with the utmost sincerity and gravity—that I was sorry to see qualified words introduced at Edinburgh that his Majesty's Government is not convinced "up to the present time" that the policy of wholesale confiscation and wholesale execution will be a prudent or a justifiable policy. Only up to the present time! I do hope, at all events, that that grim idea will never be justified by any responsible statesman in the King's employment. Although I cannot believe—I will not believe—that responsible statesmen will enter upon any such course, I would like to read you a paragraph from an article in a highly responsible and serious journal upon this point of killing them out, which is extermination. Here is the paragraph written by a man of great repute and seriousness, and published in a serious journal. Also this is the City point of view:—

"The prolongation of the resistance is involving the permanent removal of the most bitter of our opponents from large districts of the Transvaal and Orange Free State, as it is quite impossible that many of the prisoners with their families can ever return. Their property is gone; they are incapable of industry, and there is nothing to justify their being restored to their country. All this," says our cold-blooded observer, "makes for peace in the

Transvaal and Orange Free State in future. Then industrious inhabitants may settle in peace all the more easily that the restless elements are eliminated."

You are going to eliminate and banish the men who have fought for their independence; whom are you going to keep? You are going to keep the mine-owners; you are going to keep all those gentlemen who justified Mr. Lecky, the Unionist, in saying that the trail of finance is over it all. Just bear with me another minute. Here is the explanation of the extermination policy. "Unless," says one of the Lords of the Admiralty, speaking the other day at Belfast, "unless at the close of the war we do something to settle under favourable conditions Anglo-Saxon men and women with Anglo-Saxon sympathies we shall have fought this war in vain." Do you take that point? We shall have fought this war in vain unless we turn out the old inhabitants, the old owners of the soil, and put in under favourable conditions Anglo-Saxon men and women with Anglo-Saxon sympathies. Gentlemen, that is a very ghastly and, I will say, a very hideous prospect. I have had to travel over a very long piece of road, and I hope I have made my various points tolerably clear to you.

The Policy of Unconditional Surrender.

Let me add this, that the policy of unconditional surrender, of unconditional submission, which is the present policy of the Government, means there—remember the passage I read to you from the prisoners at Ahmednagar—just what it would mean here. It means the policy of extermination and annihilation. That is their prescription, the only prescription that they have to offer now. A most important and respectable member of the Government, speaking the other day, said that the only prescription they have to offer to this country is in fact a double, treble, quadruple dose of that fierce drug of violence and force—that has been futile during the last two years, and has in fact done most of the mischief. The prescription is simply more severity. Looking back over the picture that I have sketched to you, do you think severity has been a success? No; well, what is the present attitude of the Government? I can only call it an attitude of sullen desperation. They are just as much drifting to-day in view of the enormous and complex and entangled problems that the restoration of peace will present to them—they are drifting just as much as they drifted two years ago. No doubt they use high language, and the people of this island will never fail in spirit, in fortitude, in tenacity, and in energy. We all know that perfectly well. Whatever view we take of this war, we know that this country is a country of martial heart and of unbounded fortitude, but when I look at their present leaders and advisers I cannot but recall the old saying that "There is nothing so dangerous as mettle in a blind horse."

What are our Ends now?

Let us ask ourselves what are our ends now after our experience, knowing, as we did not know two years ago, the enormous difficulties of the question. What are the ends we are now about to seek? I

have never concealed my view that the moment the sword was drawn we should then inevitably find placed upon our shoulders what a Minister of the day two years ago called the "unmitigated misfortune of taking over these two States." I have never changed, and I do not change now. That being admitted, what are our ends? What is the road along which we have to travel to gain, not only the momentary arrest of military operations, but a reconstruction of a new society in place of that society we have destroyed,—yes, to our shame have destroyed. Are these ends of ours, held by nearly all of us, in any degree apprehended by our enemy. If they believed that the negotiators were negotiators in good faith, is it not possible that practicable terms might be found within reach?

