

TRANSVAAL INDEPENDENCE COMMITTEE
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WESTMINSTER.

THE CASE

Leysds

OF THE

BOERS IN THE TRANSVAAL.

BY

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HIGH COURT OF GRIQUALAND WEST.

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INTRODUCTORY.

THE interest taken throughout England in the rising or war (call it as you will) in the Transvaal, may be a sufficient apology for my endeavouring to put briefly and concisely before the public the history of the case as it at present stands. There are many who have neither time, opportunity, or inclination to read through large works on the history of the Transvaal, or to wade through long parliamentary reports and newspaper leading articles, in order to ascertain what is to be said on the present state of affairs. It is for the use of such people that I venture to write these few pages.

In the title I frankly acknowledge myself an advocate for the Boers ; with the facts of the case before me it would be difficult for me to be otherwise, and I trust my readers may say so too.

In the Appendix will be found a few extracts from the German Press relating to the subject.

THE CASE OF THE BOERS IN THE TRANSVAAL.

The word Boer is simply the Dutch for farmer, and the Boers are mostly of Dutch descent, although some people so called are descended from fugitive French Huguenots. In 1815, the Cape of Good Hope, which had been originally one of the colonies of Holland, was ceded to England by the Treaty of Paris. The Dutch settlers were much opposed to British rule, and in order to avoid it, trekked, as it is called, that is to say, loaded up all their household goods on their ox waggons, and with their flocks and herds, voluntarily abandoned the homes (such as they were) that they had made for themselves, and departed to seek fresh fields and pastures new beyond the borders of the colony,—anywhere beyond the reach of British rule. Of this body of fugitives, one part made their way into Natal, and the other into the Transvaal. In both cases they had to fight their way.

When the Natal party had succeeded in making good their footing, the country which they had fought for was taken over by the British Government, and they found that it was in vain that they had undergone labours, dangers, and sufferings, for

once more they were made British subjects. The party in the Transvaal eventually proclaimed that territory a Republic in 1840, and this Republic was eventually recognized in the year 1852 by the British Government.

At last thought the Boers, their labours had been rewarded,—that object for which they had so long been striving was at last attained. They had gained their independence, which was recognized by the English Government in a solemn and formal treaty. From that time till 1877, the British Government recognized their obligations and did not interfere with the Transvaal. In the years 1875 and 1876, the finances of the Republic were certainly not in a flourishing state, and the relations between it and its powerful neighbours were, what I believe is called in diplomatic language, “strained.” If, however, we are to believe in the policy which brought about the Zulu war, we must acknowledge that such must be the normal state, and that the only remedy is to make war on, and, if possible, crush your powerful neighbour. Be that as it may, certain disputes occurred on the border relative to wood-cutting, &c., and eventually it was reported that Secocoeni had entered the Transvaal, and burned down a Mission station ; whereupon the Raad, or Parliament of the Transvaal, declared war against Secocoeni. The report of the burning of the Mission station turned out to be untrue, but never-

theless the war was carried on. The forces necessary were raised by an unpaid force levied under the Border law with the consent of the Executive Government of the country, what is ordinarily called a Commando; a force naturally undisciplined and difficult to keep together. All the members of it have left their farms untended and their crops unreaped, and the great wish of the general body is to get home as soon as possible. After a desultory warfare with varied results the Commando dissolved and returned home. This dissolution was no doubt in many quarters considered a sign of defeat, and although the people most concerned, viz., the people of the Transvaal, including the members of the Commando who had returned home, went on quietly leading their ordinary life, looking after their farms and their cattle and had no apprehension whatever, yet a feeling got about, God knows how, or based on what facts, that Secocoeni was about to invade the Transvaal, and that in that invasion he would be successful, that the Boers who, after fighting as long as they thought necessary, had returned to their homes, would fall victims to the offensive measures supposed to be intended by Secocoeni. Another idea also seemed to obtain, and that was that all Secocoeni's hostility was towards the Boers, but if the English were the rulers of the Transvaal, his hostility would vanish and become on the other hand a friend and ally.

