

DR. W. J. LEYDS

KANTOOR.

TRANSVAAL WAR.

Four Speeches Against it

IN

HOUSE OF COMMONS

BY

Mr. WM. REDMOND, M.P.,

TOGETHER WITH

TWO LETTERS FROM DR. LEYDS

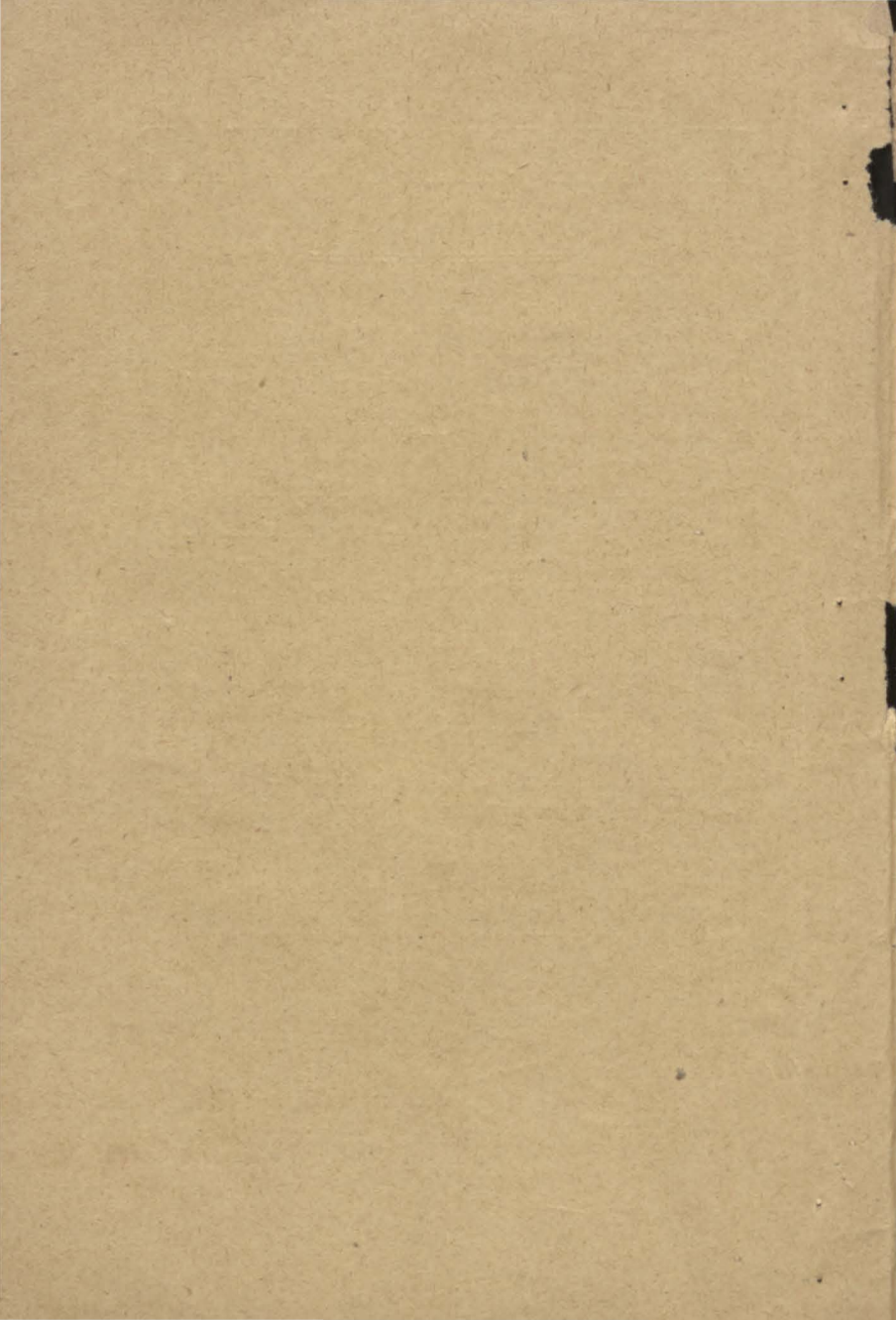
ON

THE CATHOLIC QUESTION.

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THE TRANSVAAL WAR.

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17th October, 1899.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare E.): I desire to say a very few words in support of the Amendment of the hon. Member for East Mayo, and I do so for two or three different reasons. In the first place, I handed in an Amendment of my own on somewhat similar lines, and as that will probably now be ruled out of order, this affords me the only opportunity of saying what I have to say. Again, I consider it would be an extremely cowardly thing upon my part to say one thing in speeches in Ireland, and to refrain from saying the same thing in my place in the House of Commons. I have noticed for some days past references in many of the London newspapers to speeches of mine in Ireland, and all I have to say, in reply to those references, is that I am here in my place in the House of Commons perfectly prepared to bear out, and, if necessary, to repeat every single word of sympathy with the South African Republic and its people which I uttered in Ireland, and which I believe to be shared by an overwhelming majority of the Irish people. I read in one newspaper a statement that it was not consistent for any Member of this House to object to the Vote which is about to be asked for for the prosecution of this war. I

venture to assert that I have as much right, under the constitution by which I am here, to express disapproval of that war as hon. Gentlemen opposite have to express approval of it, and if you are going to call Parliament together to discuss the prospects of this war, and to ask for a Vote of money, and at the same time refuse a hearing to those who disapprove the policy of the Government, then I say the calling together of Parliament at all is simply a farce, and an outrage on the constitution of this country. Why am I on the side, as unquestionably I am, of these two small Republics fighting for their independence? First, because I believe, as conscientiously and sincerely in my heart as hon. Gentlemen opposite hold their beliefs, that this is a fight for liberty and justice on the part of these people, and because I object, as an Irishman, to taking any part, however slight, in defraying the cost of this war, or lending any sanction to it. I know that great enthusiasm exists in England on the subject of the war. I know that the masses of the people cheer the troops when they are seen in the streets, but I also know that the people of this country do not understand what this war means. They have been told it is a war against the burghers of the Transvaal and Orange Free State, who cannot put into the field a force anything like as strong as the British forces which have been dispatched against them. They are told that in a month or two these States will be reduced to submission, and that everything will then be well. Now, I have been to the Cape myself, and I venture to say there is no man who has ever been there who does not know that, in entering on this war, England is not merely undertaking the task of subjugating the burghers of two small Republics, but that she is also entering into antagonism with a people who are to-day a considerable majority of the white inhabitants.

Sir J. MACLURE (Lancashire, Stretford) : No.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND : An hon. Gentleman cries "No," Can anyone who knows the facts deny what I say?