The Problem for Statesmanship.

I know the difficulties well. It may be that events will give no favourable answer to that view. But in sight of a year or two years in front of us, with dilapidated finances, with severe military pressure, with weakened diplomacy in Europe, surely it is worth while to make any attempt, consistently with the maintenance of the ends which we have in view—surely it is desirable not to sit with folded arms and say we leave it all to the soldiers. To leave it to the soldiers is to show that you are bankrupt as statesmen. I do not believe in that. I do not believe that the leading men in this island are so devoid of resource, so stubborn, so narrow, seeing the problem before us in so constricted a way as to have no further resource. If Ministers do not possess it, then I think the King will be compelled by the public opinion of the country and of parliament at no very inordinate distance of time to seek for other Ministers with clearer insight into facts, and with a more pliant mind in face of one of the most dangerous and complex situations that has ever confronted the statesmen of this island.

2.—FORFAR (*November 4th, 1901*).

MR. MORLEY, *who was very cordially received, said* :—Mr. Provost, Ladies, and Gentlemen, I hear with sincere regret that this is the last time upon which you, Mr. Provost, are likely to take the chair at our great gatherings in Forfar. I can truly say that during the six years that our connection has lasted, my friendship, let me say, has deepened and strengthened. The Provost has referred to the circumstances under which you did me the great honour of returning me in my absence at the last general election. That is an old story now, but depend upon it, that it will never cease to be a fresh and new story in my grateful recollection.

The Royal Colonial Tour.

I think we may well begin to-night a little outside of ordinary politics by expressing our gratification at the return of the son and the daughter-in-law of the King and Queen from a very memorable journey. This journey is undoubtedly one of the most striking that has ever been undertaken by a British Prince. They have travelled over many

thousands and tens of thousands of miles into more than one of the zones into which the globe is divided, over the waters of the Atlantic and of the Pacific; they have had passing before them, as in a vision of some glorious pageant, many a strange landscape, a long chain of military posts and stations, many diverse races of the family of man, many diverse forms of political institutions, and diverse shades of creed and faith—all bound together into a vast confederacy and aggregate of whose unity the crown of this realm is the symbol and the throne the formal link. I am sure I may undertake to say for you, as for everybody else in this part of the island, that we rejoice at the prosperous close of this great journey. This morning, when I was reading its particulars, the famous lines of Milton came into my mind in which he describes the pageantry of the streets and ways of ancient Rome:—

What conflux issuing forth, or ent'ring in,
 Praetors, proconsuls, to their provinces
 Hast'ning, or on return, in robes of state;
 Lictors and rods, the ensigns of their power,
 Legions and cohorts, turms of horse and wings;
 Or embassies from regions far remote,
 In various habits, on the Appian Road. . . .
 From the Asian kings and Parthian
 Dusk faces with white silken turbans wreathed;

Such was Milton's description of great and glorious Rome—"Queen of the Earth," as he called her.

Great Britain's Sway.

The sway of this island, both the northern part of it, to which you belong, and the southern part, where I live—the sway of this island is greater and more glorious than ever was ancient Rome. Our sway rests not on pride of the sword, though the sword cannot be laid aside—it rests upon industry and the arts of peace. It springs not from the pride of a dominating race, though race counts. It is rather the protection of the claims of nationality and tradition, alien as they may sometimes seem, recognising the sentiment of nationality as one of the most honourable and noblest parts of human nature. Finally, the rule of the realm to which we love to think that we belong, claims to rest on strict adherence to the rules and principles of justice, equity, good faith, honour, and the grand truth of which Mr. Gladstone said, "Self-government is the great aim of rational politics."

A Burden of High Responsibility.