It is upon these two ideas, utterly erroneous as events have most conclusively proved, that the policy of annexation was first based.

If it was said Secocoeni gains victories over white men in the Transvaal, it will destroy the ascendancy that the white man now has, the native races will begin to consider themselves our equals, nay, our superiors, and the consequences may, or rather must, be disastrous to all our possessions in South Africa. This, it was evident, must be avoided at all costs, and there was one obvious way of doing it—by tendering our assistance to the Transvaal against Secocoeni, seeing that that would have been from our own point of view as much for our own interests as for that of the Transvaal. However, instead of doing that, and confident in the friendly intentions of Secocoeni towards the English, it was thought better to take over the Transvaal, to deprive the Boers of that independence for which they had striven so long and under such difficulties, to utterly sacrifice men of our own colour, to rob them of their country and their rights, in order to conciliate a Kaffir chief, against whom only very lately we have had to employ over twelve thousand fighting men of all arms and all colours. That man is now in Pretoria gaol, and it has cost both blood and treasure to get him there, and to conciliate him and prevent him, as we suppose, from overrunning the Transvaal, we have wantonly destroyed the

independence of a people who had nobly earned it, and have paved the way to that disastrous civil war which is at present troubling the mind of every thinking Englishman, politician or otherwise.

So far as to the original annexation. It is true there was something said about the consent of the people. Sir Theophilus Shepstone, the Royal Commissioner, certainly did state in his Proclamation annexing the country, that "a large
 "proportion of the inhabitants
 "earnestly desire the establishment within and
 "over it of Her Majesty's authority and rule." This was on the 12th April, 1877.

On the day before this Proclamation was issued, the President of the Transvaal made his solemn protest against it, and in his own words made that protest: "Whereas I am not strong enough to
 "draw the sword for the successful defence of the
 "independence of this State against a superior
 "power like that of England." This should be well borne in mind. It has been said, How could the annexation be forcible? Sir T. Shepstone had only twenty-five policemen with him. He couldn't with those men annex a country larger than France against the will of the people. No, that's true. How could the now historical two Uhlans take a large town? but they did; in the Franco-German war they had the 30,000 men a few miles off. Sir T. Shepstone had the "superior
 "power like that of England" behind his back,

and the one case I have cited is as much the result of force as the other.

Soon after the annexation, it appeared as if we were right in our assumption of Secocoeni's attitude towards us, and with a simplicity only equalled by that which we must have believed him to possess, we were neatly taken in by the following simple message, in answer to one from Sir T. Shepstone:—

“I thank my father for his message. The Dutch have tired me out, and I intended to fight with them once and drive them over the Vaal. My armies were gathered; it was to fight the Dutch I called them together. Now I will send them back to their homes.”

For a little while this farce on Secocoeni's part was kept up, and was looked upon as friendly, although subsequent events have shown that he was just as hostile to the English as he was to the Dutch. So much for that idea as a reason for annexing the Transvaal.

On the same day as the President's protest, before mentioned, the Executive Council made their formal protest against the annexation, in which occurs this passage:—

“And whereas this Government is aware that it is not in a condition to maintain the rights and independence of the people with the sword against the superior power of Great Britain.”

After these protests, and the reasons given

therein, can it be said that the annexation was not to all intents and purposes forcible, and against the will of the people?

Commissioners were appointed by the Council "to go to England to lay before Her Majesty's Government the wishes of the people," and it is needless to add that the mission of these gentlemen was unsuccessful. On their return they duly reported their failure, and a petition making one more appeal for their rights and liberties to the Secretary for the Colonies was signed by 6591 qualified electors, and there were 301 signatures more that, on account of some formality, were not attached. This was out of a total of about 8000 electors.

The prayer of that petition was:—

"To restore us our country, that country which we love as our lives, and for which we always were and still are prepared to sacrifice our lives."

