

FROM THE AUTHOR

BY W. J. LEYDS

THE BRITISH LION IN
BECHUANALAND

Dr. W. J. LEYDS
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THE EXPEDITION UNDER THE COMMAND OF
MAJ.-GEN. SIR CHARLES WARREN,
K.C.M.G., F.R.S.

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RALPH CH. WILLIAMS, F.R.G.S.

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WATERLOO PLACE, LONDON
MDCCCLXXXV

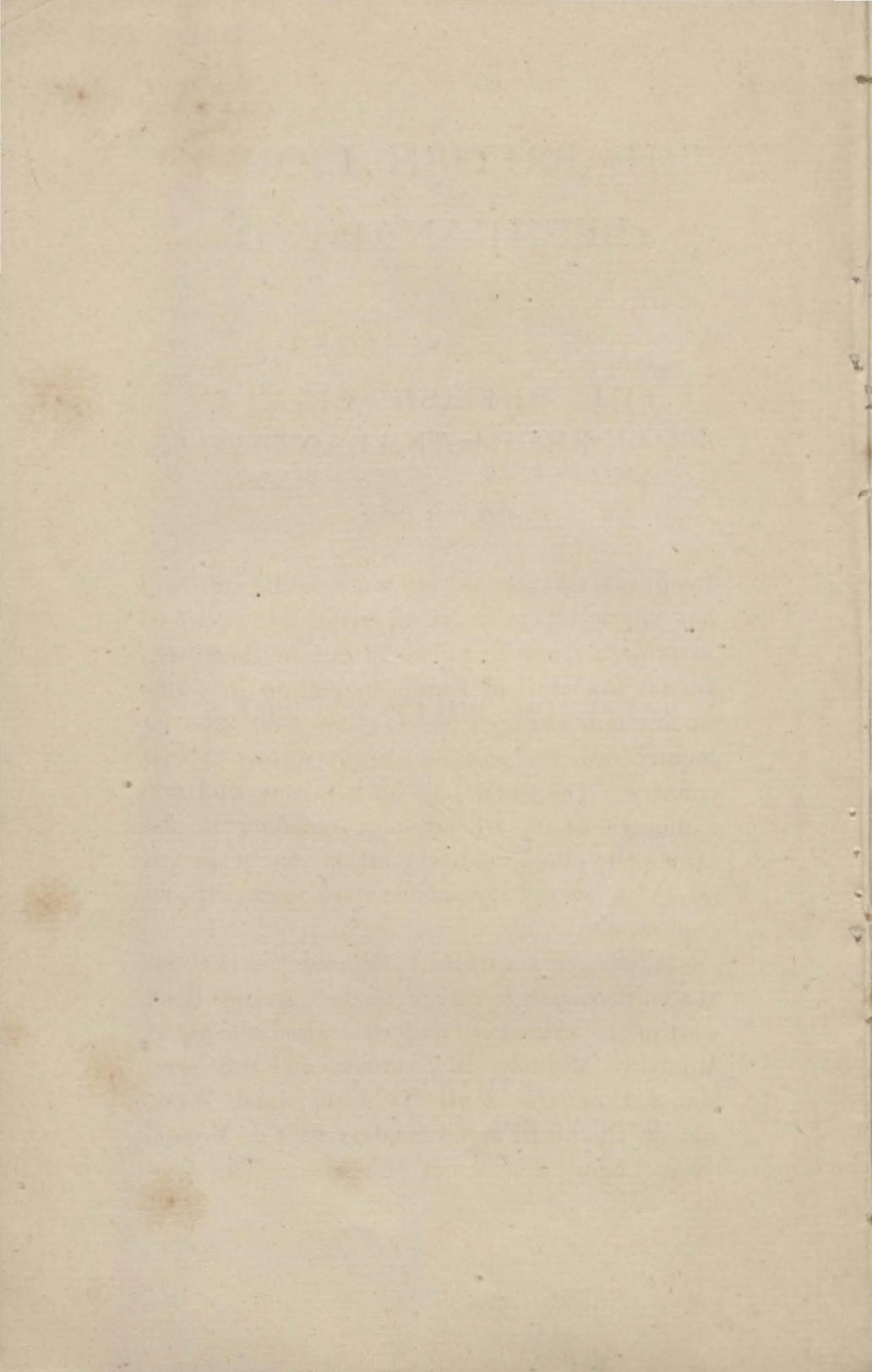
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THE BRITISH LION IN BECHUANALAND.

I.

BECHUANALAND and its relations to the future of our South African colonies has of late occupied so large a share of public attention that, even amidst the whirl of European politics in which we are now engaged, we may yet find time for inquiry into the past and future history of that country. The enormous sums (about £100,000 a month) which we are now spending in the attempt to effect a settlement should engage our attention, even if the subject itself seems dry and unprofitable.

It is a common error to suppose that Bechuanaland consists merely of those countries lying west of the Transvaal, under the chieftainship of Montsiwe, Moshette, Mankoroane, and Massouw; bounded on the south by Griqualand West, and on the north approximately by the Molapo river. Now, this is not the case. The true

boundaries of Bechuanaland are far more extensive, reaching as they do on the north-west nearly to the Victoria Falls, in about 17° south latitude, while to the due north they are generally considered to be marked by the Maclontsie river some 140 miles north of Shoshong. The new protectorate, to which I will advert later on, has brought a larger portion of this northern country into our more immediate consideration, and our future dealings with its people are a matter for our attention. For the present, however, I will confine myself to a discussion of the merits of our policy in that portion of Bechuanaland known as Stellaland and Goshenland. To arrive at anything like a right understanding of the case, it is necessary to realize that the position and circumstances of these two countries are entirely different. This is of paramount importance, inasmuch as, both in the press and in debate, Stellaland and Goshenland are almost invariably mixed up. The result of this confusion is, that a constant misunderstanding pervades the whole matter. Officials are praised or blamed where neither praise nor blame is due, and criticism is meted out based on entirely wrong premises. There has, I think, seldom been an instance of discussion and criticism where those taking part in it have been so absolutely guiltless of knowledge of the subject.

What is now known as Stellaland was formerly

country the ownership of which was disputed. It was for the most part occupied and administered by Mankoroane, chief of the Batlapins. This Mankoroane claimed to be paramount chief of the district. His claim was disputed by Botilatsisi Gasibone, a Batlapin chief living at Pokwhane, near Mankoroane's territory; and by David Massouw, chief of the Korannas, whose head-quarters are at Mamusa. It will be seen, on reference to the map, that these two latter chiefs, Botilatsisi and Massouw, lived on the very borders of the Transvaal. It is unnecessary to go into the question of whose claim to the chieftainship was the best; sufficient to say that the British Government has always upheld the claims of Mankoroane, while the Transvaal Boers have supported Massouw and Botilatsisi. For our present purposes the latter chief may be left out of the question. Although it is, I believe, without doubt that Botilatsisi is entitled by birth to the higher chieftainship of at least the Batlapin tribes, in the struggle which ensued he did not take any prominent part. The origin, then, of these later disturbances which concern us in the present was as follows. - Massouw, the Koranna chief, defied Mankoroane, and claimed a large portion of his country. War was proclaimed, and each chief summoned to his aid a large number of white volunteers. Massouw's volunteers were for the most part Dutch,

Mankoroane's for the most part English. These volunteers were duly enrolled, and the price of their service was to be a grant of land in the conquered country. Massouw also enlisted the assistance of about 1000 Basutos. In the result the mercenaries of Massouw proved too strong for the mercenaries of Mankoroane. Mankoroane's volunteers, finding fortune going against them, agreed to treat with those of Massouw; and it was finally agreed between them that, if in the final adjustment of farms they might be allowed to stand in with Massouw's volunteers, they would abandon Mankoroane and cast in their lot with Massouw; thus rendering Mankoroane too weak to continue the struggle. This being settled, Massouw proceeded to divide the lands, and apportioned some 500 farms, consisting of 3000 morgen each, to the several claimants. As was to be expected, this new community, suddenly planted in native territory, very soon began to lay down the law to their nominal chief. Massouw became a puppet; his country was limited to a mere strip of land, and the newly occupied country was declared a republic, under the name of "Stellaland." Massouw now almost disappears in the matter, and the new republic takes his place. The settlers, not contented with what they had, soon made excuse to declare war anew on Mankoroane, with the result that, until April, 1884, a constant war of reprisals was

waged, resulting gradually in the eating up of Mankoroane and his people.