Now think, gentlemen, what a burden of high responsibility does citizenship in such a Commonwealth as I have described to you impose upon you and all who possess the citizenship. It is the very magnitude, it is beneficence of this inheritance of ours, that ought to nerve us to resist the mad outcries of the hour, and to return to those maxims of sanity and of caution which have built up the mighty fabric; and, though you may think sanity and caution no very heroic or high-sounding virtues, they are virtues for which this part of the island has been pretty conspicuous. They are virtues to which I have no doubt

that this part of the island, though for a moment in what I may be allowed to call rather a bad condition politically, if I can read the signs of the times aright, is pretty rapidly returning. They tell me that those who hold the opinions upon contemporary events which I hold are blind to the change of the circumstances in which the Empire finds itself placed. They say to me, Do you not see the armaments of foreign Powers, how huge, how threatening? The colonies, which not so long ago no foreign Power grudged to us, and on which we ourselves did not set so high a value as we rightly do to-day, are now the objects of the envy and covetousness of the world. Our trade and commerce are exposed to new rivalries and hotter competition. Our legitimate and indispensable power at sea now faces revolutionised conditions. I for one am blind to none of all these changes in the circumstances of the world, all these changes in the position of this country in relation to the Powers of the world.

The Mailed Right Arm and Understanding Mind.

But I beg you to mark this. It is exactly these changes in our circumstances—the growth of forces outside, of new aims in foreign Powers—it is exactly this change that constitutes the peril of the policy of expansion and militarism, and it is because of this change that I preach, as more needed than ever, the gospel of sanity and caution. It is exactly those changes, bringing us, as they do, into a thousand points of contact with complex possibilities and interests all over the world, that demand more loudly and more imperatively than ever before that kind of statemanship which is always surveying a situation as a whole; which, in trying to put one set of difficulties right, takes care not to put other and more serious things wrong; which regards proportion; which does not deal with the present alone, but cultivates and practises the prudence that looks into the future. When they taunt those who think as I do, and I hope as you think—when they taunt us with belittling our country, it isn't so, and for that matter they know it isn't so—they know that we exult as they do in the strength and resources of our country. But mark this. The mailed right arm will avail little if it is not guided by the understanding mind.

South Africa.

Well, our opponents—if we have any in these burghs—will say, "Who are you that you should talk of the understanding mind?" A friend read to me a paragraph from a leading article in a Scottish newspaper the other day upon some observations that I had made at Arbroath. The writer wound up by the pious reflection, "Ah, this speech shows what a mercy and a blessing it is that Mr. Morley does not share in the conduct of our national affairs." "Well," I said to my friend, "I defy Mr. Morley or anybody else to have involved our national affairs in more flagrant confusion than the state in which they are to-day." You know the trodden worm turns, and I could not but comfort myself by remembering that in Arbroath I had two years ago said, "You must"—I am now on South Africa—"you must so conduct your negotiations before the war as to carry with you the friendly judg-

ment of the Dutch population in the various communities that make up the great province of South Africa." Was not that right? That was on September 5th, 1899. On September 21st the Government of the Cape Colony wrote this to the British Agent:—"It is not open to doubt that the issue of the war could only be a victory for the Imperial arms, but the evil consequences of the perhaps prolonged struggle would be far-reaching and abiding for generations, and would affect alike the European and the native populations of South Africa." That was what the Cape Ministers said. That was the feeling and the judgment to which, as I had said a fortnight before, it was the bounden duty of the Queen's Government to give full weight and force. This advice of the men who knew all the complex situations and factors of the South African problem was despised with presumption and contumely. Their expectations were neglected. The struggle, as they said, and as we see in the mournful and terrible events that come before us day by day—the struggle has, indeed, been a prolonged one. We know it—we know it as we hear the singing of the bullets, as we read of the end of the savage and bloody onslaught in the field, as we think of the silent anguish in many a stricken and desolated home. It has been a prolonged struggle. The result of neglect of counsel is written in letters of blood. The consequences will, as these men warned our Government—the consequences will abide for generations. We can see it, we know it. It will be a burden on statesmanship and on our resources for generations to come. I ask you to think of these things. Have we not the right to ask who were the better friends of the Empire, who showed more of the Imperial instinct—those who two years ago warned the Government that patience—patience in the negotiations before the sword was drawn, was the quality required, or those who now to-day invite your patience, invite your patience as the ship of our great State is drifting slowly and heavily through dark and unsounded channels? Talk of the danger to the Empire! I will tell you another danger to the Empire—perhaps some present may not like what I say.