Worthy descendants of that nation the whole of whose history has consisted of battling against powerful enemies, and against the great ocean itself. They still are peaceable, they still attempt to raise up some spirit of justice in England. They know the superior power of England, they know they cannot fight successfully against it; but still throughout them is an under-current, showing that, if at last they cannot get redress, then they will die fighting, however hopelessly, for that independence of which they had been so unjustly deprived. At last they can but say to England, You

have robbed us of our country, that country for every inch of ground of which we have had to fight, you are strong and we are weak, but if you will not do us justice, then you must add to the crime of robbery, that of murder. These men may have had some hope that England would, at the last, shrink from that, but if not they were prepared, as they said they were in January, 1878, to die for their country. At the present time I do not believe that any Boer, however ignorant, thinks that by force of arms the English can be driven out of the country.

On the 11th March, 1878, Sir T. Shepstone published a Proclamation in which he made known that all attempts, whether by public meetings, or otherwise, to unsettle the minds of the people, &c., "will be dealt with as the law directs," and also alleged that signatures to the petition were being obtained by intimidation, &c.

In answer to this, P. J. Joubert, member of the deputation, on April 9th published a notice.

"NOTICE.—Whereas notice has been received "by the Committee, that some persons have spread "the rumour that they have been moved by "threats in signing petitions for or against "annexation, so it is now that occasion is given "for any such person to make himself known to "the members of the deputation, and to scratch "out his name before the beginning of next "month, May."

CARNEGIE BIBLIOTHEK *

Messrs. Joubert, Kruger, and Bok (the latter as secretary) were again sent to England, and on July 10, 1878, addressed a long letter to Sir Michael Hicks Beach, who had succeeded Lord Carnarvon as Secretary of State for the Colonies.

Persevering men these Dutchmen, are they not? They have been told time after time that the annexation is irrevocable, they return over and over again to the charge, they think that there must be some mistake. As Mr. Kruger said, "People in England really do not know the actual position here." It never entered the minds of these poor simple men that England when it once found out that the annexation was unjust and against the wishes of the people—it never entered their minds I say—that England could do anything else than "repudiate" (I use the word in a somewhat different sense, apparently, from Mr. Gladstone) the whole transaction.

In their letter speaking of "the alleged defenceless-ness of the country, the encroachments of the natives, and the failure of the war with Secocoeni," the delegates very frankly indeed—so frankly one would think as to convince even the most wrong-headed Government—write: "These, as well as the financial troubles, we are prepared to a certain extent to admit, though we utterly reject the exaggeration with which they have been described, and the inferences of

“ utter disorganization and danger drawn from
 “ them.

“ We deny the inference which has been drawn
 “ from the failures to dislodge a chief from fast-
 “ nesses, such as Secocoeni occupied, at the first
 “ attempt. He had been reduced to the greatest
 “ straits, and had sent to Pretoria to sue for peace.
 “ It is utterly incorrect to say that
 “ there was any danger to be feared from Secocoeni,
 “ for it is well known that he never came beyond
 “ his own strongholds.” This certainly differs
 from Secocoeni's swagger as set forth in his
 message to Shepstone, in which he makes two
 statements, viz.: 1st, his ability to lick the Dutch,
 and 2nd, impliedly his friendship to the English.
 Now we find that the second is contradicted
 by facts; the first is sufficiently contradicted by
 the statement of the Transvaal delegates. It has
 also been proved that it is not such an easy thing
 to storm a stronghold like Secocoeni's mountain.
 Sir Garnet Wolsely did, it is true, but he had some
 twelve thousand men with him all told, and in the
 colony it took a very considerable time, very many
 months, before Moirosi's mountain was taken by
 the Colonial troops, and Moirosi had not very
 many fighting men with him at any time.

The concluding paragraph of the letter is as
 follows:—

“ We know that as a subject people who have
 “ been deprived of their independence by such

x strongholds

“ means, there will be before us many years of
 “ bitter heart-burnings, of ill-feeling, of desertion
 “ of homes, of wild and objectless wanderings.”