We now come to the question of British intervention. In March, 1884, a British protectorate was proclaimed over Bechuanaland, which was then, as I have said, supposed to include only those countries included (more or less) in Stellaland and Goshenland. The Rev. John Mackenzie, for many years a missionary in the interior, was appointed her Majesty's Deputy Commissioner; and in April Mr. Mackenzie arrived in Taungs. Remaining there only long enough to enter into detail questions of land, which do not now concern us, he shortly proceeded to Vrijburg. I have not the exact date before me, but it was, I think, in May, 1884, that Mr. Mackenzie arrived in Vrijburg, a new town lately grown up, and the capital of Stellaland. Here Mr. Mackenzie read himself in, and declared the Queen's protectorate. At length, after much stormy discussion, Mr. Van Niekerk, who was then administrator of the Government of Stellaland, agreed to accept the protectorate; and he, Mr. Van Niekerk, was duly appointed Assistant Commissioner under her Majesty. A scheme was drafted by Mr. Mackenzie, which provided that the existing government was to continue in office, with Mr. Van Niekerk at their head, and under which a land court was to be established to inquire into the claims to the farms allotted,

it being suggested by Mr. Mackenzie that where claims made were not duly established, money grants should be made to the appointed claimants as compensation for their deprivation. It is impossible to enter into the entire history of Mr. Mackenzie's short reign in Stellaland. Briefly, the story is as follows. On arrival, the new Deputy Commissioner was received with hostility by all sections of the people. By dint, however, of good temper and timely concession, this hostility was overcome. Mr. Van Niekerk, as I have said, was appointed Assistant Commissioner, and the members of the ¹Bestnur, almost solely belonging to the Dutch party, were confirmed in office. The town party was in like manner won over by the distribution of offices which promised them a golden harvest in the future. So far so good. The picture of a united Stellaland so happily begun was not, however, to last. The country became divided into two parties: the Hart's River party, for the most part Dutch; and the town party, for the most part a species of renegade English. Of these two bodies, the Hart's River people outnumbered their opponents by at least four to one. Jealousies grew apace, and in an unhappy moment Mr. Mackenzie, irritated by the refusal of Mr. Van Niekerk to take the oath of allegiance, allowed himself to become a partisan. The town party elected from among their body a Volks Comité, whose

first act was to depose Mr. Van Niekerk and his followers from office. This was rather as though the tail was to be permitted to wag the dog. Deceived by the assertions of the town party, who now for the first time dubbed themselves "Loyals," Mr. Mackenzie accepted their action as those of a majority, and in a hasty moment hoisted the British flag, thus absolutely committing himself to annexation, and setting aside his earlier promises made to Mr. Van Niekerk. Open rupture was now unavoidable, and but little was wanted to cause a blaze. Mr. Mackenzie was personally hateful to nearly every Dutchman in South Africa. His strong party utterances in the colony and at home had infuriated the Dutch, and nothing but the coolest judgment could save him in Stellaland. Matters gradually culminated, and the impending storm came to the ears of Sir Hercules Robinson, the High Commissioner. Mr. Mackenzie was recalled to Cape Town to explain matters, and left the country in a state of anarchy. The result of the High Commissioner's inquiry, was that he deemed it undesirable to retain Mr. Mackenzie in his office as Deputy Commissioner. The position was now serious, as not only was Stellaland in a state of ferment, but Goshen, where Mr. Mackenzie had also (through no fault of his own) been unsuccessful, was in open rebellion against the Queen's protectorate.

II.

Before proceeding further it would be as well to revert to the history of Goshen, and show the origin and condition of that country up to the time of Mr. Mackenzie's retirement from office. Goshenland, as it is called, is really the territory of Montsiwe, chief of the Barolongs, and of Moshette, a subordinate chief of the same tribe. As in Stellaland, so in Goshen the disturbances arose out of a desire on the part of the subordinate to establish his right to the position of paramount chief. Moshette, then, in his struggle with Montsiwe, was induced to call to his aid a number of Dutch volunteers, all either farmers or squatters of the Transvaal, under one Nicholas Gey, the promise being, as before, the distribution of lands awarded from the conquered territory. Montsiwe, on his side, did not employ volunteers, being content to fight the battle out with his own people. He did, however, avail himself of the help of the very few white men resident in his country, amongst whom the late Mr. Christopher Bethell was the most notable. Mr. Bethell originally went into the Barolong country as imperial agent under the orders of Sir Charles (then Colonel) Warren. This post he retained for some years, until it was abolished by the Imperial Government. He then chose to remain among the Barolongs, and cast in his

lot with them, becoming a leading man in all their councils. One word for Mr. Bethell's personal character. It has been suggested that he was one of the usual type of vagrant Englishmen who, while retaining their nationality, lay aside all those elements of character of which we are justly proud, and bring discredit on the name of Englishmen throughout the world. This was not so. Mr. Bethell, the younger son of a good old Yorkshire family, made both name and fame for himself in South Africa. He was respected and regarded by all who knew him, and it is a fact that, go where you will or among what class you will, you will never hear aught but good of the name of Christopher Bethell. He was one of the few instances of a man retaining his old instincts in the midst of untoward surroundings.

But to resume. Moshette soon became a mere lay figure in the business, and the war simply became one of plunder on the part of Gey and his Dutchmen, and a struggle for existence on the part of Montsiwe. In 1882 a treaty was signed between Gey and Montsiwe, consenting to a cession of land to the Dutch on condition of Montsiwe being allowed to continue undisturbed in the remaining portion of his territory. To this treaty Mr. Bethell was a party, and it has since been asserted that, in his subsequent dealings with the Boers, he was

guilty of a breach of his written pledges. This, however, was not the case. Both Mr. Bethell and Montsiwe were prepared to carry out the treaty loyally; and it was not until the Boers themselves acted unfairly that the treaty was set aside. What happened was this. The Boers, on proceeding to apportion the farms, found that the lands were insufficient in extent to supply all their requirements. They thereupon exceeded the limits of the treaty, claiming far more of Montsiwe's territory than had been agreed upon. Montsiwe refused to let the land go, and Mr. Bethell gave due notice to Gey that if the further unreasonable demands were insisted on, he should consider himself absolved from his pledges under the treaty, and should recommend Montsiwe to resume hostilities. The treaty thus became a dead letter, and a war of extermination was resumed. We have heard hideous stories of the cruelties perpetrated by the Boer filibusters during this war; of prisoners invariably murdered in cold blood, of women and children massacred while engaged in their peaceful avocations, and of horrors almost untold. I have had an opportunity of inquiry into many of these matters, and there has been but little exaggeration. The conduct of the filibusters exhibits an extraordinary instance of moral deterioration. Beginning as mere border raiders, there is no doubt that, during the latter

part of the war, they exhibited a ferocity which would have done credit to Nana Sahib himself. It was, then, while this latter war was being carried on that Mr. Mackenzie, during his period of office as Deputy Commissioner, found time to visit Montsiwe and proclaim the protectorate. In due course he proceeded to the Rooi Groonde, which was the head-quarter camp of the filibusters on the border, and requested an interview. This interview was denied him, and he was therefore compelled to send a notice to Gey and the other leaders, stating that he did then "formally proclaim the establishment of a British protectorate." Mr. Mackenzie, having established Mr. J. M. Wright as Assistant Commissioner, and Mr. Christopher Bethell as Inspector of Police, subject to the approval of the High Commissioner, left Mafeking (the capital) and returned to his post at Vrijburg, whence he shortly repaired to Cape Town. This brings the history of Goshen up to the same date as that of Stellaland. Now, while Mr. Mackenzie has been blamed, and I think justly blamed, for his want of success in Stellaland, and for the injudicious party animus he displayed, there is not any cause for a like complaint against him in Goshen. He did his duty to the best of his ability, and, without force at his disposal, he was powerless to do more.

Here let me point out the difference between

the position in Stellaland and Goshenland as they were presented to Mr. Mackenzie, to his successor, Mr. Rhodes, and to Sir Charles Warren. Stellaland, on the establishment of the protectorate, was found to be a settled country, with a resident white population, and with farms occupied and improved. A government was duly established, crude in form, I grant, but still sufficient for practical purposes. A town of some importance, as such towns go, stood in its midst, and we had before us an established fact of a people and country that could not be eliminated. The native element was gone, and in its place was a fairly law-abiding community. In Goshen it was far otherwise. Goshen was then, and has ever been, non-existent. The country has always been in the occupation of its own people, the Barolongs. What was known to the public as Goshen was in reality a nucleus of hungry adventurers herded together within the Transvaal, eager for plunder and thirsty for blood. When an attack was about to be made, these marauders were recruited by large numbers of the lower-class farmers of the Transvaal, men whose abject poverty made them grasp at their neighbours' goods. Loot in the shape of cattle was their object, and, that obtained, they returned once more within the Transvaal border, to await an opportunity of a fresh attack.