Sir J. MACLURE : I do.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND : The hon. Gentleman, who is so very popular, will, when he wakes up now and again,

deny anything. I repeat that nobody who knows the facts of the case can deny that the majority of the white inhabitants of the whole of South Africa—of Cape Colony and Natal as well—are men of the Dutch race. (“No.”) Well, at any rate you have a Dutch Ministry at the Cape of Good Hope, and your Prime Minister there is Mr. Schreiner, a Dutchman. I repeat that, in entering upon this war, you are bound to create feelings of antagonism against your rule and against your Empire in the breasts of the majority of the white men there. You may be told that they will not interfere actively in support of these small Republics, but, after all, blood is thicker than water, and feelings of resentment and indignation are bound to be roused among the Dutch all over South Africa when they see a huge Army Corps of the first military power in the world launched against a mere handful of their own countrymen, with a view to driving them into subjugation. I say here, speaking with some knowledge of the inhabitants of the Cape, that if this war is prosecuted, and if you beat the Transvaal and the Free State, if you kill every man in them capable of bearing arms against you, you will not be able, as long as Members of this House live probably, to withdraw your Army Corps from South Africa; it will have to remain there in order to keep in subjugation the men of the Dutch race, who are disaffected against you. And I would add that this is a poor return for the generous and loyal treatment accorded to you by the Cape Parliament, which is composed mostly of Dutchmen, in granting you a subsidy for your navy. Much has been said as to the grievances of the Uitlanders, but I defy anyone to prove that, outside the question of the franchise, these men have suffered any serious or real outrage or disability. A great deal was made some time ago of the killing of an Uitlander by a policeman at Johannesburg, and the indignation of the country was aroused; but the real grievances of the Uitlanders can be counted on the fingers of both hands. It is complained that they are denied the right to vote. It is true that some time ago the number of years a man must reside there before he could vote was fourteen, but that term was reduced some years ago to seven, and Her Majesty’s Government asked for five. After

some delay this was agreed to, with conditions, and I assert that this coming war is to be waged because of a difference between five years and seven. In this country you compel a foreigner to live six years before you give him the franchise and a vote, and because the Boers will not allow five years you are going to war. Who are the Uitlanders? No one in this House more condemned the Jameson Raid than I did. It was an unwarranted and criminal proceeding, but after all there was a certain amount of pluck about it. Jameson and his few untrained men were given to understand that the Uitlanders of Johannesburg would meet them—they outnumbered the Boers five to one—and enforce reforms. At this time the Uitlanders were fully armed, and at this time Johannesburg was unfortified by the Boers. Jameson, on the faith of the promise of these valiant Uitlanders, marched in with his men, and what happened? Not a single one of the Uitlanders went out to meet him; they went and hid themselves and allowed Jameson and his men to be seized by the Boers and brought to Johannesburg and cast into prison. They are a brave people, truly. I have heard of people with grievances, but never before have I known of men with arms in their hands who would not fight to remedy their grievances. I should like to hear what Jameson has to say of those who sent for "Dr. Jim," and did not lend a hand to help him.

Sir ELLIS ASHMEAD-BARTLETT (Sheffield, Ecclesall): They only had 2,000 rifles among them.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND: But even so omnipotent a general as the right hon. Gentleman must be aware that something may be done by men who know that others are on the road to help them, though they only have 2,000 rifles among them. These are the men for whom you are going to vote eight millions to-morrow—and who can say it will not be fifty millions before we have finished?—whilst in this country there are thousands of people in the direst poverty, but you have not a million to help them, not a farthing, but you may spend fifty millions in subjugating a people who never injured England. What is the history of the Boers? Some people imagine that the whole world originally belonged

to England, and no doubt, in a fit and proper state of things, if everything had been properly ordained, that would have been the case; but we must not forget that the forefathers of these men now behind their guns were the original colonisers of South Africa. They it was who first brought white men to the Cape of Good Hope. From time to time you have hunted them out, but it was theirs before an English foot trod South Africa. Pushed from the Cape, they trekked time after time, until when they had crossed the veldt they were told they could rest, and would be molested no more. When they went into the country and enriched it and built their towns they were followed by people from the outside, and now again they are going to be denied the land which they have carved out of the wilderness, and we are told this is to be done in the interest of the Empire. It is the worst thing that can be done, and to say that these two little countries are to be crushed in the interests of liberty is a thing no intelligent man can for an instant believe. There is now a state of war, and we are told the Liberals and Tories unite, and I am sorry to say in regard to English Liberalism that is largely true, because there are people on the front Opposition bench who say that it is an unjust and unnecessary war, yet they will vote for the Government. Let Liberals and Tories do as they will; thank God there are in this House a few men who, undeterred by the laughter of hon. Gentlemen opposite, will register their votes against this measure. Hon. Gentlemen talk about the oath of allegiance. Am I to be told that anything in this House or out of it binds a Member to vote and speak for a measure which in his heart he considers unjust? If my oath required me to support every measure submitted by the Government it would be a very sad thing for my oath. A Unionist or even a jingo Government supported by Liberals with Conservative opinions on Imperialism might command some respect, but surely it is a sorry spectacle, and not calculated to inspire respect, to see a Government led and pushed and dragged along into a disastrous war, not by a Conservative statesman, but by a man who in turn has been everything in degree. I remember years ago, before I entered this House, studying the different leaders

of this great assembly, and when I entered this House, sixteen or seventeen years ago, I asked my father near me who the various persons were. He pointed out one after another, and then he pointed out a lean man with a spare and hungry look. I asked who that was? and heard he was a very celebrated man. He was a great Republican. He it was who made speeches to and led our young "Reds." Sixteen years after I find the Republican orator of that day, the man who was considered the leader of the young "Reds" of England, climbing up on the Treasury Bench, Toriest of the Tories, dragging his party to disaster. With the might of England at his back, the once Republican turns out as Conservative as his Tory companions. When his story is written nothing will be more discreditable than to know that the man who hurled the force of English might against these two small Republics was a man who was a Republican in his younger days, when no country gentleman would touch his hand. I apologise for detaining the House at such a length, though I may tell the hon. Gentlemen who cheer the remark, I do not apologise in one iota for anything I have said against this man, either in Ireland or in this House. I opposed the war in Ireland because I think it is unnecessary and unjust, and is against the spirit of liberty. The man upon whose head will be the blood of every British soldier who bites the dust, the man whom the widowed women of the Dutch race will teach their children to curse, is the man who, under the power of an overweening ambition—an ambition seldom coming to gentlemen, but to people of that class who aspire to mix with them —

Mr. SPEAKER: That is not a courteous or proper way to speak of a Member of this House.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND: Mr. Speaker, I have not the slightest intention of disobeying your ruling. At a moment like this, I think that if an expression is used which is not altogether suited to the place, one might to some extent be excused, for I am not one of those who enter upon this work with a light heart. (Ministerial laughter.) If hon. Gentlemen opposite were shut up in Mafeking they would not be laughing. If they were in Kimberley they

would not be laughing. Those take it with a light heart who do not go to the front; they are like the valiant Uiltlanders, who, having raised a storm in Johannesburg, storm all the trains to get out. The man on whose head the bloodshed in this war should be visited, the man who is responsible before the country and before heaven, is, I say without hesitation, that recreant Republican.