This foreshadows the possibility of a course different to that actually adopted, it was possible that the Transvaal Boers might, instead of fighting as they are now, have abandoned their country and the homes for which they fought and suffered hardships and trials innumerable, they might have once more wandered forth “objectless” this time. When they wandered forth last they had an object. To make a home and country for themselves free from British rule; now they know if they went into the middle of the great Sahara, some Shepstone of the future would go and annex them.

The “heart-burnings,” too, are not and cannot be confined to the Transvaal, seeing that there are men of Dutch descent in large numbers in the colony, and in the words of Mr. Merriman, the leader of the Cape Opposition, “Every shot fired
 “ in the Transvaal finds an echo in the colony.”

But at the time of which I was speaking, the idea seemed to be rather “trekking” than fighting.

Previous to this, in January of the same year, Sir T. Shepstone, in a dispatch to Sir Henry Bulwer, Governor of Natal, wrote as follows (speaking of the acts of the natives):—“Practically,
 “ the line of occupied farms has not been hereto-
 “ fore affected by the dispute about the beacons

“boundary, but now the prohibition to these has
 “become absolute by Zulu claims and actions.
 “Ruin is staring the farmers in the face, and their
 “position is for the time worse than ever it was
 “under the Republic.”

So here we find annexation because the Boers could not defend themselves against the natives, and yet it is not until after annexation that they are for the first time unable to occupy their farms.

In a previous dispatch from Sir T. Shepstone to Lord Carnarvon, dated January 2, 1878, Sir T. Shepstone said, speaking of his conference with the Zulu Prime Minister and the Induna, on the 18th October, 1877:—

“Nothing concerning natives more surprised
 “me than the self-asserting, aggressive, and
 “defiant spirit in which, from the first moment I
 “was met at that conference by the Zulu Prime
 “Minister and the Indunas.”

So, after all, it does not appear that annexation had much improved the state of the native question, and further on Sir T. Shepstone states that some weeks after this he finds, *for the first time*, that in the matter of the boundary line between Cetywayo and the Transvaal Republic, that the Republic was in the right.

It is, of course, unnecessary to say that this letter of the delegates to the Secretary for the Colonies had not the slightest effect.

In the mean time nothing had been done to give the people of the Transvaal representative institutions, as promised, and the general discontent which prevailed against British rule itself was by no means lessened by the way in which it was carried on. Towards the end of 1879, at the time Sir Bartle Frere was about to visit the Transvaal, a large number of Boers with their waggons and oxen went into laager.

Disquieting rumours were flying about that the Boers had stopped all the roads, and when for some days no news of Sir Bartle Frere was heard at Kimberley (which place he had announced his intention of visiting after he had passed through the Transvaal), it was reported that he had been taken prisoner by the Boers. This, however, turned out not to be true, and once more the Boers petitioned through him, though he gave them but little hopes of success.

Shortly after this a new form of Government was established by Proclamation, and that again caused much dissatisfaction. The newly-constituted Legislative Council consisted of the members of the Executive, and members nominated not by the people, but by the Government.

This could hardly be called "the fullest" "privileges compatible with the circumstances of" "the country, and the intelligence of its people," which was what was promised by Sir T. Shepstone in the Annexation Proclamation. The Boers at

this time took up generally a position very hostile to the English, nor could an English traveller get anything given or sold him by the Boers along the road. At one time, in fact, there was an idea of "Boycotting" the English by getting up a company among themselves with which alone they would do business either of purchase or sale.

Throughout the country generally the Boers refused to pay taxes, and upon a waggon being seized on a judgment for unpaid taxes, it was retaken from the messenger of the Magistrates' Court as he was about to sell it in due course of law, which appears to have been the first act of violence on the part of the Boers. Shortly after this they assembled in laager in large numbers outside the town of Potchefstrom.

It thus appears that from the annexation on 12th April, 1877, till November, 1880, the Boers contented themselves with endeavouring peaceably by protest, petition, and memorial, to induce the English Government to restore them that independence of which they had been unjustly deprived. As long as the Conservatives were in power the injustice did not seem to be acknowledged, and therefore their actions were, at all events, logical.