A Real Danger to the Commonwealth.

Another danger to the Empire—what I prefer to call the British Commonwealth—is the heady, violent, heedless temper of a not inconsiderable portion of our population, the very temper to which the Government appealed at that election to which the Provost has just referred. I don't believe that a more nefarious thing has often been done in our history than that appeal to this rash and heady temper. This country, for the very reasons I began by calling your attention to—this country more than any other country in the world, because of the complexity of its interests, the intricacy of its situation—this country more than any other, requires that those who have its destinies in their hands, shall not be heady, violent, reckless and heedless, but sane and circumspect.

The National Expenditure.

I want to turn to another aspect of the case. Last August the Prime Minister, of whom I think I have never spoken, to the best of

my knowledge and belief, in any language but that of respect, spoke in the House of Lords of "one of the greatest of all the dangers which can threaten this country." What was "one of the greatest of all the dangers which can threaten this country?" I will tell you. It is the stream of national expenditure. Lord Salisbury spoke of the absolute necessity of arresting and resisting the stream of national expenditure with as much fervour, as much earnestness, as Mr. Gladstone could have spoken. This remark was called from Lord Salisbury during a speech made on that occasion in the House of Lords, in July last, by a man of the widest and deepest experience (*Lord Welby*) in the financial affairs of the country, who has served the Governments of both parties, and I invite your attention to this. The figure of speech by which this financial expert introduced his very remarkable speech to the House of Lords was this. He said: "Sometimes you see when you come to the top of a steep hill the inscription, 'Dangerous to cyclists.'" Then he went on to say—"We have been bowling along for the last forty years or more, along a swift and a level road, in the matter of taxation, and I think now," he said, "we have come to the top of the hill, where we ought to inscribe the words 'Dangerous to taxpayers.'" I am not going in a great meeting of this kind to inflict large numbers of figures upon you, but as I dare say you have found out in your private lives and private circumstances, figures are not entirely to be neglected in the matter of housekeeping. No more are they to be neglected in the matter of national housekeeping, and here are a few figures for you.

The Road to Financial Ruin.

The latest accounts are reproduced in the *Economist* newspaper of last week. Don't be wearied by them, don't be bored by them. We are now going, I won't say to the root of the matter, because, of course, national existence is the first thing, self-preservation is the first law. But don't forget figures. The ordinary expenditure, exclusive of all war charges, has gone up in the ten years since 1890 from $82\frac{3}{4}$ millions—I only give you round numbers—to $110\frac{1}{2}$ millions in 1901. That is to say, there has been an increase in ten years of 28 millions, and, if you make certain rectifications in the account, allowing for the suspension of the Sinking Fund, the true figure of the increase is not 28 millions, but is 32 millions. Let us look especially at the increase since the present Government became responsible for expenditure. Of that 32 millions, the increase which I have named to you, 26 millions—in ordinary expenditure, mind you, not war—is an increase within the last six years. One more figure, and then I will release you from that part of the case. The tax revenue this year is nearly 50 per cent. higher than it was ten years ago, simply to meet the ordinary demands of the public services. Why, gentlemen, there is not a single man on either side of the House of Commons who does not know, and indeed who does not say, that this increase marks a profound national danger. The very able man who presides over the national Exchequer at this moment—Sir Michael Hicks-Beach—told us more than once in the last session of Parliament that our course

must end in something very like the financial ruin of the country. Lord Salisbury himself, as I have told you, calls this one of the greatest of all of your national dangers, and my friend and comrade, Sir William Harcourt, to whom the finances of this country owe so large a debt, has always used the same language. Then I must say that Sir William Harcourt, unlike Sir Michael Hicks-Beach and Lord Salisbury, has made himself the advocate of a policy which would not involve the country in this increase, which is due to wrong ideals of national greatness, and a wrong measure of the sources of national prosperity.