15th February, 1900.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): It will be in the recollection of most hon. Members that during the last session of this House in October I took the opportunity of opposing the Vote of ten millions for the prosecution of the war. I did everything in my power to oppose the prosecution of the war, believing it to be unnecessary and utterly unjust. In continuation of the protest I made last session, I now rise to offer opposition to the Vote which is before the House to increase the Army by 120,000 men and give £13,000,000 more to prosecute this war. I have reason to know that the action of hon. Members who oppose the war has created a great deal of displeasure both in this House and in the country. English Members who have opposed the war have in some instances been offered actual violence when addressing public meetings in this country. In Ireland it is different: there we have the support of our constituents; but we who represent Ireland have during the Parliamentary session to live in England, and I may say there is not a post delivered in this House which does not bring to me and other Members numbers of letters reviling us in the most virulent terms because we have the common courage to state here that which we know expresses the feelings of our constituencies. Mr. Lowther, no amount of intimidation of this character will prevent me from honestly saying that

which I feel is right, and what I should be a coward not to say. Hon. Members representing Unionist constituencies have sometimes quoted speeches made by me in Ireland in connection with this war. I am prepared to repeat here every sentence of the speeches I made in Ireland on the subject. It is not because we are confronted with the representatives of the British people that we would abate our tone in the slightest degree, or one sentence of our sympathies with regard to this war. Whatever you may think of our sympathies, treasonable and disloyal as you regard them, scandalous as you may regard our views of an Imperialism which has cost so much blood and treasure, you must admit that we have the courage of our opinions, and that with our voices and by our votes we are to oppose every step which is taken to prosecute this war. I cannot regard with admiration, or even common respect, the attitude of the great bulk of the Liberal party in regard to this war. With a few brilliant exceptions the Liberal party has funk'd the whole matter. Speeches have been made stating that the war is unjust, cruel, and not warranted by circumstances. It has been denounced in all the moods and tenses, but when it comes to the point of voting millions of the hard-earned money of the taxpayers there will not be half a dozen Liberal Members with sufficient courage to walk into the lobby against the Vote. Yesterday a meeting was held at the Westminster Palace Hotel, and a number of resolutions were passed; by the first, it was solemnly declared that the war was a crime and a blunder; by the last of a long string of resolutions, unbounded confidence was expressed in the Leader of the opposition and the leaders of the party generally. What does it mean? To a plain man it is extraordinary to find great politicians in a party of this country stating in one breath that the war is a crime, and in the next voting millions of money for its prosecution. The argument seems to be that this war is unjust, but it is to the advantage of England to prosecute it to a conclusion. However unjust, however criminal, it is necessary for the honour of the country, the glory and the good name of England, that the war should be prosecuted for many more months to come, with untold shedding of blood and spend

ing of treasure. I say that every additional day, week, and month the war lasts is calculated to bring greater dishonour, shame, and loss of glory to England. If the people had any regard for their good name, and desired to do that which would cause every people in the world to respect England, they would say there was a mistake made in commencing this war, and the best way we can repair this mistake is to admit that it was made and withdraw from this proceeding, and acknowledge before the world the error of judgment which led us into it, and give the people of South Africa that independence for which they are prepared to lay down their lives. Then all the world will say when England made a mistake she had the courage to acknowledge it—a great deal more courage is often shown by acknowledging an error than the prosecution of a war. We hear about the disaster of Majuba. I was one of those who rejoiced at it, but even we could not restrain from paying a tribute of admiration to Mr. Gladstone, and the then Liberal Administration, which had the courage to face the fanaticism of the Tory jingo Imperialists of the country and make peace with the Transvaal, giving back to the Dutch people in South Africa the right to govern their own country, because it was the right thing to do. And nothing has redounded more to the honour of England throughout the world than the policy of Majuba. I listened to the speech of the man whose conduct has at least filled every generous-minded Irishman with admiration, the late Member for Plymouth, Sir Edward Clarke, a strong Unionist, who had the courage of his opinions, and who vacated his seat in Parliament, but who by so doing has gained the respect of every politician in the world. I should like to see some Liberal statesman exhibit some of the spirit and manliness of Sir Edward Clarke, but they think it is better not to take a course which may cause their constituents to call upon them to resign. Although the big battalions behind the Government were compelled to go into the lobby against him, the House is obliged to admit that the balance of argument was with Sir Edward. The most remarkable part of this discussion appears to me to be the complete change of front on the part of the Government.

The CHAIRMAN: Order, order! The question the hon. Member is now going into is not relevant to the question before the Committee. The policy which led up to the war cannot be discussed; only the policy of continuing it.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND: Then I will go no further than to say that all last session we were told of specific grievances, and now the right hon. Gentleman the Colonial Secretary says that the war has not been brought about by any specific grievance, but is the consequence of old strained relations, existing before 1881. That is a complete change of front. It is said that the object of the war is to make peace. Are the Government sanguine enough to believe that after months, and perhaps years, of bloodshed in South Africa, after thousands of homes in South Africa have been rendered desolate and miserable, that the Dutch and English will sit side by side in friendship and amity. Where is there an historical parallel in the world which goes to prove that a bloody campaign of this kind tends to the peace of two races? I was reading a short time ago a speech of one of the greatest statesmen of his age, Edmund Burke. He was speaking on the American War, and he used these remarkable words, which are, I venture to think, applicable to this war—

“Force alone is but temporary, and a nation is not governed which is perpetually to be conquered.”

You have been using force against the Boers for the whole of the century, and the result is that so far from there being peace, the lines of separation are wider than ever. It is no use to sanction the increase of 120,000 men to the Army without dealing with the cost, and we shall be asked to sanction a Vote of £13,000,000. £23,000,000 has already been spent on this horrible campaign. From an Irish point of view can anybody complain if we raise our voices to protest against this enormous expenditure when we see the dire necessity in our own country for the expenditure of capital, and if we view with dismay and indignation the initiation of a policy which denies Ireland everything she wants, and lavishes on what we believe to be an unjust war such expenditure. I am glad that I am not an English Radical