At the time of the General Election, the hopes of the Boers increased. Mr. Gladstone's speech at Peebles on April 1st, 1880, when he said, "That is the meaning of adding places like

“Cyprus, and places like the country of the Boers in South Africa, to the British Empire. And, moreover, I would say this, that if these acquisitions were as valuable as they are valueless, I would repudiate them, because they were obtained by means dishonourable to the character of our country.”

This was devoured eagerly by the Boers, and throughout the Transvaal they felt that if Mr. Gladstone came into power, the hour of their deliverance was at hand, and at last it would be acknowledged by the English Government that the annexation was dishonourable, and there could then be but one course,—their country would be given back to them.

Unfortunately, they were not aware that when Mr. Gladstone said he “would repudiate,” he only meant that he “did disapprove,” for that, I take it, is all that his explanation, given in the House on the 21st January last, amounts to. High as the hopes of the Boers had been raised, the more bitter was their disappointment ; they knew at last that petitions and memorials were no more good. Although they had at last succeeded in convincing the English Government of the injustice—nay, more, the inexpediency—of the annexation, they were no nearer the goal of their independence than they were before, nay, on the contrary, irrevocably cut off from it.

Under these circumstances, nothing remained

for them than either to "wander aimlessly forth," once more to break from the, to them, dark shadow of British rule, or else to fight for that "country" which they love as their lives, and for which "they always were, and still are, prepared to sacrifice their lives."

It is for England to say whether the blood of her soldiers is to be shed in order to retain a valueless country, dishonourably acquired, and whether we have to add the crime of murder to that of robbery already committed.

The only reason for retaining the country after Mr. Gladstone's expression of opinion, seems to have been an idea that, as the Boers had endured so much already and been peaceable, they would not fight now.

This has turned out to be erroneous.

Mr. Gladstone says that by the annexation of the Transvaal we have incurred obligations, first, to the native races; secondly, to the British settlers and others; and thirdly, some political obligation which I can't quite understand. With regard to our obligations to the native races, there does not appear to be any mutuality, and it can only exist at all from a sentimental point of view; our obligations to the Boers, viz., to give them back their country, unjustly taken from them, is surely far greater. I may remark, too, that in South Africa the British and Colonial obligations towards the natives seems practically to consist of

fighting them. In the last few years we have fought the Gaikas, the Galekas, the Griquas, the Zulus, and a few stray Korannas, and at present we are fighting the Basutos, the Tambookies, and the Pandomise. With regard to the second obligation, there is no doubt that people have invested money and have settled in the Transvaal since annexation, who would not have done so had the country not been under British rule; but they must have been, or, at all events, ought to have been, fully aware of the circumstances under which the country was annexed, and to have been prepared to take their chance. At all events, this is a matter purely of pounds, shillings, and pence, and probably of no great magnitude even in that respect, and certainly not sufficient to justify the retention of the Transvaal.

As to the third, it is a mere vague phrase that may mean anything or nothing, and in this case can only mean the latter. Against these obligations on the one hand there is the sacred obligation on the other of repairing a great wrong that has been committed. One matter I have not hitherto referred to, it is the alleged slavery question. It is said that the Transvaal Government permitted the institution of slavery to exist, and that this is contrary to one of the Articles of the Treaty by which their independence was recognized, and that therefore the annexation was justified. Neither in the Commission, by virtue of which Sir Theophilus

Shepstone issued his Proclamation, nor in the Proclamation itself is there one single word on the subject of slavery, or even of cruelty to the natives. The reason given in both documents is the same, viz., "grievous disturbances," in other words, the war with Secocoeni. Under these circumstances it is unnecessary to discuss the facts of the alleged slavery, except to say that it never was recognized as an institution by the Transvaal Government. It is a reason invented long after the act it attempts to justify.

Thus far have I spoken of the state of affairs as they existed up to the 17th December, 1880, the day on which the first shot was fired at Potchefstrom. It is unnecessary for me to go through the events that have taken place since then, they are fresh in everyone's memory.