Lord Salisbury's Fatalism.

Lord Salisbury made a sort of an apology. He said on this occasion that we were dealing in finance with a very difficult and awkward element—the element of public opinion—“We are in presence of forces far larger than any that we can wield or that we can influence.” That may be. Public opinion may be misguided, the forces may be formidable, but let us try, at all events, to influence public opinion, let us try to get at those forces of national judgment that leads to this national danger. I am trying to-night to call your attention, and, if I may say, the attention of others in Scotland to this national danger. If this country remains in its present mood of financial indifference, of financial slackness, depend upon it—if there is any relation whatever between cause and effect—it is beyond all question of dispute that this high-running tide of militarism and spurious Imperialism must end in financial disaster.

Taxation and Trade.

You only need to suppose bad trade—which I hope with all my heart will not arrive—but you only need suppose bad trade for two or three years, and a falling off in the revenue. What fresh taxes can be imposed to meet the deficit? Two or three years of falling trade, a declining revenue—what taxes can you impose to meet the deficit? I beg of you to think of this. We are talking to-night of the Empire. Everybody knows that one of the sources of strength and power, and confidence in our strength and power, is the certainty that we could raise even the gigantic sums necessary for a great war without seriously feeling the burden of taxation required to pay the interest. That was one of the sources of our strength compared with the position of one of the great Continental Powers—this was one of the elements of the conviction here and abroad of the immense and deep-seated strength of the people of this island. Gentlemen, this vantage ground will be impaired, and there will be no margin out of which the interest on a great debt for a great war could be met. I do not want to use any exaggerated language. I do not for a moment say that the nation is bleeding to death. I do say that we are on the wrong track, that we have got ideas in our heads that will lead to grave embarrassment and widespread ruin. Mere territorial expansions, mere acquisition of barren territory in Africa or anywhere else is not Empire-making. That is not strengthening the Empire. The estrangement of the goodwill of

the world—which is admitted by the King's present Ministers—does not strengthen the Empire, but weakens it.

Our Commercial Supremacy.

It is years since Mr. Gladstone put his finger upon what everybody now admits to be the weak place in our commercial supremacy, in which you of Forfar and our other burghs are so concerned, and what was it? Everybody knows it now. It was the prospect of the inevitable growth of American production, and the appearance of America in the open markets in the world. Well, what was the moral he drew from it, and what is the moral I want respectfully to draw from it? He went straight to the point of national duty—"We ought to make preparation for this state of things in the future, and the way to do it is by using moderate and reasonable efforts to rid ourselves of our encumbrances in the shape of national debt, as those who are to come after us may have to encounter difficulties of which we have no practical knowledge; we ought not to hand down to them any more difficulties which it is in our power to alleviate." Ah, gentlemen, there were statesmen then to whom the maintenance of our great national inheritance was more than a phrase—the statesmanship that looked to the future, that looked all round, that did not lose itself among the vain mists and vapours of national vainglory and spurious aggrandisement. What have we done? We have flung away the savings of years and years, and more than that, and worse than that, we have committed ourselves to a position in South Africa where it will be impossible to reduce debt for years and years to come.

The Irish Question.