Member to be compelled to sit silently on these benches and vote million after million, when the House knows perfectly well that that money should be devoted to matters of greater and more urgent importance in the interest of the masses. I am not going to enter into any alternative schemes in regard to this matter; but when we have, as we have at this time, a famine in India resulting in 4,000,000 of the Indian subjects of Her Majesty suffering all the horrors of misery and starvation, and which I am told not a penny of Imperial money is to be given to relieve, and when we shall be asked to-morrow to vote £13,000,000 to drive to their last rest 100,000 men in South Africa whose only crime is their love for their country, I say it is a scandal and a disgrace. I venture to predict that England will never be secure until she learns the lesson that other peoples have the same spirit of patriotism and national pride which they themselves possess, and that they should also be allowed to live and be proud of their country. I served on the Committee on Old Age Pensions last year, and everybody who studied this question knows that the one great difficulty, and the one argument that could be adduced against establishment of old age pensions in this country—for the relief of aged working men who can no longer toil—was that the necessary funds could not be found, that the money was not available, and no Chancellor of the Exchequer could be found who would give it. That being the only argument against a measure which, in principle, received the support of the right hon. Gentleman the Colonial Secretary, I say here, Sir, that I thank God I am not a Radical or a Liberal Member of Parliament to sit silently in this House and vote millions of money for this unjust war; while relief is denied which might sweeten the old age of working men whose right arms are no longer strong, and who are suffered to drag their weary limbs through the streets of this land, in absolute misery and want to the end of their days, or beg their way to the workhouse. I do not know what the immediate result of this war will be. I do know that great enthusiasm exists throughout the country in regard to it; and whether inside or outside this House, the general cry seems to be, "Hang the expense!" "Send out the money;"

say they. "The great thing is to plant the Union Jack in Pretoria." That is the prevailing sentiment of the day. Ah, but a revulsion of feeling will yet succeed this frenzied cry for war, as sure as I am standing here to-night. It may be later, it may come soon; but sooner or later the time will come when not only the Government, who are responsible for this extravagant expenditure of blood and treasure, but every man in this House who gives his vote to this resolution will be called to account by the country and his constituents. You will be asked why you sanctioned this expenditure, when at the same time you offered no relief to your starving fellow-subjects in India, and made no provision for the old age of your kith and kin in England, Scotland, and Ireland. You are aiding in prosecuting a war which no one can say will under any circumstances bring glory to England. One hundred and twenty thousand men are being asked for in this Vote. I wonder if it has ever occurred to the people of this country what a great disparity exists between the forces now opposed to each other in South Africa. I wonder if the outside public realise that at the present time there is in South Africa in the uniform of the Queen and under the command of Lord Roberts an army of soldiers under arms larger in number than the whole Boer population—men, women, and children—in the Transvaal and Orange Free State combined. I give the figures. Figures, like all statistics, may vary to some extent, but I say that nobody who has inquired into the statistics of the Transvaal and the Orange Free State, or who has secured his information on the spot can deny that approximately the figures I have given are correct. Excluding the Uitlanders and the people of British blood in the Orange Free State and the Transvaal, there are 180,000 Boers, men, women, and children, in those two small provinces. I have heard it said by one authority that there are 10,000 more, and by another that there are 10,000 less; but I have never heard it stated by anyone speaking with authority that there are, even on the widest estimate, more than 200,000 men, women, and children in the Orange Free State and the Transvaal. Accordingly with your 200,000 men you have a soldier with a weapon in his hand

for every man, woman, and child in the two Republics you are invading. And yet we are now asked to vote for 120,000 more men. I have not yet heard it explained by the Under Secretary of State for War what was to be done in the way of garrisoning South Africa when the war is brought to a close. After you have planted the Union Jack in Pretoria you will require 100,000 men to permanently garrison South Africa, and they will have to be maintained there a longer time than you would care to prophesy on the occasion of this Vote. The rural population of the whole of these vast territories is almost entirely Dutch, and to guarantee peace you must make your garrisons strong enough, and I say therefore to prevent the outbreak of a revolution you must permanently lock up your 100,000 men there, and that will inevitably force you into a scheme for conscription. The proposed new Army scheme is neither voluntarism nor conscription; it is a sort of half-hearted steering between the two, but it cannot possibly work, and in the end, as I have said, the country will be driven to adopt conscription. But will they do it? I say it will be impossible for nine-tenths of the Volunteers and the young men of this country to give up their employment and go under canvas for one month; their employers would not sanction it; it would derange the whole commercial life of the country. I say that when this war has passed away, and when the people see things in their proper colours—at present they can see nothing but khaki colour, an extremely unpleasant colour, in my opinion—it will be found that this little war in South Africa has landed the country into an expenditure of what in the end will be 100 millions. We hear a great deal just now about the way in which the colonies have supported the mother country, and no doubt the colonists have warmly responded to the call. The principal reason for that, I take it, is that you gave them the Home Rule which you won't give us in Ireland. Be that as it may, the colonists have supplied you with quite a number of men; but I know them intimately, and I venture to say that the colonies will not give you one single penny piece towards the future extra cost of your increased regular Army. If, then, you are going to increase your standing Army, and

to depart from the old British principle of a small standing Army, with a goodly complement of Volunteers, I would ask you who is going to bear the increased cost? It will have to be borne solely by the people of this country. Sir, it seems to me that this war inaugurates a sad and serious era in the history of England. It is an era of unjust and unnecessary warfare waged against a small Christian country. It is leading us into a policy of maintaining a huge standing army, which is the beginning of a ruinous system of militarism—a system that is already sapping the life's blood of the Continent. What is to be gained by it? Supposing you disarm every Dutchman in the Transvaal to-morrow, what better off will you be? You would have the territory, it is true; but God Almighty knows that this Empire has territory enough already. If this war is to be continued, in the name of common honesty let the mask of hypocrisy be torn from the face of those who are prosecuting it, and let the people see their mistake, that it is not a conflict in the cause of right or of good government, but in the furtherance of a policy of aggrandisement and laud-grabbing. An hon. Member asked the other day—

“How can the Boers in the end expect to withstand the forces of the British arms? Where are they to turn for help? Germany won't help them. America is too far away.”

Ay, it was a sad, a miserable day for the Boers that their country was not nearer to America. Had it been otherwise the wings of the American Eagle—that glorious emblem of liberty and equality—would have sheltered them in this time of stress and trial. As my hon. friend said, however, they can put their trust in God. Most sincerely do I believe, Sir, that the defeats and disasters which have overtaken the British forces hitherto have not been due to want of pluck and courage on the part of the men, or for want of gallant leadership by their officers. I solemnly avow my firm conviction that they are due to the interposition of Heaven because the war is unjust. The right hon. Gentleman the Colonial Secretary wound up his speech last session by a quotation from Shakespeare, saying, with a jaunty air as though the battle was won, that his quarrel was just. That was one of the wise sayings of William Shakespeare

but it applied not to your cause but to that of the Boers, for of them it may be said with perfect truth—

“Thrice is he arm'd that hath his quarrel just;
And he but naked, though lock'd up in steel,
Whose conscience with injustice is corrupted.”