In comparing the circumstances of the two countries, we cannot be too careful to discriminate between them.

III.

Such, then, was the condition of things in Bechuanaland when the Hon. Cecil Rhodes, late Treasurer-General of the Scanlen Ministry, consented, at the request of the High Commissioner, to accept the office of Deputy Commissioner. Merely stipulating that he would undertake his duties without pay, Mr. Rhodes proceeded to Bechuanaland without loss of time. His instructions were to obtain the concurrence of the people to the continuation of the protectorate, and, at all costs, to preserve law and order in the country. Now let us look for a moment at the position of matters when Mr. Rhodes undertook these duties.

Again and again had the High Commissioner urged the employment of British troops and British money in preserving our interests in Bechuanaland, and as often had his representations been disregarded. A reference to the Blue-books will show that the sole concessions gained by the High Commissioner were the setting aside of two sums of £5000 to be expended by the Imperial and Colonial Governments respectively, which sums were expressly

stated to be the very utmost that would be granted to preserve British influence in this sorely troubled land. Not a man and not a penny could Mr. Rhodes hope for to enforce any threats of compulsion by which he might seek to establish British supremacy. Mr. Rhodes, then, (with whom from time to time was associated Captain Bower, Imperial Secretary to the High Commissioner,) on his arrival in Stellaland, sought for the man most likely to represent the majority of those with whom he had to deal. To Mr. Van Niekerk he most naturally gravitated as the only leader of men in Stellaland. It is easy now, under the altered circumstances, to find fault with Mr. Rhodes; but his only chance was to win over the majority by argument; and the majority was distinctly represented by Mr. Van Niekerk. Hostilities between the Stellalanders and Mankoroane's Kaffirs were on the point of breaking out, and the danger was imminent. After some parley, Mr. Rhodes met Mr. Van Niekerk and his party at Commando Drift on the 8th of September, 1884. An agreement was there signed which has since become famous in the history of Bechuanaland. By this agreement all Mr. Mackenzie's acts were cancelled; the Government of Stellaland was recognized; Mr. Van Niekerk was accepted as Administrator; the ownership of farms, as represented by the land

register of Stellaland, was guaranteed; rival cattle claims were to be submitted to arbitration; the British protectorate was acknowledged; the position of the Deputy Commissioner was admitted, and a special clause was inserted by which no act of the Stellaland Government was to be valid without the sanction of the Deputy Commissioner. The result of this action of Mr. Rhodes was, that order was restored in the country; Mankoroane was saved from annihilation; the Transvaal was checked in its career of annexation and thrown back within its borders; and the trade route to the interior, with all its future possibilities, was preserved to the English empire. At what cost were these advantages purchased? At the cost of the absolute guarantee of a few farms, and of independence granted to a body of men whose farms and whose independence Mr. Mackenzie himself had been willing, under other circumstances, to guarantee. For let us look back for a moment to the agreement made by that champion of imperialism, Mr. Mackenzie. There a guarantee of farms was given, subject to inquiry; and, in the event of the titles not being established, Mr. Mackenzie suggested that a suitable money grant should be paid by the Imperial Government in lieu. The hated Van Niekerk was actually appointed by Mr. Mackenzie to the post of Assistant Commissioner, directly under her Majesty, and the sittings and acts of the

7 Bestuur, or parliament, were duly accepted by Mr. Mackenzie as effective. It was only when his own subsequent acts rendered his presence impossible in Stellaland, that Mr. Mackenzie discovered the wickedness of Mr. Van Niekerk and his people. The gist of the agreement made by both of the Deputy Commissioners was the same, but the spirit in which it was sought to be carried out was different. Mr. Mackenzie sought to use Van Niekerk and his party as tools to establish a minority of adventurers dubbed "Loyals" in office; while Mr. Rhodes, having once accepted the situation, acted in good faith towards the Dutch, and won their sympathy and co-operation in preserving the peace of the country. Mr. Rhodes' agreement was accepted by the High Commissioner, and was confirmed by Lord Derby, who, in a despatch since published, conveyed his thanks to Mr. Van Niekerk for his action in stopping hostilities and in preserving order in the country. Stellaland being now settled, Mr. Rhodes turned his steps towards Goshen, where Montsiwe was being hard pressed by Gey and his followers.

IV.

f Having now reached the 8th of September, 1884, in Stellaland, we must for a moment hark back to the month of June of the same year, to follow out occurrences at Goshen.

The success of Nicolas Gey in plundering the Barolongs had attracted to his aid several hundred needy adventurers from the Transvaal and elsewhere. His followers were further augmented by advertisements, publicly inserted in the *Volkstein*, a paper printed in Pretoria, promising land and loot to volunteers who might join his standard. It is, of course, clear that the Transvaal Government, in allowing this open aggression on the protectorate to emanate from their territory, was guilty of a gross breach of faith toward England. On almost the last day of June a decisive battle was fought between the filibusters under Gey, and the Barolongs under Mr. Bethell. Fortune, which hung in the balance the whole day, at last decided in favour of Gey. Mr. Bethell, in saving the life of Israel Molemme, a Barolong chief, was shot through the face, and the Barolongs, disheartened by his loss, were easily routed.

The story of Mr. Bethell's death now comes before us. I have since visited the spot in company with Israel Molemme, have been present at the examination of Mr. Bethell's body by medical experts, and have heard abundant testimony as to what happened. Immediately on being wounded, Mr. Bethell sat down under a bush, where he obtained temporary shelter, having with him this same Israel Molemme. Feeling himself sorely hurt, he awaited the arrival of

the Boers, whom the tide of battle had, for the time, taken elsewhere. After the lapse of at least half an hour, hearing them approach, Molemma crawled away and lay down in a slight depression of the ground at a distance of some twenty yards from Mr. Bethell, pretending to be dead. Preferring to be taken prisoner, and hoping to gain assistance, Mr. Bethell coughed to attract the attention of the oncoming Boers, who would otherwise have, as it appears, very possibly passed by without noticing him. Perceiving him lying wounded, the Boers (two of whom, Joel van Rooyen and De Bruin, are well known), began to taunt him with his position, and to boast of their success. Mr. Bethell, not suspecting any further injury, begged to be taken to the laager. After some conversation, Van Rooyen appears to have taken up Bethell's rifle, a rifle long dreaded by the Boers, and supposed by them to be of remarkable range and accuracy. He asked Bethell to explain the action, and on this being shown him, he inserted a cartridge, and, putting the muzzle to Mr. Bethell's head, blew out his brains. It has been said that a second shot was fired by De Bruin, but of this there appears insufficient evidence. A more cold-blooded murder it is impossible to conceive. It was an absolutely indefensible piece of brutality, committed for the sole purpose of revenge, and meriting the

hangman's reward. The subsequent examination by the doctors, on the exhumation of the body, furnished conclusive evidence that the first wound, received in fair fight, was not fatal, and that Mr. Bethell most undoubtedly owed his death to the felon shot of Van Rooyen. The evidence of Molemma, who escaped observation and overheard all that passed, was given with much descriptive power, and was both valuable and interesting. The death of Bethell appears to have demoralized the Barolong, and up to the date of the arrival of Messrs. Rhodes and Joubert, there followed a succession of disasters to Montsiwe.