Many things I should wish to have been able to talk to you about. I should have liked to talk about Ireland. We were told the other day that the demeanour of the Irish, in face of the circumstances in which we find ourselves, proves that Home Rule, if it had been granted by Great Britain, would have been an unmixed misfortune. (*Hear, hear, and laughter.*) Well, my friend thinks so—I don't. The language that is used about the military mishaps that befall us is certainly as detestable to me as it is to any man in this island. But when it is said that men used language of hostility to the policy of this country, when this country has refused them a boon which for generations they have been asking—I say that if the boon had been granted to them, their language might, and, as I believe, would have been entirely different. In any case, from that point of view, our position in respect of the difficulties by which we are now confronted—our difficulties would have been eased, and not aggravated, by the possession of self-government in Ireland, which would have brought along with it responsibility and the sense of responsibility. When men are not responsible for the government of their own country, when they are deprived of it, when it is refused to them—I will not judge them—I will not judge them as I would the people of Scotland or the people of England. Now, I saw the other day it was laid down that the Liberal party ought not to think ever again of resuming office, dependent

for their Parliamentary majority upon the Irish vote. Well, I read all declarations of that kind—I hope I am not cynical—I read them with great composure and with a very moderate amount of interest. We will see, you and I will see, what happens when the Irish vote in the House of Parliament will make all the difference. It is wrongly said that this maxim, that the Liberals should not take office without a majority independent of Ireland, was what Mr. Gladstone said. It is not what he said. He said nothing of the kind. He said he hoped that when the Irish demands came up for settlement there would be a majority independent of the Irish contribution to that majority. I thought it was—I think now, I believe he thought, that was a very mistaken declaration, because it contained a false principle in it, just as this new declaration contains a false principle in it, namely, that you are going to rule out the Parliamentary representatives of Ireland when you come to consider questions in which Ireland is more intimately or as intimately concerned as any other portion of the realm. I only make that remark as I pass, so that you may not suppose that your representative, at all events, whatever others may do, rules out the Irish vote from its constitutional position in the British House of Commons.

The Irish Representation.

One other remark. It is understood that by and by there will be an attempt to reduce the number of Irish members in the House of Commons. Well, a great many arguments, good and bad, will be used in that controversy. There is an argument that by the Act of Union the Irish representation was settled, and as the Act of Union was a treaty, that number should remain fixed. For myself, I do not regard that as decisive. But if you are not going to consider the Irish vote, if further, you are going to reduce their numbers, and if you are going to leave—mark this if you please—you are going to leave the laws affecting Ireland to be settled in the last issue by the House of Lords in which not one single direct representative of the national majority of Ireland has a seat or a vote—if you are to do that, you are going to reduce the constitutional Government of Ireland to a farce. There is plenty more to be said about Ireland. To-night I have done no more than drop one or two hints of my own view of the present Irish situation.

The Terms to the Boers.

Now I come back to South Africa. The Chancellor of the Exchequer said the other day, "We have offered the inhabitants of the Transvaal and the Orange River Colony greater liberties than are enjoyed by the subjects of any European State—we have offered them the position which has made the French Canadians loyal and devoted subjects of the Crown; we have offered them the position of self-governing colonies of the British Empire." That was a very straightforward declaration, such as we should expect from the author of it. Upon that, the other day, at Stirling, the leader of the Opposition—who is one of your countrymen—and who is courageously fighting a pretty difficult battle, asked: "I want to know when, where, and

under what circumstances was this offer of self-government, such as Australia or Canada has—when was that really made to the Boers?” There is no answer. There have, no doubt, been vague and shadowy phrases in speeches, but I declare, though I follow South African affairs closely and studiously, I declare that I can recall nothing approaching to clear or definite terms which the Boers can be expected to understand. One story was, there was to be set up in those two new dominions of the King an Advisory Council, but then some other Minister said, “No, not an Advisory Council, but a Representative Council.” Well, which is it? There is no coherence in the language used by Ministers, and if we here—if you and I—cannot tell to-night what I would call the high-water mark of the proposals shadowed forth by the Government, how can you expect the Boers, amid all the strife and confusion that is raging round them, to have got any clear idea of what is proposed to them. In June last the Government were asked whether they were not prepared to discuss with the Boers the question of granting to the Orange River Colony and the Transvaal such independence as is possessed by Canada and Australia, and the answer of the Government to that question was, “Certainly not at the present time.” That may be right or it might be wrong, but let us see where we are. Whether the Government having, in the face of the House of Commons, declined to discuss terms, are now prepared to do what Sir Michael Hicks-Beach declares they have done—how can we tell where the thing really stands?