19th February, 1900.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND: I have already spoken frequently on this question, and no doubt hon. Members might consider that I have protested enough. When the first vote of £10,000,000 came before Parliament last session I spoke and protested against it on every possible occasion. Nothing fills me with greater gratification than that recollection, because everything that has occurred during the last five months has justified the course I then adopted, and has encouraged me to make at every stage during the present session an equally energetic protest against the prosecution of this war. I have no doubt that to say the least of it, it must be an irritating experience for the British Members of Parliament to be called upon to listen night after night to speeches of the character made by Irish Members. We are subjected sometimes to a great deal of adverse criticism both inside and outside the House, but hon. Members must recollect that if they are obliged to listen to these continual protests it is after all but the result of the system under which this so-called United Kingdom is governed, and if one portion of the Kingdom is governed against its will hon. Members must not be surprised, and really ought not to protest, if the representatives speak as their constituents desire, even though the sentiments expressed be not in accordance with English views. It is not a pleasant thing for anybody—not even an Irish Member

of Parliament—to speak in an assembly of this kind, or, indeed, in any assembly, against the general sense and opinion of those whom he is addressing. It is often said that we oppose these Votes because of a persistent enmity towards England, which nothing can allay or destroy. Last session I heard an English Member of Parliament say, “Oh we don’t believe you are so sincerely upon the side of the Boers in this matter, because we have heard you make similar speeches in sympathy with other people with whom England has been at war. In every case you are against England. It is not a genuine sympathy with the Boers that compels you to take the course you have adopted, but rather an unaccountable, almost insane idea of opposing England.” That is not the case. I represent one of the most national constituencies in Ireland, the people in which have always distinguished themselves by their devotion to the national cause—the constituency which vindicated the right of national opinion by returning to this house many years ago Dan O’Connell, and which, when their representative was not allowed to take his seat because he refused to take the oath of Allegiance, which cast a slur on the Catholic religion to which he belonged, returned him again. I say that the Nationalists of County Clare, whom I represent, in their present feeling against this war and in the sentiments they desire me to express, are not animated by any bigotted hostility against England, but simply by the merits of this case. They believe that no just grounds exist for this war, that it might have been avoided by ordinarily good diplomacy and that if the Government had acted in a conciliatory way all this bloodshed and loss of treasure would have been saved. If England were at war in some just cause, such as the liberation of some struggling people from intolerable oppression, we, although our relations with England are strained because of the system under which we are governed, would give this country our cordial support. If at the time of the horrible atrocities in Armenia this country had embarked upon a war and had used the sword in the cause of those persecuted Christians against the Turks, the Irish people would have been in sympathy with you. Even though nothing was done for the Armenians, when Great

Britain did take action to protect the inhabitants of Crete, the Irish people endorsed the Cretan policy because they believed you were in the right. It is in the nature of Irishmen to be always against England, but let England do justice and fight for freedom in any part of the world and Irishmen will be ready to back her. We object to this Vote not merely because the war is waged for England—though, goodness knows, we in Ireland have no reason to wish for the success of your arms or to desire glory to attend the progress of your Imperialistic designs—but because, having studied the history of South Africa, we have come to the conclusion that these small Dutch Republics have been treated with invariable injustice, not only lately, but from the very day when England first landed in the Cape of Good Hope nearly a century ago. That our sympathy with the Dutch in this matter is no new-formed growth is shown by the fact that nearly twenty-five years ago one of the strongest protests ever made by an Irish Member in this House was made by the late Charles Stewart Parnell at the time of the annexation of the Transvaal. He it was who placed on the Paper a resolution affirming the inalienable right of the Dutch to rule according to their own ideas the land they had carved out for themselves, and it is only in pursuance of the policy then laid down of vindicating liberty in South Africa that Irish Nationalist Members stand up to-night to protest against this unequal and inglorious struggle which is so disastrously proceeding. I endeavoured to point out last session that a lamentable ignorance prevailed in this country with regard to the true state of affairs in South Africa. I have never set up to be a prophet, but on reading over some of the speeches I made last session as reported in *Hansard*, I really feel as if I had at that time had some sort of prophetic spirit. English Members seemed to think the war would be merely a matter of a month or so; that an army corps would be sent out, and after a little trouble all would be over. It was said that the population of the Transvaal was not as large as that of some of our large provincial towns, and there would be no difficulty in overcoming such a people. That was the spirit that animated the House of

Commons, and how much more was it the spirit of the "man in the street," who had not the same opportunity of judging as to facts as Members of the House Commons? But what did I tell the House? I said that in entering upon this war you had not merely to deal with the population of the Transvaal and the Orange Free State, but that the first British gun that was fired would call into being the hostility, either latent or active, of every man of Dutch blood in the Cape of Good Hope from the Zambesi to Cape Town. I was laughed at then, but was I not absolutely correct? ("No.") Oh, very well. Hon. Gentlemen opposite say that that has not turned out to be true. Take up any newspaper you like, and what will you find? You will find that in large districts the Dutch are either in open rebellion or in sullen disaffection against your rule, and that amongst them are smouldering the fires of discontent which is only a natural state of things when their own kith and kin are subjected to the onslaughts you are making against them. If I had thought that such a proposition would have been denied, I could have brought down countless extracts from authorities to prove the truth of my statement. I will give one instance from the papers of this very day. When the news of the relief of Kimberley was received we are told that the people of Cape Town went mad with joy, that the British people of various places exhibited every sign of rejoicing. But while the British inhabitants decked their houses with flags and gave the High Commissioner an ovation to show their loyalty and delight, you have this remarkable fact—that no single sign of rejoicing came from any official source on the part of the Government of Cape Colony; there were no flags over any public governmental buildings in Cape Town to denote rejoicing; nor were there any of those marks of exultation and victory such as would be seen in this country. Why? Because the Government is a Dutch Government; because the Prime Minister is a Dutchman; because the majority of the Parliament are Dutch, representing a majority of the people who are Dutch. If you have a difficulty in carrying this war to a successful issue it will not be because of the small populations of the Boer Republics, but because, in striking the match of war

in South Africa, you have not only attacked the homes of the people of the Transvaal and the Orange Free State, but you have aroused natural resentment and indignation in the hearts of the people of Dutch blood throughout the whole length and breadth of South Africa. What is to happen when this money is spent and you enter victoriously into Pretoria? As has been already said, you will create in South Africa another Irish nation, but one more difficult to deal with than the one on the other side of St. George's Channel. Our country is a small country close to your doors, but yet you have had difficulty enough in ruling it century after century. In South Africa, be it not forgotten, outside the urban populations the people are almost exclusively Dutch. The British people have centred almost entirely round the towns where the mines were in operation and have occupied themselves with industrial pursuits. Leave Johannesburg, Pretoria, Durban, and the large towns of South Africa, and go into the parts of the country which really provide the backbone of the whole district, and what will you find? I challenge contradiction when I say that nine-tenths of the rural population are people of Dutch blood, speaking the Dutch language. When you have taken the centres of population what are you going to do? This sum of £13,000,000 is but a flea-bite in comparison with the enormous amounts this country will have to vote year after year, not to prosecute the war, not to carry your flag to Pretoria, but to keep it there. These countries are mountainous countries; the people are largely mountaineers; they are naturally a guerilla force; and you will have to garrison those countries from end to end to keep rebellion from flaming out time after time. Some hon. Members seem to think that once Pretoria is taken everything is settled and there will be no further trouble. Once you have taken Pretoria your troubles will begin. Even though you kill every able-bodied inhabitant and leave no adult man alive in the Republics, I say that the boys and the children who are growing up will be taught by their mothers and will learn from the traditions and history of their country that their fathers were slaughtered and their land overrun by the British, and it is not the enmity of this

