

(4th Letter. - 24 March 1900)

To the Hon. R. P.

Deputy in the House of Commons.

London.

I thank you heartily for the official report of Mr. Chamberlain's address before the House of Commons (Feb. 5th), which you sent me, also for the copies of the discourses of eminent Pastors, all of whom hold a position, in favour of the war to the last, which the English Government has undertaken against the Transvaal, as though this war constituted a real act of justice! Instead, justice requires that one should respect the nationality of all modern Associations — be they large or small. This we call *love for our neighbour*; to do unto others as we would have them do unto us.

In the time of King Ahab, ¹ four hundred prophets who were said to be *true prophets of God* (not those of Baal) prophesied unanimously in favour of the war which the King was about to undertake against the Syrians, for the purpose of wresting from them that which he thought was his; and yet they prophesied falsely. One alone spoke the truth, the prophet Micah, who was not heeded, he was even persecuted.

But now it is not the case that one prophet alone speaks the truth. The best preachers of London — that is the most spiritual, those most dear to God for their faith, — speak against this scandalous war, much more than I have done; and I wonder indeed, that I, an

(1) 1 Kings 22; 1-40.

Italian, should understand their words, while you, who are English, ignore them.

In regard to the causes of the war, these are they which the Lord would have to say against the present politics of the English.

The policy of 1881-1884, of which Chamberlain declared himself to be the victim, and all his Colleagues in the Cabinet, was a righteous policy. By that, independence was restored to those republics, stolen from them in the first place by a theft of the worst sort; *a domestic theft*. The English had entered the homes of others as protectors, defenders and allies, and then they remained there as usurpers, a fact not new in the history of England — and of other nations.

When Chamberlain says: « We cannot concede liberty to these republics » he leaves his auditors under the impression that the government of London has been so generous at some time, as to bestow independence upon these republics. Instead, nothing is more false: it had only restored, first by justice and then by violence, that which they had unjustly taken away.

The policy of 1881-1884 was then, a just policy, which honours indeed those who promoted it. The present policy is instead, one of usurpation which shocks the entire world, and will undoubtedly cause the ruin of the British Empire.

If the English who are in the Transvaal and Orange do not like the government of the Boers, because harsh and unjust, they can go away, or at least, continue to make known their grievances, through diplomatic means, as they had commenced. But in order to impose its conditions on the Transvaal, the English government should

never have drawn from these diplomatic treaties the phrase: « We do not wish to hear the treaties of 1881-1884 spoken of » which is equivalent to saying « henceforward you can be no longer free. »

It is precisely this phrase, repeated again and again, that made the war break out, which will really seem just in the eyes of many, but which will always be an iniquity in the sight of God!

Some will say: « How was such a phrase ever pronounced with so much thoughtlessness, without taking into account the terrible consequences which might result from it? » I answer, that avarice caused it to be pronounced! The compromised interests of thousands of stockholders of a Bank which is about to fail, and which must have spent *who knows how much*, to paint the Boers as half-savages and the English living among them as poor victims, worthy of the commiseration of the entire civil world, and consequently of the intervention of the English arms! Oh, the root of all evil is always the cupidity of money! ¹ On this account twelve thousand English youths lie dead and wounded in South Africa, without counting the Boers!

Therefore the Rev. Watson (English) justly exclaims:

« From the highest unto the lowest, priests and people together, we have been growing mercenary, wordly, materialistic... What is certain is that the immediate occasion of this disastrous war was the desire of a pastoral people to retain the control of their own country, and the determination of a handful of mine-owning millionaires to seize it for their own ends.... It would be an admirable action, if it were only possible, to commandeer the habitues of the taverns, and the gamblers of the exchanges... and then to place this whole commando of disreputables, in front of our troops when they fight the great battle of the war, so that valuable lives may be protected while they are crossing the zone of danger, and the country may be rid of its chief classes of disgrace, the drunkard, the gambler, and the swindler. » ²

(1) 1 Tim. 6; 10. (2) From *The British Weekly*, Dec. 28, 1899 p. 268.

Oh what will not be revealed at the end of the war. Then, I hope that one thing more will be discovered, that I am a loyal and sincere friend of England, and that my heart often beats for her.

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But will the two small republics be really conquered? Oh, this is indeed impossible. For if that should come to pass, it would be necessary that the Lord, Who is in Heaven, should change His character. Instead of being the Father of all His children, He would become the protector exclusively of the reigning English government! It would be necessary for the Sacred Scriptures to cease, for the moment, to be an emanation of His Holy Will: it would be necessary, in fact, that God should cease to be *good* toward His creatures, *true* in all His affirmations, and *faithful* in all His promises of divine protection to all those who put their faith in Him, with sincerity of heart, as now do the Boers.

Before that happens, it is more likely that the sun will move from its place, or that the earth will burst asunder! — In fact the Lord tells us plainly: « Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away. »¹

Therefore the two small republics will continue to exist even if all England should disembark at Cape Town!