How it Must Appear to the Boers.

Now put yourselves in the position of the Boer in this matter. He reads that they are to have the position of Canada or Australia. Aye, but then he remembers what Lord Salisbury said—they are not to have “a shred of their independence,” not a shred. Nobody in this room will deny that Canada and Australia have a very considerable shred of what they regard as independence. I am not arguing the case, I am only endeavouring to point out the confusion of mind in which the Government leave both the Boers and ourselves. The Boers, I dare say, recollect that the same important man who told them that they should not have a shred of their independence, said this, “They will have self-government, but it may be ages and generations before they are ready for it.” He knows that Cabinet Ministers, though not of the first rank, whilst some are talking of Colonial self-government, others are going about talking of British, but I suspect they say English, mastery, not military mastery, but race supremacy. Now, race supremacy—nobody knows that better than you, or feels it more deeply than you here—race supremacy is intolerable. It is true that some of the Boer leaders have used language which indicates that nothing short of independence will satisfy them.

An Appeal to the Government.

Now, have the Government—and this, gentlemen, this is a serious question—have the Government taken any trouble, serious as the issues are—have they taken trouble to show to the Boer in any definite shape

not in vague phrases in speeches, but in any definite shape, what the difference between what the Boer leaders call independence and what our own Ministers profess themselves willing to grant them. Has any attempt been made to clear up in the mind of the Boer—what that difference between what the Boers call independence and what just and reasonable men call self-government—what that difference really amounts to? I should like to see some efforts made by our Government to press home how narrow is the margin between the independence that they persistently demand and the self-government that we are supposed persistently to offer. It may be that no attempt of this kind will suffice to extinguish the hideous conflagration that is now raging. It is possible. I think I am not over sanguine. It often happens in politics, as in other things, steps have been taken from which no good issue is possible. It may be that the evil passions you wantonly let loose will not readily be chained up again. I know there may be objections to a strenuous advance towards conciliation. Are there no objections to the present course?

The Festering Sore.

It is said, "Oh, any sign of a spirit of conciliation will expose you to being charged with humiliation." Are you not humiliated?—not militarily, but are you not politically humiliated now? Do you think the enemies of Great Britain, who, I am sorry to say, at this moment are not a few, do you think that they do not rejoice at our present situation? I would like to baffle the enemies of Great Britain. It may be, gentlemen, that we are in the position described in the ill-omened but striking simile of Mr. Winston Churchill, which I quoted at Arbroath the other night, and which I quote again, because I believe it really may describe the true situation. It was this—that the wound in South Africa has now become a sluggish, festering sore—not a healthy wound like that of an ordinary war, but a sluggish, festering sore, eating into the flesh, draining away the strength, and stopping the processes of recovery. If that be so—if such a situation as that, a reproduction in a worse and more dangerous form of all the political miseries of our Irish connection—if that is going to reproduce itself in South Africa, gentlemen, it is worth our while to try all means consistent with national honour and national dignity.

For the Sake of the British Commonwealth.

Let us sink our party manœuvres. I do not appeal to you to-night upon abstract principles of conscience, although there is something to be said for conscience even in public affairs—I do not appeal to you upon maxims of humanity, though there is much to be said for maxims of humanity; but I invite you to consider what I have said to-night not in a vague way, but earnestly, vigorously, resolutely, for the sake of the strength, the health, the well-being, the power, and the good fame of the mighty Commonwealth, of which the people of this island are the centre and the heart.