But to return to Mr. Rhodes' progress. Travelling by the Transvaal, he arrived at the Rooi Groonde, the head-quarters of Gey. Here he met Mr. Joubert, who had been appointed by President Kruger as "Commissioner of the Western Border," for the nominal purpose of preserving order, but for what actual purpose we shall presently see. Reference to the Blue-books will show that Mr. Joubert did not act straightforwardly with Mr. Rhodes in this matter. Daily attacks were made upon Montsiwe, which Mr. Rhodes was powerless to prevent, and which Mr. Joubert, while publicly deprecating them, secretly encouraged. At last, in defiance of Mr. Rhodes' protestation, a final attack was made on Montsiwe, his town was

taken, and the Barolonges were placed at the mercy of Nicolas Gey. Finding representations to Mr. Joubert to be of no avail, Mr. Rhodes, having formally notified to Gey that by his action he was warring against her Majesty, left for Stellaland. This absence was taken advantage of by Mr. Joubert, who, under the pretence of securing order in the country, set aside the Convention of London, of 1884, and publicly proclaimed the country as Transvaal territory. Montsiwe, in his despair, accepted the position and consented to this course. His country was taken from him, and partitioned off among the filibusters, while he and his people were awarded only ten farms, on the produce of which they were to live or die, as they could. To add to the insults heaped upon us, Mr. J. M. Wright, the Assistant Commissioner appointed by Mr. Mackenzie, was induced, under cover of a flag of truce, to leave Mafeking, and was made prisoner by the filibusters. The story of his imprisonment and subsequent escape is told in the Blue-books.

These actions by Gey and Joubert roused, as we know, a storm of indignation in England. Mr. Rhodes' reports had by this time shown convincingly that her Majesty's authority must be supported by force of arms. In the face of a strong opposition on the part of the Cape Government, the High Commissioner urged

armed intervention with such good effect that, at the end of October, 1884, Sir Charles Warren was appointed Special Commissioner, with orders to proceed to Bechuanaland and restore order.

For military purposes Sir Charles was created major-general, and was given the means of raising a force of 5000 men, which should be strong enough not only to drive out the filibusters, but to overawe the Transvaal. Sir Charles accordingly left England on the 14th of November, arriving in Cape Town on the 4th of December, 1884.

Preparations such as these alarmed the Transvaal Government, and, protesting that their proclamation over Montsiwe's country had merely been a temporary measure, they hastily withdrew it, tendering profuse explanations of their conduct.

Compare dates

V.

We now come to the action of the Cape Ministry in the matter. Finding that her Majesty's Government were determined to preserve the protectorate and punish offenders, Mr. Upton, the Premier, decided to try one last effort to prevent hostilities. He procured the sanction of the Imperial Government to a mission which he proposed to undertake, in company with Mr. Sprigg, to Bechuanaland.

In November, then, Messrs. Upington and Sprigg started on their journey. To their dealings in Stellaland we need not refer, as that country was deemed sufficiently settled under the agreement of the 8th of September. Proceeding to Goshen, they called a meeting of Gey's followers at Rooi Groonde. Mr. Upington addressed the people in a speech which has since been severely criticized as disloyal to imperial interests.

In the result, however, a scheme was propounded by which Gey and his people were practically forgiven their offences, Mr. Bethell's murder was condoned, and the land apportioned very much as arranged by the treaty so lately forced upon Montsiwe. For this latter purpose a Land Court was to be established, to consist of three members, Nicolas Gey, Mr. Van Niekerk, and one other member to be thereafter nominated by the Cape Government. Montsiwe and his people were given somewhat more land than they had obtained under the treaty, but were still to be tied down to the terms of the enforced treaty of 1882. Finally, Mr. Upington pledged himself to use his best endeavours to pass a bill annexing both Stellaland and Goshenland to the Cape Colony.

This new scheme was put before the public almost at the same moment as Sir Charles Warren arrived in the colony. It met a most righteous

fate, being heartily and universally condemned by all parties in the country outside the Africander Bond. The condonation of Gey's offences was felt to be an outrage, and the constitution of the proposed land court an insult to the Imperial Government. Lord Derby refused his sanction, and the Sprigg-Upington settlement accordingly fell to the ground.

Sir Charles Warren arrived in the colony on the 4th of December. By Mr. Rhodes' agreement of the 8th of September, the Government of Stellaland was vested in Van Niekerk and his burghers for a term of three months only, to allow time for trial and inquiry. Thus, on the 8th of December, Van Niekerk's authority would lapse unless new measures were taken, and Stellaland would be in a state of anarchy. In view of this, the High Commissioner proposed to Sir Charles Warren that a telegram should be sent to Niekerk confirming the agreement of the 8th of September, and requesting Van Niekerk to retain office pending the arrival of Sir Charles Warren. Further, it was suggested that Mr. Rhodes should be despatched to Stellaland as Deputy Commissioner, and Mr. Van Niekerk was requested to accord his aid to Mr. Rhodes in preserving law and order in the country provisionally. This scheme was discussed on the 6th of December, and Sir Charles Warren did actually on that day sign a telegram embodying the fore-

going suggestions; which telegram was duly despatched to Van Niekerk. Relying on the assurances then given, Mr. Rhodes accordingly proceeded on his mission to Stellaland. Now, the importance of this telegram will be apparent. It absolutely committed Sir Charles Warren to the entire policy of the High Commissioner and Mr. Rhodes, and it practically took Van Niekerk into partnership in the settlement, thus condoning all the previous acts of his administration.

As criticism on the subsequent course of Sir Charles Warren is entirely based on his action of the 6th of December, it is well to see, before going further, what explanation he has to offer. In a communication forwarded to the *Cape Times* in March last, Sir Charles Warren, by his interviewer, states, that he did indeed sign such a telegram, but that "at the time of so signing" he "had been unable to communicate with Mr. Mackenzie, had no complete knowledge of the actual facts, had never thoroughly studied the real purport of the agreement of the 8th of September, and," lastly, that he "signed hastily and under pressure put upon him by Government House."

Now, it will be apparent that with all these matters Van Niekerk, the ultimate scapegoat, had no concern. He accepted Sir Charles Warren's pledges and believed in them, and has lived to repent his folly in the dust.

But, further, one naturally asks, Why had Sir Charles Warren no knowledge of the general facts of the case? and why had he been unable to study the purport of Mr. Rhodes' agreement? The general history of the late proceedings and the actual text of the agreement were published in Blue-books issued in England certainly not later than the 1st of November. They had been in the hands of the public fully five weeks, which surely afforded ample time for analysis. Finally, as to the statement that pressure was exercised at Government House, history on this point differs, and the High Commissioner will doubtless in due time tell his own tale. In the mean time, was any excuse ever weaker? Will those who know Sir Charles Warren picture him under the ruthless thumb of the High Commissioner, a lamblike, plastic figure, limp and trembling in the hands of the master? I think not. Sir Charles Warren is a man of strong views and remarkable tenacity of purpose, not the weak and doubting politician he would have us believe him to be. When he signed the telegram, he himself most undoubtedly believed in the desirability of its provisions. We must look to what happened later for an explanation of the change which came o'er the spirit of his dream.

Sir Charles Warren's arrival in Cape Town was marked by a singular outburst of popular

enthusiasm. He was for the moment the embodiment of a policy of action which was felt to be sorely wanted. Crowds met him on the wharves, public meetings applauded him, public dinners toasted him, and womenkind adored him. He set to work with his accustomed energy, and a very few weeks saw him ready to start, with a fine force of regulars and newly raised levies under his command. In due course Sir Charles Warren and his troops established themselves in Barkly West, which was selected as the base of military operations. Here, for the first time, those steps were taken which have since resulted in the unfortunate friction between the High and the Special Commissioners. Mr. Rhodes' actions in Bechuanaland, based on the telegram of the 6th of December, became distasteful to Sir Charles Warren. He accordingly placed himself in communication with Mr. Mackenzie, and summoned that gentleman to his councils. Mr. Rhodes hastily returned to Barkly, and, finding Mr. Mackenzie in the confidence of the Special Commissioner, offered instantly to resign his post. It should be noted that up to this time Mr. Rhodes, though nominally acting under the Special Commissioner, was actually reporting direct to the High Commissioner. This was a position that the Special Commissioner—not unreasonably, I think—objected to. He explained this

objection to Mr. Rhodes and to the High Commissioner, with the result that Mr. Rhodes agreed to, and the High Commissioner sanctioned, a new departure in this respect. After consultation, Mr. Rhodes consented to act under the Special Commissioner, and to report to him in the future, on the sole understanding that Mr. Mackenzie was not to be allowed to enter Stellaland as Sir Charles Warren's adviser.