generation, but of generation after generation of the Dutch that you will have to face. But the saddest and most miserable reflection about the whole of the transaction is the thought of how easily the conflict might have been avoided. I am not going into any discussion of the negotiations which immediately preceded the war, but I say that those negotiations were brought to a point when by a little conciliation and consideration the Government of the Transvaal could have been induced to give to this country everything that was desired. When I make that statement I do not base it on the opinion of any mere Irish Member, but upon the opinion of such men as the late Member for Plymouth and the Member for Bodmin. Hon. Gentlemen opposite sneer and jeer at those names, but there is not one of those whom I noticed jeering who can ever hope to point to such a public record in the service of their country as can the two gentlemen to whom I have referred. Both of them are statesmen, supporters of the Unionist Government and opponents of the claims of Ireland; but I ground my assertion that these negotiations could have been brought to a successful issue on the statements of those two eminent and respected English statesmen, whose action will be commended by the British people long after the authors of this war have been condemned. Of course, this money will be voted, and the war will go on. The only consolation we have is the conviction, amounting to almost absolute certainty, that when all this ginger bread enthusiasm for military affairs, this beating of drums, these attempts to get recruits, and these military pageants have come to an end, when John Bull, having calmed down from his fit of militarism, comes to look at the bill, a serious verdict will be passed upon the gentlemen who have provided the entertainment. If there was one part of the British Empire where care and caution ought to have been exercised it was South Africa. It is the most vulnerable part of your Empire. In every other portion of your Empire you have nothing to fear, because you have given them Home Rule. But deny one of those colonies what you deny Ireland, and see how many men they would then send to South Africa. But unhappily for you, when the moment of crisis came, when a strong

hand was wanted, when a level head was required, you found at the head of your affairs not a statesman in whom the British people could have reliance, but a gentleman who has been everything in turn but nothing long, and whose very personality was obnoxious to the Dutch population in South Africa. The Dutch have a rigid belief—whether well-founded or not I do not know—that but for the Colonial Secretary's connivance there would have been no Jameson raid, and if there had been no Jameson raid there would have been no war. It is the opinion of Unionists opposite and throughout the country, that if Lord Salisbury or the Duke of Devonshire, or indeed any other prominent Unionist statesman had been conducting the negotiations with President Kruger there would have been no war. ["No, no!"] But the negotiations failed because they were conducted by a man who could not keep his temper. ["No, no!"] I have been seventeen years in the House of Commons, and I have always noticed that when anything particularly true is said it is objected to. That probably accounts for the fact that my statements are very often objected to. I say that it is the popular belief throughout the country that if the negotiations had been conducted by any other man they would have been successful. It is an elementary principle that must be admitted, that if you are going to negotiate your representative should be a man whose past has been completely free from any suspicion or of any conduct likely to arouse suspicion in the minds of those with whom you are going to negotiate. The one man in the whole British Empire of whom President Kruger and the Transvaal had most suspicion was the Colonial Secretary. The wisest suggestion that has been made in these debates was that of Sir Edward Clarke, that even though this war be carried on there would be a better chance of a permanent peace after its conclusion if the Colonial Secretary was removed from his position and another Minister put in his place. However, what is done cannot be undone. This disastrous war will continue. Your big battalions will no doubt bear these men down. In the course of time you will sweep the country from end to end. You will do practically as you please with these two small

nations. It would be strange if it were otherwise, seeing that you have out there an armed soldier for every Dutchman, Dutchwoman, and Dutch child in the two States. If I was an English Member I would protest against the war as being dangerous to the Empire, and as calculated to bring unnecessary expense upon the taxpayers of the country. But I do not look at it from the English point of view. The jingo feeling is so strong that, with two or three exceptions, even the strongest Radicals are stricken dumb. Those who ought to speak in favour of peace, retrenchment, and reform are silent, and the spirit of Mr. Gladstone has departed from them. It is a deplorable thing that no Member on the front Opposition bench should be found sufficiently wedded to Liberal ideas to stand up and manfully protest against this war. Even if English Unionist Members are determined to give this money they ought to take the advice of my hon. friend the Member for South Leitrim, and see that those who will expend the money are properly qualified to do so. We are going to give £13,000,000 into the hands of the present War Office officials. There is not a country in Europe that would not have turned out every official at the War Office after the bungling of the last few months. Everything has been bungled; nothing has been right. These officials have proved themselves to be absolutely incapable. That is not merely the opinion of an Irish Member. It is the view of every newspaper in London and the country, particularly of the great Unionist organs, such as *The Times* and the *Standard*. In leading article after leading article they have declared the War Office to be incompetent, and denounced the plans and deficiencies of that Department. That being the case, it is a scandal and a shame that the spending of this enormous sum should be entrusted to such a Department. I object to this Vote because it is unfair to Ireland, because it is unfair to the toiling masses of the people of this country, because it is un-Christian, because it is an outrage upon Christianity, that when Members leave this House to-night, when the light is extinguished, and the cry, "Who goes home?" is heard, you will, after passing hundreds of miserable half-starved beings, sleep the sleep of the just, reflecting

that while millions of your own countrymen are in distress, and you will not vote a penny for their relief, you lightly and freely in an hour or two vote £13,000,000 of the taxes of the people of the country, not to build up prosperity or relieve distress, but to carry on an unholy, bloody, and cruel war, which is causing misery broadcast throughout the length and breadth of South Africa. That is a worthy action with which to wind up the nineteenth century. We, at least, who represent Ireland, a small and weak nation, are proud in the face of the world to be able to say that when this infamy was sought to be perpetrated we had the courage and hardihood to stand up for what we believed to be the right, even though we were in a minority.



13th March, 1900.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): I beg to move that this Bill be read a second time this day six months. One of my objections to this Bill is that I do not think it is a proper way to raise money for carrying on the present war. At the time of the Crimean War a great deal of the necessary cost was raised by direct taxation, whereas only something like £12,000,000 is now to be raised by taxation on articles of consumption. The balance is to be raised by way of loan repayable in ten years. I think that is not a candid way of meeting the expense of the war. Sooner or later this loan will have to be repaid, and the burden will then fall on the taxpayers. By means of it you are deceiving and deluding the people as to what the war is actually costing. I think it would be more candid and fairer to impose additional taxation to a greater extent, especially as we are told that the war fever is so strong in England that there would be no objection to fresh taxation. So much from that point of