I need only say that the allegation that there was treachery on the part of the Boers in attacking the ill-fated 94th has been disproved; that attack was on the 20th December, or three days after the actual commencement of hostilities, six days after the Proclamation of the Transvaal Government, although it would appear that the colonel in command was not aware of that fact until summoned to surrender.

Unfortunately, there appears to be too much truth in the story of the brutal and treacherous murder of Captain Elliott, but a whole people must not be blamed for an isolated act of this nature.

General Colley telegraphs, on January 27th, that he has "sent copy of Lambart's statements to Joubert (the Dutch commander) who expressed "horror at the act, and promised strict inquiry. "Result not yet received." This shows the view General Colley has taken of the matter ; a brave and skilful soldier himself, he is not one of those who would recklessly bring charges of cowardice and cruelty against the enemy, as so many people have done.

In the telegram announcing our defeat at Langs Nek, it is reported that the Boers shot the wounded, this I ask everyone to disbelieve, at all events for the present. It is exceedingly unlikely, the Boers know as well as we do that they cannot long resist the overwhelming power of England, and would know full well that the result of carrying on the war in such a way could not but be disastrous to themselves, and such acts would be utterly contrary to everything that we know of them.*

It has been argued that even if we ought to and should have given up the Transvaal before this rising, it is impossible for us to do so now.

In one sense this is true, it is impossible for us to give up the Transvaal by reason of our hitherto having got the worst of it. But it is perfectly possible when we have massed our forces on the border, when it will have become obvious to every-

* See P.S. p. 21.

one, Boer and native, that the struggle for independence is hopeless, then it will be possible not to dictate hard terms, but to perform that act of justice so long delayed. It is true that we cannot afford to have it said that we are compelled to relinquish the Transvaal through weakness, but on the other hand, still less is it necessary that when we have once made sufficient display of force, we must prove it by unnecessary bloodshed, either on our part or theirs. It may be necessary for us to show that we have the power of subduing and conquering the Boers, but with that exception I would end these few pages in the words of the declaration emanating from Stuttgart:—"The honour of England does not require the putting down of the rebellion first, in order afterwards perhaps to negotiate with the Boers about their rights. The honour of the English nation rather requires it without further bloodshed to voluntarily expiate the wrong committed four years ago by recognizing the Independence of the Transvaal Republic, and to live in friendship with the brave and sterling people which has proved itself to be pioneers of civilization as against the uncivilized despotisms of South Africa."

P.S.—Since writing the above, the telegram, stating that the Boers had shot the wounded, has been most authoritatively contradicted. On Monday,

January 30th, Mr. Childers stated in the House of Commons, that Sir George Colley had telegraphed :
 “ In my capacity as General, I have maintained
 “ relations of courtesy with the Boer Commanders,
 “ and as they have released most of the prisoners
 “ taken from us, propose to do the same with any
 “ we may take. *They have acted with courtesy and*
 “ *humanity in the matter of our wounded.*”

At the time this statement was being made, there were placards of evening newspapers about the streets with, among other things, “Boer Atrocities” in large letters ; of the thousands who read this, very few probably ever read the contradictions. It must be that the eventual status of the Transvaal Boers, and the measures to be more immediately taken against them, will be influenced to a large extent by public opinion, and that public opinion cannot but be unfavourably influenced by reports of this nature. Under the Roman Dutch law, which obtains in Natal and throughout the British possessions in South Africa, there is a crime known as “the dissemination of false news.” I can only hope that the “eyewitness,” if he be in existence, who informed the Durban correspondent of *The Times*, may be made practically acquainted with the penalties attached to crimes of this nature.

It seems to be thought in the Cape Colony that the temporary success obtained by the Boers will cause their resistance to be more stubborn, but

however that may be, it will not lead the men who are at the head of affairs to look upon success by force of arms as a possibility. The longer the struggle is prolonged, the greater the chance of some civilized Power intervening in their behalf; the greater the chance that England herself may see the true state of the case of the Transvaal Boers.

APPENDIX.