At the latter end of January, 1885, a conference took place at a place called Fourteen Streams, on the border line of the Transvaal and Griqualand West, between Sir Charles Warren and President Kruger. Both Mr. Rhodes and Mr. Mackenzie were present. In suggesting this meeting, there is no doubt that President Kruger was actuated by an intense desire to avert hostilities. The Transvaal was, as it still is, in a state of absolute bankruptcy, and was torn by internal dissensions. The President felt that for once England had resolved to maintain her supremacy, and that any overt act of hostility on the part of the Transvaal must inevitably result in a re-occupation of that country by England, and to the final extinction of all hopes of Republicanism in South Africa. It would be tedious to recapitulate the details of this conference, which lasted for two days. It was apparent throughout that the main desire on the part of the President was to stop the troops

proceeding to Goshen. He professed himself ready to accompany Sir Charles Warren to Rooi Groonde, himself guaranteeing the personal safety of the Commissioner. He, doubtless, felt that the progress of so large a body of troops would destroy that prestige with which the Boers had been glorified since Majuba Hill; and, in addition, that in the possible event of a war breaking out between the two countries, the Transvaal would be sandwiched in between British troops on their north-west and south-east borders. So apparent was the peaceful tenor of the President's course that it became from that moment almost a foregone conclusion, that the whole matter could be settled without recourse to arms. It was still as necessary as ever that the troops should proceed, and that Sir Charles Warren's instructions should be backed up by force; but it became obvious that the only enemy to be encountered would be Nicolas Gey's rabble of Goshen. It was here agreed that the boundary line under the new convention should be duly marked off, provision being made for arbitration. The President pledged himself to maintain order on his borders; and, lastly, he declared himself willing to render all the aid the law would allow him in bringing to justice the murderers of Mr. Bethell. Nothing could have been more satisfactory. It is unnecessary to hark back to the reasons which

impelled the President to this course. Sufficient to say that there was every reason to suppose that self-interest would induce him to carry out what self-interest had initiated.

From Fourteen Streams Sir Charles Warren proceeded through Griqualand West to Pokwhane, the head-quarters of Botilatsisi, and thence to Taungs, Mankoroane's capital. On his journey through Griqualand West, he received information which induced him to believe that a rising of the Dutch population of that country was impending. As this can be but a matter of surmise, it is unnecessary to discuss the grounds on which he based his conclusions. Acting, then, under information, he applied, through the High Commissioner, to Mr. Upington for a large force of colonial troops to occupy Griqualand West. Much communication passed which will doubtless find its way into the Blue-books. Mr. Upington declined to incur the expense of a military display without full evidence of the asserted sedition. Accusation led to accusation, and the result was an open rupture between Sir Charles Warren and the Cape Premier. As no outbreak has occurred in any portion of Cape Colony, it may now be inferred that Sir Charles Warren's fears were erroneous.

VI.

As the action in Mankoroane's country has not been opened for discussion, it may be passed by without comment. While at Taungs, however, two officers were despatched by the Special Commissioner to Vrijburg for general purposes of inquiry. This fact is only worthy of notice inasmuch as these officers were subsequently instructed to take possession of the public documents in Stellaland, and a few days later they did so take possession. As this action has been referred to as an infringement of the agreement of the 8th of September, it is as well to state what happened. Van Niekerk and the officers of his Government were at that time in Vrijburg, Mr. Rhodes being still absent on private business. The instructions as to the public papers were communicated to Mr. Van Niekerk. His reply was to the effect that, the Government of Stellaland being acknowledged, the demand was illegal. As, however, he was desirous of meeting the wishes of Sir Charles Warren on all points, he declared himself ready to yield, and to try and persuade his officers to the same course. The members of the government were summoned, and the demands made known. After some slight show of opposition by Groot Adrian de la Rey, which was soon overruled, the papers were duly handed over to these temporary commis-

sioners, who placed them under seal, pending the arrival of the Special Commissioner.

We now come to another point in which it has also been asserted that the "agreement" has been broken, namely, the "Cattle claims." Without going deeply into the claims and counter-claims which existed between the various parties to the late transactions, it may be noted that Mr. Rhodes had provided that the claims of Mankoroane against Massouw, and of Massouw against Mankoroane, should be arbitrated on, the British Government acting as guarantees for the good faith of Mankoroane, the Transvaal for Massouw. Now, Mr. Rhodes accuses Sir Charles Warren of repudiating, on behalf of Mankoroane, any liability, while Sir Charles Warren accuses Mr. Rhodes of initiating this repudiation by his own letter. As far as explanation can go without having the actual documents before us, what happened was this. The Transvaal Government, by its attorney, Dr. Leijds, formally agreed to this arbitration. Mr. Rhodes, in the presence of Sir Charles Warren, also formally agreed to arbitration. At a subsequent meeting, which took place early in February between Mr. Rhodes and Dr. Leijds, the latter, while professing himself still willing to abide by his pledges, suggested that it would be a wiser course to abandon all claims on either side. Mr. Rhodes consented to forward a letter

from Dr. Leijds to Sir Charles Warren, embodying those suggestions. Oddly enough, however, on the very day that such a letter was forwarded, another letter was received from Sir Charles Warren, stating that "While he would still consent to arbitration, under no circumstances would he allow Mankoroane to pay compensation, even though the award should be given against him." To still further complicate matters, Sir Charles Warren quotes a letter of Mr. Rhodes, addressed to Captain Bower, the Imperial Secretary, dated the 25th of November, 1884. In this letter Mr. Rhodes does most certainly state that in his opinion "direct compensation ought not in any case to be forced from Mankoroane," and Sir Charles Warren quotes this against Mr. Rhodes. But the quotation is an unfair one, and the context is suppressed, inasmuch as Mr. Rhodes' letter goes on to say, "but I think that if the award be given against Mankoroane, a money payment might be made by the Imperial Government in lieu, and due security obtained from Mankoroane for the advance." Thus, to summarize the whole question of the cattle claims, Mr. Rhodes accuses Sir Charles Warren of a breach of the agreement, because Sir Charles wrote the letter I have stated; while Sir Charles accuses Mr. Rhodes of being the first to break the agreement because, firstly, of Mr. Rhodes' letter of the 5th of November, of which he sup-

presses the context, and secondly, of Dr. Leijds' communication forwarded by Mr. Rhodes, which was dated a day later than Sir Charles Warren's own repudiation, and which crossed it on the road.

VII.

Our next point is the history of Van Niekerk, of his arrest and the causes thereof. When President Kruger agreed at Fourteen Streams to the demarcation of the boundary line, he, at the same time, nominated Mr. Van Niekerk as "Commissioner of the Western Border," a distinct office of profit under the Transvaal. Thus from that date Mr. Van Niekerk was actually a Transvaal official, although he had not taken up his duties. He still continued to administer Stellaland, and on the 3rd of February of this year (1885) he arrived in Vrijburg. To make matters clear, I must quote as nearly as possible his own words, spoken on the day of his arrival. "I have come in to meet Sir Charles Warren, and to hand in my resignation to him. I confess I should have liked to see the country a part of the Transvaal, but now I find it cannot be. The boundaries of the New Convention place me within the Transvaal, and I am anxious to take up my official post there. I want to give every assistance in the establish-

ment of a good government here, and for that purpose my services are entirely at the disposal of Sir Charles Warren." He then went on to advert to the charges of peculation made against himself by the so-called "Loyals," and requested that a commission of two imperial officers might be delegated to inquire into the matter. He did not, by so courting inquiry, intend to put himself into the dock, and constitute a jurisdiction of officers to try him. It has been asserted that he actually sought a criminal inquiry. Can it be supposed that a reasonable man would in a moment become such an absolute fool as thus to place himself in the hands of people whom he hated, and who hated him—a voluntary criminal. The Transvaal was open to him, a seat in the Volksraad was at his service, office and salary were actually his; all that he wanted was to begin this new career with a clean sheet. "Come here," he said, "appoint your officers and examine into my administration, and I am confident that you will absolve me from blame." It will be asked how, with such charges shadowed out against him, he could trust himself to inquiry. The answer is plain. It was because, with all his hatred of the English, the Dutchman always believes implicitly in an Englishman's promise. He had Sir Charles Warren's telegram in his pocket, a telegram which he might fairly consider to be penned by one who had a full know-