view. But I object to participating in the slightest degree in the passage of this loan from an Irish point of view. I consider, quite sincerely and honestly, that it would be little short of a crime if Irish Members in the present financial condition of their country sat silent while this additional burden is put upon it, and if they failed to protest by their votes against this fresh imposition. I calculate that, at the very least, three millions if not four millions of this loan will fall upon the shoulders of the Irish taxpayers. At any time it would be a serious cause of complaint in Ireland, but at the present time, when the whole country is agitated from end to end on the question as to the capability of the Irish people to bear the burden of taxation now upon them, to impose a fresh burden is in my opinion little short of monstrous. The incapacity of the Irish people to bear the burden of taxation already upon them is not a matter of complaint by Irish Nationalists alone. The Chancellor of the Exchequer knows perfectly well that the agitation in Ireland during the last few years on the question of Imperial taxation has been maintained not merely by Nationalist Members, but by a large number of Unionist Members as well. The Royal Commission which inquired into the condition of Irish finance and into the question of the ability of the people to pay the Imperial burden already upon them reported practically unanimously that considering all the circumstances of the case the Irish people are called upon to pay something between two and a half and three millions more every year than they ought to pay, having regard to the different conditions of Ireland and England, and above all having regard to the Act of Union at the commencement of the century, which specifically stated that the Irish people should only be taxed in proportion to their relative taxable capacity, and that abatements and exemptions should be made in their case. That Report was not drawn up by mere partisan Nationalists, but it was a Report drawn up by a Royal Commission composed of the principal experts of the day on financial matters, and they laid down the conclusion that Ireland was paying at least $2\frac{1}{2}$ millions more towards imperial taxation than she ought to pay. That is beyond dispute and cannot be denied. No attempt has,

however, been made to enforce the conclusion of that Royal Commission. Under ordinary circumstances a Report of that kind would have been followed by legislation, and the defects which the Royal Commission had pointed out would have been remedied if an English question were concerned. But no action was taken with regard to Ireland.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is now discussing the financial relations between Great Britain and Ireland.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND: I do not intend to go at length into the question, because it would not be strictly *apropos* of the matter under discussion, but I wish to point out that the Irish Members object to this Bill not only on its merits but because it has been shown that, independent of this fresh taxation, Ireland is already paying several millions a year more than she should. No attempt has been made to remedy that injustice. On the contrary the Chancellor of the Exchequer, instead of endeavouring to equalise Irish taxation and to remove the grievances of which many of his supporters in Ireland complain, asks the representatives of the Irish people, overtaxed and overburdened as Ireland is, to sanction this loan for the purpose of carrying on the war. I have no doubt English Members sometimes feel irritated at the constancy with which Irish Members refer to these financial proposals, but I say deliberately that not during the whole of this century have there been a more monstrous and more infamous proposition than that the Irish people should be called upon, in the present condition of their country, to pledge themselves to millions of fresh taxation for the purposes of the war. The stock of this loan is to be known as "war stock," and the bonds as "war bonds;" therefore I assume I am entitled to go into the policy of the war, I have no desire to do so except very briefly; but this I will say, that whatever objection I had to the policy of this war, which has entailed this enormous cost, before this evening, within the last hour my objection has been doubled and trebled, and never since the commencement of these war discussions have I been so opposed to it. The Chancellor of the Exchequer calculated that the

war would cost £60,000,000, but it will really cost between £65,000,000 and £66,000,000, because the right hon. Gentleman has not taken into account the surplus which would have been to the good had there been no war. We were told first of all — and a very plausible statement it was — that this war should be continued at all cost because certain dominions of Her Majesty had been invaded by the forces of the two Republics. That is quite true, though I hold my own opinion as to what led to that invasion. I was not at all surprised that Natal was invaded under the circumstances. At the same time, I was not surprised at the attitude of the English Members, who maintained that this money should be spent, and more if necessary, in order to clear Natal and every inch of Her Majesty's territory in South Africa from the invading Boers. I can understand that; but what I cannot understand, and what I protest against, is that when by an overwhelming force you have cleared the invaders out of Her Majesty's territory, you are not satisfied with that, and you refuse to consider terms of honourable peace with a brave and gallant people. Now we are told for the first time what we all along suspected, that this war is not a war to right the wrongs of British subjects in South Africa, not a war merely to clear Her Majesty's territory of invading forces, but a war waged against the independence of the two Republics. The Prime Minister stated in a speech not long ago that the war was forced upon them to right the wrongs of British subjects in the Transvaal and that they sought neither territory nor goldfields. The Duke of Devonshire said something of the same kind, and denied that there was any intention on the part of the Government to annex either the Transvaal or the Orange Free State. Now we are told by the First Lord of the Treasury that this war—this horrible carnival of bloodshed and misery and wretchedness—is to be carried on until the independence of the Transvaal and the Orange Free State is overthrown and swept away. After that declaration I object to this loan all the more strongly, and I shall vote more readily than I have ever yet voted against a single penny being granted. I venture to say that there was no Member in this House who listened altogether unmoved to the com-

munication from the Presidents of the Transvaal and the Orange Free State. You may disagree with them; you think, no doubt, they commenced this war without provocation; you think they were wrong from start to finish; but is there any Member in this House who, in his own breast, can withhold from these two States some tribute of admiration for the extraordinary valour and almost superhuman courage with which they have endeavoured to preserve what they consider to be their rights? And now these two men, having won some victories; when it seems that they are about to be overwhelmed; when they are about to be cleared out of the Queen's dominions; when they are considering any terms of peace which they could possibly, with an atom of self-respect, accept—when they make this offer, the answer of the Prime Minister to that offer will fill liberty-loving people throughout the world with despair, if not with disgust, at the policy of Her Majesty's Government. No; no terms are to be considered. This war is, to go on to its bloody end. Nothing is to satisfy the Government or the Colonial Secretary until Pretoria has been reached, and until the list of 15,000 killed, wounded and maimed British troops has been increased a thousandfold. This war is to go on with all its misery, all its bloodshed, all its terrible torture to those who fight, and those who are left behind, because, having got the power of enforcing every right that you could possibly claim for your British subjects in the Transvaal, having got the power of dictating the terms on which your people should live in the future in the Transvaal, no terms will satisfy you except those which strike at the existence and self-respect of those Dutch farmers—terms which you know perfectly well make it absolutely certain that these men, after to-day, will continue to fight to the last ditch, and that they will not surrender as long as a shot is left in the locker. Where is the wise statesmanship which we are told governs the policy of this Government at the present time? I wish to goodness that Mr. Gladstone were alive. I wish to goodness that Mr. Gladstone were directing the affairs of this country, and I believe the necessity for this money we are asked for to-night would not have arisen. Mr. Gladstone would have offered the same fair and honour-