The *Augsburg General Gazette* says (Jan. 26), speaking of the Transvaal:—

“If the Government understands anything about the interests of the country, they would heartily wish that a strong pressure from outside may be brought to bear on them, to the effect that they would have to act according to the declarations made by Gladstone as well as by Hartington during the time of the election contests. Looking at the growing danger in Ireland, they have every reason to keep their strength intact, not to speak of the blame a Liberal Government would bring on itself if it was to repeat the spectacle of destroying a free state. . . . In the debate on the Basuto war Mr. Grant Duff expressed a word of regret about the forced annexation of the Transvaal, and quoted several sentences of Gladstone’s speeches during election time, in all of which he raised his voice against the injustice of annexing a free state. . . . He would now do very much better, as all liberal-minded men will wish and agree, to act according to his own words instead of splitting the forces of the Empire.”

At a meeting held at Dusseldorf, attended by sixty of the most prominent representatives of Rhenish and Westphalian commerce, the following resolution was passed:—

“The annexation of the Transvaal Republic, which

was effected by England in April, 1877, without any lawful cause, and whilst England was at peace and on friendly terms with the Boers, was a great wrong. England tried to make it plausible by the thoroughly false affirmation that the Boers themselves wished for English rule. If this statement needed refutation, it has been given already by the rising of the Transvaal Boers; and if ever a nation acquired its country and possessed it by right, the Boers did, descendants as they are of Dutch and German immigrants, who after innumerable labours and struggles, conquered and colonized the Transvaal solely to get out of the way of English rule, and to constitute an independent Republic. The love of liberty, the bravery, perseverance, and tenacity of these people excite our admiration; their sufferings move our pity. Justice revolts against the suppression of the weak by the strong. In this struggle of the small Transvaal Republic against the great power of England, the feelings and sympathies of the whole civilized world are on the side of the weak, who are fighting for their rights and liberty. As Germans and friends of Holland, we feel all the more obliged to raise our voices for a nation allied to us in race and to express our sincerest sympathy with their cause."—*Cologne Gazette*, Jan. 30th 1881.

The *New Free Press*, of Vienna, of Jan. 8th, reporting the Queen's Speech, says, in the leading article:—

"The unjust annexation of the Transvaal, for which we cannot find any reason but an immoderate appetite for land, has brought its own revenge on the Government. In thousands the Boers have risen for their liberty and independence. . . . It must have been a bitter blow for

Gladstone when he first got the information of the rising of the Boers. He had always disapproved of and spoken against the unscrupulosity with which the Tory Cabinet pocketed the country of the free Transvaal Boers. The Queen's Speech mentions the military measures necessary for the restoration of British authority in the Transvaal, but seems to entirely forget the fact that the Boers from the very beginning protested against English rule, never looked upon themselves as British subjects, and that they declared the present war in all due form."

The *Journal des Debats*, of January 6th, in giving a review of last year, relates that the Boers have risen, and continues :—

"Caring very little to be British subjects, a quality which the unfortunate politics of Sir Bartle Frere imposed upon them, and desirous to recover their independence *they have at first had recourse to all legal means, but seeing their efforts unsuccessful*, they have taken up their arms in the very favourable moment, when the natives claimed all the attention of Government."

The *Journal des Debats*, of January 15th, says :—

"We receive the following correspondence from Rotterdam :—All letters from South Africa show the resolution of the Boers to fight it out. I doubt that they will ever be again deluded by English promises. The Treaty of 1852 guaranteed most solemnly their independence, and the Government of the Cape did little honour to its signature when simply confiscating this independence."