ledge of the subject, establishing his position, confirming past promises, and soliciting his aid. This he most certainly felt was a sure and absolute guarantee. Not two days before Sir Charles Warren's arrival in Vrijburg, a letter arrived from Mrs. Van Niekerk, saying that she had heard a rumour that her husband was to be arrested. Van Niekerk went at once to Mr. Rhodes and to the other officers then present, and asked whether there was any ground for such fear. Each of those officers gave Mr. Van Niekerk their absolute assurance that he might implicitly rely on the telegram of the 6th of December for his security. On such assurances as these Van Niekerk stayed. Sir Charles Warren arrived in Vrijburg, meeting Van Niekerk and greeting him, at first, with cordiality. A day or two later, however, on February 14, a meeting of the burghers was summoned. A number of resolutions were put forward by Sir Charles, on which the populace voted, while a thousand men under arms stood by. Yet we are told that no coercion was used. The general tenor of these resolutions was adverse to Van Niekerk, and on what happened that day has been founded the statement that the people of Stellaland were opposed to the Niekerk Government. As a fact Van Niekerk's supporters that day were as three to one, but resolutions were placed hastily before them; all that they understood well was that if they held up their hands they

would please the general, and so, they thought, stand a better chance of having their land grants confirmed. At this meeting the question of the land titles was gone into, and the people were given to understand that their farms would be allowed them, subject to a proper definition of the boundaries of Stellaland. As the fairest basis on which to proceed, Sir Charles Warren announced that he would accept the map of Stellaland as it appeared defined in the Blue-book of the Convention of 1884. At the outset this appeared to be as fair a course as could be pursued, where no real ascertained limits exist. Unfortunately, however, this map of Stellaland is now declared to be entirely incorrect, except as regards its eastern border, having been simply tacked on to the map of the Transvaal for the purpose of settling the new boundaries of the South African republic. Mr. Rhodes takes entire exception to it, as curtailing unreasonably the limits of Stellaland. On this point I do not think there will be much ultimate dispute, as the land question is the only one on which Sir Charles Warren, Mr. Rhodes, and Mr. Mackenzie are practically at one. They differ in detail, but in effect they have all counselled the confirmation of the land titles. At the close of the meeting a proclamation was made placing the country under "military rule to supplement the inadequate machinery of the so-called

Government of Stellaland." Here again the agreement is said to have been violated. Had it not been for the stern and harsh *régime* which was now inaugurated, I do not think this objection would have been raised. Unfortunately, however, every course was taken which could irritate the people. Small restrictions were imposed, threats of "German rule," of fines and punishments were held out. It will be said, possibly, that these matters are exaggerated, and that proof is wanting. In answer, one can but point to the rigid censorship exercised, and wholesale suppression of facts which would otherwise have been made public. A military telegraph wire may be, and indeed is, primarily for military purposes. But in these days the public demands more; they do not object to that legitimate inspection which it is the right of every general to demand, but they will always exact an account of a supervision which ends in actual suppression. Such a supervision is unwise, too, as it will, and invariably does, recoil on the heads of those who use it. It is an unfortunate fact that imperialism is generally exhibited in its worst light when its exponent is the British soldier. His whole tone is aggressive to the Boer mind. The fact is, that he cannot, unfortunately, divest himself of a consciousness of his enormous superiority. The Boer he esteems an inferior being, on a par with the cottagers of his native

village. A man who wears ill-made clothes, and never "tubs," is in very deed an unengaging object, and the aversion towards him is not unnatural. But small things make up the sum of existence. The result of these apparent trifles is that a feeling of positive hatred is engendered in the Boer mind, which jaundices all legislation, even though it be for his ultimate good. Such results as these ensued on the proclamation of military rule. Then followed the grand *coup*. On the evening of the same day warrants were issued for the arrest of Mr. Van Niekerk, Groot Adrian le la Rey, and S. P. Celliers, charging them with being concerned in the murder of James Honey, in January, 1883. Now, I have already explained how and why this act, as far as Van Niekerk was concerned, was a breach of good faith. I will now try and show that it was a failure in policy. In the first instance, however, it would be well to tell the story of how James Honey came by his death.

VIII.

Honey was one of the early volunteers of Massouw. He was a notoriously bad character, a noted cattle-lifter and horse thief, and a clever, unscrupulous man. On the establishment of Stellaland as a republic, Honey aspired to be a leader. Disappointed in this, and unable

to get the large grants of land to which he deemed himself entitled, he plotted with Mas-souw to drive out his former friends and reinstate the natives; with, of course, an understanding that he was to receive a fitting reward. His schemes came to the ears of Van Niekerk and his Government, and, at a meeting which he attended shortly afterwards, he was charged with treason. Now, it is asserted that Van Niekerk gave the order which condemned him to death, but there is absolutely no evidence produced to warrant such an assertion. What followed would rather show the contrary. Knowing Honey to be an offender against the Transvaal law, Van Niekerk ordered him to be taken under escort to Christiana, a small town in the Transvaal, and there to be handed over to the Landrost for trial. He was so taken, but unfortunately the Landrost refused to receive him. Honey was then taken back to a spot near Kopje Enkel, on the border line, and was there shot, as far as is known, by order of Groot Adrian de la Rey. From the time when he left for Christiana until the tidings of his death were received, we have sufficient reason for believing that Van Niekerk had absolutely no communication with his escort. The whole proceedings took place at a distance of many miles from the spot where Van Niekerk was known to be. Surely the very fact of his handing over the

prisoner to the Transvaal suggests that he wanted to save Honey's life rather than to cause his death. Here we do, indeed, come to a point where possibly the evidence may weigh against him. There is a general idea among these communities of the interior that a sentence of outlawry duly notified, if not attended to, may be followed by sentence of death upon the person so outlawed. Now, the evidence tends to show that the offence was committed on the 10th, while the edict of outlawry was not issued till the 12th; that is to say, the outlawry edict was issued two days after Honey was shot. It has always been asserted that the outlawry took place on the 10th, and the murder on the 12th. But even if it had been so proved, that Van Niekerk was a party to the ante-dating of this edict, thus rendering himself accessory after the fact, was this sufficient ground for an absolute breach of faith? For look at the state of society which existed. A body of lawless men, difficult of control, requiring care and consideration to rule them, were gathered together under Van Niekerk. Were these the men who would have for a moment endured to have their acts inquired into or their deeds punished by the dry light of technical law? It is not sought to prove that Van Niekerk was a being without spot, whose soul was steeped in a well of purity. He was a clever, cautious man, who by ability had won

the leading place with those among whom he lived. He had tried to save Honey, who was now dead, was it unnatural that he should lend his name to a scheme to try and hide it? Perfect freedom from guile is not a characteristic of the land-grabber in a new country, and Van Niekerk has been neither better nor worse than those leaders who have gone before him, the pioneers of our South African colonies.

More than this, we claim that actual condonation of this very offence had been made. The bald fact of Honey's death at the hands of the Stellalanders was known to Lord Derby, to the High Commissioner, to Sir Charles Warren, to Mr. Rhodes, and to Captain Bower. But to Mr. Mackenzie we must look for the actual words of condonation; to Mr. Mackenzie, who now absolutely denies his acts of a few short months ago; to Mr. Mackenzie, who sits on the right hand of the Special Commissioner, urging him on to actions which threaten to cover the Bechuanaland expedition with ridicule and discredit.

On the arrival of Mr. Mackenzie in Vrijburg as Deputy Commissioner, he was met by Mrs. James Honey, who prayed him to inquire into the details of her husband's death. Mr. Mackenzie's account of this interview may be given *in extenso*: "When the poor woman spoke to me so sadly, my Scotch heart was sore. It was

hard to deny her request, but I felt where my duty lay. I said, 'Mrs. Honey, I speak to you as Deputy Commissioner, and I say now that I can hold out no hopes of inquiry into the manner of your husband's death. Let bygones be bygones.'” Mr. Mackenzie then appointed Van Niekerk, as I have said, Assistant Commissioner. If, by these words and this act, Mr. Mackenzie was not a condoner of what had passed, then words and actions have ceased to have any meaning. His own explanation appears to be that as Deputy Commissioner Mackenzie he was constrained to deny inquiry, but as the Rev. John Mackenzie, unattached adviser, he is at liberty to follow the dictates of his great heart, and recommend his successor to disregard his earlier pledges. There are yet more objections to be urged against this arrest. Questions have arisen as to its legality. Was the act murder? Was it committed in Transvaal territory, in Stellaland, in Mankoroane's or Massouw's country? Most certainly it was not in any country then under the British protectorate; and Stellaland was not then a recognized republic. If it was in the Transvaal, the jurisdiction lies with that country. Assuming it to have been in the territory of either of the native chiefs, there does exist a provision under which the High Commissioner can institute an inquiry; but he can only hold such inquiry if the offender

is a British subject. Now, De la Rey and Celliers, culpable though they probably are, are most certainly not British subjects. Is Van Niekerk a British subject? It is, I believe, shown that he was born in Cape Colony; but there appears to be no doubt that in 1881, if not before, he became a subject of the Transvaal. At the time of the retrocession of the Transvaal all Englishmen who desired to continue as subjects of her Majesty were put on a special list, which exempted them from certain liabilities, and made provision for their continuance as British subjects. Now, Van Niekerk is on no such list, and is, and was at the time of the murder, most clearly a Transvaal citizen.