able terms which commanded the respect and the admiration of the world when the Boers inflicted a small defeat on the British forces at Majuba. If he were alive, directing the affairs of this country, what terms would he not have made when appealed to by the Presidents of these two Republics in the hour of British victory? He would have behaved with humanity, and would have said to these people, "Now we have demonstrated our strength; now that we have got 205,000 British troops in South Africa—more than one for each of your population; now that you see our power, and that it is only a question of money when we can subdue you, admit you cannot withstand our overwhelming forces and ask for peace." Mr. Gladstone would have given them peace on terms which would have secured for every British subject the fullest fair play for the future, and would have given them peace upon the only terms upon which you can have any abiding peace in South Africa, and on terms also of consideration for the self-respect and the bravery of the Dutch population throughout the length and breadth of South Africa. It is all very well to ask for this thirty millions to carry on the war, and enable you to march to Pretoria and hoist your flag there, and to destroy the independence of these two countries. That is easy enough to do. You may destroy their independence; you may raze Pretoria to the ground; you may kill every soldier in the armies of the two Republics; but will that guarantee the permanent peace of South Africa? Will that guarantee for the future to bring contentment or satisfaction to the minds of the vast concourse of Dutchmen in Cape Colony and Natal, and the majority of the whole population in South Africa, who are Dutch at the present time? I say, now is your time to make terms of peace regarding which the Dutch in the Cape and Natal will be able to say, "Well, after all, these English people have shown us their enormous power and strength, and when we acknowledged that and asked for peace they were magnanimous and generous enough to give us terms of peace which we could accept with terms of respect." I say that is the policy which ought to actuate Her Majesty's Government, and which would win for England the respect of Europe and of the whole world. It is the only policy

which will prevent the necessity for fresh military operations in South Africa. But if you go on with the policy that the blood of the British lion is up, and that you will be satisfied with nothing but to destroy the independence of these two small countries, you will earn the contempt of every liberty-loving people in every part of the world. That policy will perpetuate disaffection throughout every part of South Africa, and will make the Dutch in Cape Colony and Natal dissatisfied with your rule and wait for a chance of striking a blow for that independence which they so dearly prize. There is one point which always appeals to me in this matter, and which is always overlooked not only in this House but in the country, and that is that no matter what settlement you make you cannot help the whole of South Africa from Cape Town to the Zambesi being populated by Dutch people and English. These people will have to live for the future in South Africa. Are they to live together in peace, respecting each other; or are they to be obliged to live, as we have been forced to do in Ireland, not loving your rule? I say that Dutch and English having to live together, you should pursue a policy which should commend itself to them in the hour of defeat—a policy of generosity and wisdom, and unless you do that you will only be breeding fresh trouble for this country. As for us in Ireland, we object to this war as being unjust; and, therefore, what is more natural than that we should come here and object to pay any portion of the money asked for these military operations? Why, it is hard to understand the feeling which is afloat in England at the present time. It is hard to understand that this is what is called free England at all. The only place, so far as I can see, where any man in this free country can say a word against this war and this enormous taxation is the House of Commons. [HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!] Hon. Gentlemen opposite rapturously cheer that statement of mine, that the House of Commons is the only place where a word can be said against this iniquitous war and this enormous war expenditure, by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bodmin, the late Member for Plymouth, and many others. If they attempt to exercise the right of public meeting or free speech in free England to-day, what is the result?

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Member cannot discuss the right of public meeting on the motion before the House.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND: I have no desire, Mr. Speaker, to do anything but obey your ruling in this matter. I have stated that these meetings were interfered with, for the purpose of showing that the only place where our protests can be made without having our persons injured, our property destroyed, and the houses of our families invaded by a war-like mob, is the House of Commons. Therefore we take this and every opportunity of entering our protest against this war. I say the time will come, and it is not very far distant, when there may be scenes of excitement outside this House amongst the taxpayers and the working people of this country. These scenes of excitement will not be created by pouring out the millions of the taxes wrung from the people for warlike preparations; but they will be caused in years to come, when this policy of crushing the independence of the South African Republics bears its fruit in continual disturbances in the Continent of Africa, and when the people find that the only return they get for this enormous expenditure of money, is to create in South Africa a larger and a more stubborn Ireland than you have here. I conclude by saying that the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer—impatient as he may be, and impatient as his friends may be to vote this money—cannot complain if we protest, as Irishmen, against having anything to do with this Vote—in the first place because we object to the war, and in the second place because Ireland is not entitled in any way to be asked to bear a share of its cost. They can hardly complain of us doing that, for ever since the session commenced we have opposed this war. As the representative of one of the Irish Nationalist constituencies I enter my protest, and I care very little whether the supporters of the Government complain of my doing so or not. I beg to move that this Bill be read a second time this day six months.

CATHOLICS IN THE TRANSVAAL.

LETTER FROM DR. LEYDS.

The following letter has been received by Mr. William Redmond, M.P.:—

8 Rue de Livourne, Brussels,

November 11, 1899.

WILLIAM REDMOND, Esq., M.P.

DEAR SIR—I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 3rd inst., and wish to thank you for your expression of sympathy with the people of the South African Republic.

With regard to the assertion that the Government of the S. A. Republic has persecuted Roman Catholics, and refuses to allow them to hold office of any kind, I can conscientiously and honestly contradict any such statements.

The law makes no distinction, and I remember, furthermore, the names of the following gentlemen who are Roman Catholics, and who are in the Government service of the Republic, viz.:—

- 1st.—Mr. A. Bruyn Prince, of the State Secretary's Department.
- 2nd.—Mr. DeSoura, of the Commandant-General's Department.
- 3rd.—Mr. Jossou who is attached to my Legation.
- 4th.—Mr. Gossolure, who is in the Public Works Department.

I am, dear Sir,

Yours very truly,

W. T. LEYDS.

DR. LEYDS EXPOSES MORE CALUMNIES.

Mr. William Redmond, M.P., has received the following important letter from Dr. Leyds, the Transvaal plenipotentiary to the European Powers:—

8 Rue de Livourne, Brussels,

30th November, 1899.

WILLIAM REDMOND, Esq., M.P.

DEAR SIR—With reference to my letter to you of the 11th instant, and having seen some correspondence in the newspapers asserting that no Roman Catholics can hold Government appointments in the South African Republic, I think it may be useful to inform you with the following:

By Article 20 of the Grondwet of 1858 it was stipulated that the Dutch Reformed Church should be the Church of the State, and in Article 21 it was laid down that the nation would admit no Roman Catholic Churches in their midst, and no other Protestant Churches than those in which the same Christian doctrine should be preached as mentioned in the Heidelberg Catechism.

These clauses, however, were cancelled by resolution of the Volksraad of 1st June, 1870—Article 151, whereby absolute religious freedom was granted.

With regard to the appointment of Government officials, it was stipulated by Article 68 of the Grondwet of 1889 that all officials must either be enfranchised Burghers, or be able to produce satisfactory testimonials.

By resolution of 21st July, 1894, the Volksraad instructed the Government to appoint no persons belonging to the Roman Catholic Church, but this resolution was cancelled within two years by resolution of the Volksraad of 10th June, 1896—Article 874.

By Article 93 of the Grondwet of 1896 it was laid down that only enfranchised or naturalised Burghers could be appointed as Government officials.

In case of a vacancy in the Government service a notice is inserted in the Government *Gazette* for that purpose, in which applicants are also requested to state to which religion they belong; but the assertion that in such a notice it is stated that applicants must be of the Protestant religion is untrue.

I am, dear Sir,

Yours faithfully,

W. T. LEYDS.