The *Cologne Gazette*, of January 13th :—

"A POLITICAL DISGRACE.—We published a short time

ago a proclamation addressed from Utrecht to the people of England, in which the injustice of the annexation of the Transvaal was stigmatized. This address has in a very short time received more than 5000 signatures of men of the highest society of Holland; it has also found an echo in all civilized countries of Europe, and scarcely ever has a political action been branded so unanimously as an infamy and a cowardice by the whole Press of Europe and America; as an infamy, because the English took possession of someone else's property, hypocritically simulating that they did it only for the sake of humanity; as a cowardice, because they set this on foot against a small, powerless nation, and now raise the cry of treason, since their evil doings bore only evil fruit. This first address in Holland is now followed by a second one in Belgium (dated from Antwerp, January 11th), in which in the same way, the Flemish people appeal to the justice of the English. It contains about the same essential points, that the annexation had been effected just in the moment when the first rails for the construction of the railway to Lorenzo Marquess—so much wished for by all the Boers—had been landed in South Africa. They all had in Belgium made the acquaintance of Mr. Burgers, and were all convinced that the Boers struggled as well as they could for civilization and progress, but that they have been robbed of their liberty. The Boers had kept quiet and endured till the Liberal Government—the Cabinet of Liberty, as it had promised so often to be—had come to power, but when even then they could not perceive any intended change, they had risen and taken the ruling of their country into their own hands again.”

Having given, thus far, an extract of the Belgian

proclamation, the *Cologne Gazette* draws the attention of its readers to Labouchere's question in the House of Commons, whether the Boers were to be looked upon as rebels or belligerents. The answer had been evasive, but the *Daily News* had answered the question for itself, that the Boers could not possibly be called rebels, as they had never sworn the oath of allegiance, never regarded themselves as British subjects; that even everyone in the Transvaal when having to pay taxes had signed on the back of the receipt a protest against the levying of taxes by an incompetent Government.

Sir Theophilus Shepstone, continues the *Gazette*, "seems, in spite of all his pious speeches, of which he liked to make use, to have played a game for which we can find no word amongst parliamentary expressions. He arrived at Pretoria with, apparently, the most benevolent intentions, especially for the 'poor natives,' and in his despatches to England let it appear as if the majority of Dutchmen wished for annexation. And so the annexation was proclaimed, just as a robber in a priest's garb, having broken by night into a house, might proclaim everything he finds there his property. English troops following Sir T. Shepstone stifled all resistance. This was how the Transvaal became English."

The *National Gazette*, of Berlin, 20th January, brings in "from Africa," a letter of Pretorius *written before the rising*, as published by another Berlin paper (*Berliner Nachrichten*).

Having first mentioned that he is descended from a German family, at Naumburg, Pretorius goes on in his letter, as follows:—

"My grandfather quitted in 1838 the Cape Colony,

with a number of other burghers, when the British Government began to press too heavily on the Colonists. They went to Natal and constituted a new colony, after having conquered by means of personal bravery the wild Kaffir tribes there. But, in the year 1842, they had to secede again before the power of the English arms, and to leave Natal, as especially my father did not like to be subjected to the British Government. They then trekked into the interior of the country, and under continuous fighting with the natives and numerous losses of life and property, they succeeded at last, aided by their bravery and perseverance, to build up the Republic which we inhabit still. The British Government did not persecute us any further, on the contrary, declared us by the Convention of 1852, free and independent. The bad feeling which formerly existed between the English Government and the burghers was changed, and the best understanding ruled everywhere. I have myself visited Cape Town and Natal, and have been received by the governors and citizens with all honours as President of the South African Republic."

Then follows a description of the constitution, the climate, the resources, and the prospects of the country, inviting German emigrants, especially German science to the country, as there was a great need of good schoolmasters, physicians, &c.

The *National Gazette*, January 25 :—

"London, January 22: Of all the political questions which just at present occupy the English ministers, statesmen, and politicians, none is to them more perplexing than the Transvaal question. They are rather embarrassed by finding *that all Europe takes the part of the Boers*. . . . But there are also a great many

Englishmen, who whatever may be the political party current, raise their voice, that justice might be done to the oppressed."

A report follows of Ryland's resolution, and speech of Gladstone, etc.

The *Cologne Gazette*, February 3:—

"London, 1st February: In one point, at least, has been given the due satisfaction by the British Government to the much calumniated Boers, when Mr. Childers read General Colley's dispatch, in which this General states that they have released the prisoners, and praises their moderation. This will, we hope, put a stop to all defamations of the Boers."