This trial, so rashly initiated, has already ended in a fiasco. But let us look at its results. Stellaland, peaceful and contented under Mr. Rhodes' settlement, has become a hornet's nest of disturbance, requiring a military occupation. The government, which its people were willing to place into our hands, has been torn from them by force, and party spirit has been fanned to a point which only waits the withdrawal of the troops to effervesce. In Goshen the result has been still more disastrous. There we have lost the main objects of our expedition, namely, the punishment of Gey, and the seizure of Mr. Bethell's murderers. The filibusters of Goshen were lulled into a temporary

security. Many of them were actually awaiting our arrival into their country. They lived in a fool's paradise, fondly expecting that they, like the Stellalanders, might, by an attitude of submission, obtain their lands. Gey himself had actually sought an interview with Sir Charles Warren. There is positively no doubt that, by passing quietly through Stellaland, we should have been able to lay our hands on some of the principal offenders whom we had come so far to seek. More than that, we should have won the good-will of the Transvaal, whose sympathies with Niekērk are strong and sincere, and we should, I do firmly believe, have secured their co-operation in our later work in Goshen: President Kruger was anxious to see an end to the constant disturbances on his western border. The late German annexations have set the Dutchmen thinking as to what German rule means. They had fully realized what the results of such rule would be. They were fully convinced of the wisdom of the saying, "Better the devil you do know than the devil you don't know." They were anxious to gain our good-will by their assistance in the matter of Goshen. Their hearts were never really with Gey and his gang, and any help accorded was but the offspring of success. With adversity came contempt, and Gey was to all intents and purposes abandoned. But how do matters stand now?

The immediate result of the Stellaland policy has been to drive the culprits into the Transvaal, far beyond our reach, and to enlist the sympathies not only of the Transvaal, but of the entire Dutch population of South Africa on behalf of the freebooters. It has divided the Englishmen of Cape Colony, and driven them into adverse camps; it has alienated from us the good and wise Sir John Brand, the President of the Orange Free State, who has ever been our mainstay in all dealings with the Dutch people; and, finally, it has destroyed all faith in imperial promises and imperial pledges throughout South Africa.

IX.

The attitude of the High Commissioner on the general question of Sir Charles Warren's actions has been adversely criticized; articles based on false premises are launched at him by the English press; and, on less than no evidence, an old and tried public servant is held up to public censure. Now, a fair examination of what has passed will, I think, show us how unjust such criticisms are. To follow Sir Hercules Robinson's action throughout. It was he who for years past urged armed intervention in Stellaland; it was he who pressed the declaration of the protectorate and the appointment of

a resident Deputy Commissioner. Finding that the Imperial Government were unwilling to provide men or money to support their new obligations, he, by means of Mr. Rhodes' agreement, preserved the trade route, and checked the advance of the Transvaal. It was he who, in the teeth of ministerial opposition at the Cape, insisted on the absolute necessity of the Queen's authority being upheld in Goshen; it was he who counselled the appointment of Sir Charles Warren. And it must be noted that, from the first arrival of that officer, the High Commissioner pointed out the imperative necessity of abiding by pledges already given. Finding the new Special Commissioner in agreement with him in these views, he accorded him an active support. It was not until Mr. Mackenzie once more appeared on the scene that friction began. And it must be remembered that from the moment of the late Deputy Commissioner's recall the High Commissioner had regarded that officer's policy as ruinous in its nature. Yet even this second advent of Mr. Mackenzie brought no serious opposition to the action of Sir Charles Warren. It was not until the arrest of Van Niekerk, the proclamation of military despotism, the threats of German rule, and the written remonstrances of the Presidents of the Transvaal and the Orange Free State, that the High Commissioner felt at last constrained to record his

dissent from Sir Charles Warren's policy. It is said that he was influenced by Mr. Uppington. Is it reasonable or likely that, inasmuch as when standing alone he fought the battle of imperialism with his ministers, he should now, when backed by the full strength of England, yield himself over a willing sacrifice to their persuasive eloquence? Hardly, I think. The High Commissioner is now, as ever, desirous of upholding the honour of England, but he is a shrewd statesman, not prone to be led away by the excitement of the moment. He saw the necessity of armed intervention, but he deprecated a course of unthinking revenge. He sees that true imperialism may be better advanced by a firm adherence to promises given than by spasmodic efforts of military display. He realizes that, in the future administration of our South African colonies, we must try to attract rather than to repel local influences. We have given our colonists responsible government; we cannot now withdraw it. We have before us a huge Dutch population; with all the will in the world we cannot eliminate it. We have shown that we mean to hold on to our colonial empire. Let us now show that we mean to remain as friends, rather than as iron rulers of a discontented people.

The High Commissioner knows all this. He knows, too, that the patience of the British tax-

payer may be exhausted, and that this kind of armed occupation cannot last. He knows that the rampant patriotism of the English frequenter of an up-country canteen, and the foolish vapouring of the youthful Boer are alike ill-judged. To sum up, he sees his assertion of imperial authority becoming a display of imperial bluster, his efforts to punish offenders against the Queen becoming a means of revenging private slights, and of discrediting personal enemies. Can it be wondered at, then, that he refuses any longer to lend his sanction to a course which has reversed his chosen policy and nullified his best efforts—a course which still threatens to land us in a sea of trouble in our future relations with our Dutch fellow-colonists.

IX.

In discussing the Bechuanaland question, it is impossible to confine our attention to the comparatively narrow bounds of Stellaland and Goshen. To arrive at any idea of our ultimate objects in preserving imperial influence we must take into consideration the whole of the native territory reaching to the Zambesi. When we think of the expenditure incurred, we may well indeed ask, "To what end do we look?" I have already, at an earlier period of this paper, explained what Bechuanaland proper may be considered to comprise. But there are other

more important countries beyond those bounds ; and it is from those countries we may look for our ultimate profit in the future. To the north of 22° south latitude, the great country of Matabeleland, under its powerful king, Lobengula, lies before us. And not only Matabeleland, but to the north and east lies Mashunaland, reaching to the confines of the Portuguese territory on the east coast, and bounded on the north by the Zambesi. Lobengula, the King of Matabeleland, is a Zulu, as are all his people—the descendants of one of those hordes who, during Chaka's tyrannic rule in Zululand, some forty or fifty years ago, left their country, seeking fresh conquests further afield. Not only does Lobengula hold sway over Matabeleland, but the whole of Mashunaland owes him allegiance, a power which he exercises by annual inroads and raids made upon that country. The Matabeles can at a moment's notice bring some fifteen thousand notable warriors into the field, and it may be readily believed that they are a political factor not to be despised. Now, we have actual knowledge that these several countries abound in mineral wealth, gold being, as far as we know, specially abundant. It is a fact also that there exists a vast extent of land remarkably suited for pastoral enterprise—a fine open country, interspersed with belts of well-grown timber. Water is abundant, and ample facilities exist for irrigation. In Matabeleland and in the north-eastern

portion of Mashunaland the climate is exceptionally healthy. In Mashunaland the natives are, when undisturbed by their warlike masters, peaceably disposed, and singularly industrious and ingenious. Unlike Bechuanaland, where the population is sparse, we have here a far more densely peopled country, which, as civilization advances, will absorb a large quantity of our English manufactures.

It is, then, to this country we have to look for the value of our trade route, and for a return to us of some of the expenditure we are now incurring. It is impossible within the limits of this paper to enter upon a detailed history of these countries and peoples. The subject is one full of interest to those who watch the march of civilization in Africa, but it is one which requires to be dealt with at greater length than we can now give to it.

Briefly, then, assuming that we do seek to concern ourselves with the vast possibilities of this central South African interior, what further steps do we mean to take, and what price do we mean to pay? For in the answer to these questions lies the answer to the question of colonial annexation. There are many courses open to us, but I will, for the present, propound three schemes only, pointing out as far as I can the advantages of each. (1) *Absolute annexation* to the Zambesi, governing the whole of the country as a Crown colony, at the cost of some

half million of money yearly; (2) *the extension of the protectorate* to the Zambesi, stopping short of annexation, and allowing the natives to fight their own battles for a while, but supporting our authority in Stellaland and Goshenland by imperial officials at an imperial cost of, say, £150,000 yearly; or (3) keeping within the limits of our present protectorate, and advocating *colonial annexation* for Stellaland and Goshen.