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Before the defeat of Cronje took place, the Lord made me write, and print and publish that this should happen *by His will*, in order that England might honorably

(1) Matt. 24; 35.

conclude peace with the Transvaal, thus bringing to an end a shameful war, which if it had continued would undoubtedly have brought the English army to ruin. And we have proof that it is exactly so from the fact that the Lord, in order to stop all thought of revenge, made the surrender of Cronje coincide with the Anniversary of the defeat of Majuba!

Notwithstanding all this, the English government closed their ears to the Word of God, and the people thought that the coincidence of the two above-mentioned Anniversaries was the *sanction* that the Lord gave to the English soldiers' cry of revenge. — « Now Ladysmith is freed, the capital of Orange is in our power, the Boers are retreating.... one step more and we will be in Pretoria. »

Instead, Honourable Deputy, the reason of these victories, lies in the fact that God wished to force the two Presidents to be the first to ask for peace, in order to show to all the world that the true cause of the war was to be looked for in the English Government, which responded to proposals of peace with terms of conquest; and not in those of the two small Republics which they propose to crush!

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« We must absolutely maintain our preponderance in South Africa — the day in which we should lose it, our colonies might revolt — with us it is a question of life and death — in the actual state of things our supremacy over the two rebellious Republics is absolutely indispensable — if we do not assert it immediately, another nation will do so before us.... »

These few phrases, repeated so many times in the House of Commons and published in the newspapers, should be enough to prove to all the world that the reasons of the war are decidedly other than those of the simple protection of persecuted English subjects! But by what ways do you wish to keep your indispensable supremacy in South-Africa? Through the ways of God, which are always blessed, or through those of oppression, which brings with it its curse?

One day the thought came to King Ahab of annexing the vineyard of Naboth to his possessions. Many reasons bore in favour of this annexation. To have it without litigation, he would have spent a large amount; but Naboth, out of respect to his ancestors, did not wish absolutely to sell it to him. Then the royal family took recourse to wicked means, in consequence of which Naboth first was calumniated and then killed.¹

But the vineyard of Naboth which the British Empire believes has already been annexed to it, has cost many more calumnies and many more lives than those that King Ahab wished to appropriate!

As then, so now, a prophet of God says to the domineering English imperialism: « That vineyard shall never be yours, indeed you shall perish! » and so undoubtedly it will happen.

For the Lord our God, little Transvaal is of as much value as the great British Empire; as He does not judge nations according to their size, nor from their greater or lesser civilization, but *according to their uprightness!*

Many are impressed by my writings, and think within themselves, how ever can these few Boers yet defeat

(1) 1 Kings 21; 1-19.

the English who have heretofore filled the two republics with soldiers! Oh, this would indeed be a difficult task for the Boers, but not so for the Lord God in Whom they place their trust. He will over-rule the great army and put it to flight, and all the nations of the earth shall know that the Lord does not save by a multitude of armies, and that for His victories the Boers are even too numerous.

Would to God that the faith of the Counsellors of the Crown, in the highest truth of the Word of God, should still reach them in time to prevent the great discomfiture of the English army now arrayed against it!

I say, *faith in the word of God*, and how easy it is to recognize that among a thousand!

The WORD OF GOD respecteth no man's person — it tolerates, but does not adapt itself to human corruption — seeks always the Glory of God, never that of man. — It is Charity and Justice — walks always in the path of real prudence and true wisdom, by which means, heaven and earth were created, and are now wonderfully preserved. — It is always in harmony with itself. What it has been in the past, it is in the present, and will be in the future.

« The WORD OF GOD is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow; and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. »¹ The Sacred Scriptures are an emanation from Him alone; its principal essence is Jesus Christ Himself, which lives in the heart of all the children of God, communicating to each of them its spiritual gifts, according

(1) Hebrews 4; 12.

to His marvellous wisdom. Therefore they have « the high praises of God in their mouth, and a two-edged sword in their hand to execute vengeance upon the heathen, and punishments upon the people. »¹ Before long this WORD will take possession of all the kingdoms of the world, and they will be compelled to bend to its influence and its sovereign power, as iron bends under the action of fire.

Against this WORD OF GOD the English army is now arrayed. This fact alone should cause the entire British Empire to tremble!

Do I love the English army more than do the English? It is true I must love it greatly, if I interest myself so much for its salvation and true glory. But the Lord assures me that for the present I will not be heard, therefore I foresee the approaching imminent catastrophe of the English army caused by the valour of a handful of heroes, rendered such by the justice of their cause and by the power of God!

I thank you cordially, dear sir, for your letter, the only one that I have received until now, in answer to the many sent to all the honourable members of the two Houses. You have tried to benefit me, and I pray God that He will turn your heart to do always more, by means of your communion with Christ, from which only proceeds the glory of God, and the triumph of His kingdom in the World.

With kind salutations, I subscribe myself

Yours faithfully

ALBERTO CHIERA.

Rome, 24 March 1900.

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(1) Psalms 149; 6-7.