The first of these schemes is noble in its proportions, and has infinite possibilities. Will the Imperial Government pay the bill? Of one thing we may be certain, that if we do not very speedily make good our claims to these countries, some one else will step in before us. If we are content that it should be so, well and good.

For the second scheme there is much to be said, and, while discussing it, I should like to point out that the protectorate under the late Order in Council, extending only to 22° south latitude, falls short of the necessities of the case. We have gone too far or not far enough. We have encumbered ourselves with the responsibility of a country which is only valuable inasmuch as it lies between us and the prize in the distance. It is as yet a moot point whether this twenty-second parallel absolutely hems in the Transvaal; and even if it does, the Transvaal claim that it is a breach of the Convention of London of 1884. But be this as it may, there is nothing to prevent Germany from stepping into the country

to the north of the twenty-second parallel before us. It is easy to say that it has no ports, and that we have the key of the front door. So we have at present, but an arrangement may very easily be come to between the Germans and the Portuguese by which the Germans may still possess themselves of the key of the back door. Why, then, not continue the extension of the protectorate to the Zambesi at once, and so reserve to ourselves all possibilities. It is said that the Portuguese claim rights under old concessions. Even so, let that be a matter for future arbitration, not an excuse for present delay. It is sometimes objected that it would be unwise to involve ourselves with Lobengula, King of the Matabeles, making ourselves in a manner responsible for his actions; but it is a question whether our present limits do not rather add to those difficulties. Khama, chief of the Bamangwatos, whose territory comes within the limits of the late Order in Council, is a sworn enemy of Lobengula. By sending embassies to Khama, and keeping aloof from Lobengula, are we not rather constituting ourselves as Khama's champions. Sir Charles Warren is, as I write, actually at Bamangwato (or Shoshong, as it is now called), and is thence sending down telegrams, repeating the usual scare, "The Matabeles are coming!" Why cannot we at once seek to obtain Lobengula as a friend, instead of holding aloof from him as an enemy? Do not

let us make the grievous mistake of alienating the one powerful king who still exists south of the Zambesi. That is what I fear we are inclined to do. Let, then, communications be opened up with that potentate; let him be sounded on the question of his acceptance of a further protectorate. If his answer is favourable, let the question of his further protectorate become one of practical politics. Now that the unfortunate Niekerk prosecution is abandoned, there will be no necessity to retain an army of occupation in Stellaland. Let it be once understood that military pressure is removed, and that the people are free to exercise their votes and choose their own leaders, and all causes of irritation will vanish. In Goshen it is otherwise. It will be necessary for some time hence to retain a force of not less than five hundred pioneer police to check any further aspirations on the part of Nicolas Gey. This force should not be mere gallopers, but a hardy, useful body of men, whose services could be utilized in times of peace in opening up roads and improving the water supply of the country. A fair estimate of expense for such a force as this would be about £120,000 annually. The necessary civil cost entailed on the Imperial Government in salaries to officials and other matters may be estimated at an annual £30,000; in all, say £150,000. This is about the lowest estimate of the probable cost of preserving the protectorate without

annexation. If we are prepared to incur it, we may fairly hope for a cessation of our difficulties for a time, unless some new development takes place. We might even undertake such a responsibility for three years; in the mean time making such grants of land in the new territory, under the occupation clause, to respectable farmers, who would, in the future, form the nucleus of a good law-abiding population, whom, under altered circumstances, the Colonial Government might be willing to take under their control.

We now come to the third alternative. If we are content to leave the future of the undeveloped interior to chance, and to save our pockets in the present, a compromise of this kind may, I think, be readily effected. Let us confine ourselves to the limits of our present protectorate, which, in such a case, would be almost nominal; and let us encourage the absolute annexation of Stellaland and Goshen by Cape Colony. Mr. Uington would be prepared to propose annexation were he encouraged to do so by the promise of a moderate subsidy from the Imperial Government. The Colony is not rich enough to undertake the entire expenses, but she could undoubtedly carry on the government of these countries at far less cost than could the Imperial Government.

The result of colonial annexation would certainly be that a Dutch element would, both now and in the future, preponderate in the countries

so taken over; but it is doubtful if that is a matter for deprecation, as experience has shown us that the pastoral districts of South Africa will hardly support an English population. And it is a question whether, in any case, ownership of the soil would not in the long run gravitate into the hands of the Dutch. Again, it must be remembered that, as the colony can only annex with imperial consent, so she cannot dis-annex without imperial concurrence. If once, then, these countries were attached to Cape Colony, they would be secured from all chance of falling into the hands of an adverse power. But, it is said, "The natives whom we have sought to protect would suffer." Well, that is true to an extent. They would most undoubtedly suffer in the gradual curtailment of their lands, but would not this happen under any scheme? The survival of the fittest must always result in the gradual elimination of native interests; and, even to the natives, such annexation would not be an unfeigned evil. They would at all events be protected from the horrors of partial extermination, through which they have lately passed. Their lives, and the lands remaining to them, would be theirs to live on in safety and in comfort. They would lose their mock royalty and their nominal authority, but in lieu of that they and their wives and families might look forward to a settled peace and prosperity. As to the native territory lately placed within our limits by

the Order in Council, dated the 27th of January, we must still be content to retain our new responsibilities in our own hands. The colony could hardly be expected to undertake this for us. But as we do not, I imagine, intend, under this new order, to pose as the champions of this or that chief against his warlike neighbour, the expense of maintaining our obligations in that distant land need be of no great consequence.

In deciding, then, on either of these three schemes which I have thus sought to analyse, we have only to ask ourselves, What are we aiming at? Do we aim at an extension of our colonies with a view to a great imperial South Africa in the future? or, do we seek merely to consolidate what we have got, avoiding present difficulties, being content to live alongside our neighbours, whether they be Dutch or Germans, as joint sharers of any benefits that may accrue, with a minimum of expense in the present? But whatever be our object, above all things let us avoid the errors of the past. We have it in our power now to effect a settlement—let us beware of harking back to our old policy of indecision. Let us take our line and keep to it; for, be assured that on what we do now will depend our position in South Africa in the future. The time has come in the history of the world when other nations beside ourselves are seeking to establish a colonial empire. And what right have we to complain if they do

so seek? We are too apt to content ourselves with a dog-in-the-manger policy of holding back ourselves, while we affect astonishment and indignation when others step in where we have feared to tread. We have this matter now in our own hands. We have, on the spot, all the elements necessary for a solution. Let us decide now, lest we repent hereafter.

XI.

Before closing the subject I have undertaken to discuss, it would be well to advert once more to the results which have followed the abortive arrest of Mr. Van Niekerk. Let the Imperial Government ask their advisers what the result of this step has been. They will be told in answer, if they are truly told, that they have roused a storm of indignation in every Dutch heart; that they have lost the alliance of those loyal burghers of the Free State who follow Sir John Brand; that they have doubled the numbers of the Africander Bond; that they have ensured the continuance in power of a Dutch party in Cape Colony; and that they have, by all this, themselves laid the foundation stone of that great Dutch republic which it is the hope of the Africander party to build up.

To the world at home Van Niekerk simply poses as a detected criminal and a double-dealing politician. To the world of South Africa he

figures as the persecuted victim of British mismanagement and official treachery. I am not one of those who think that even extreme measures would have caused a national rising. The leaders of the Bond are far too shrewd to commit their cause to the arbitration of the sword, with such a country as England. They fully estimate the fact that their strength lies in constitutional agitation. At this moment they realize how thoroughly we are playing their own game, and are biding their time with infinite tact and judgment. Is it too late to alter our tactics? Instead of applauding the empty boasting of colonial Jingoism at the beck of Mr. Mackenzie, let us try to temper our military ardour with even-handed justice. Let us endeavour to realize the possibility of loyalty existing even in the hearts of our Dutch fellow-colonists. Let us show a little interest in these colonies of ours, caring for them as a child rather than cursing them as a step-child. Let us take for our motto, "Decision and Honesty," not "Hesitation and Treachery." Do not let these Dutchmen have it to say of us—

"They palter with us in a double sense
 Who keep the word of promise to our ear,
 And break it to our hope."

THE END.