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A BRIEF ACCOUNT

...OF THE...

South African Situation

BY

VIOLA DERATT

DELIVERED BEFORE

The Chicago Teachers' Federation

November 25th, 1899.

*As the request of the
Hon Montague White
by J. Vander Ploeg*

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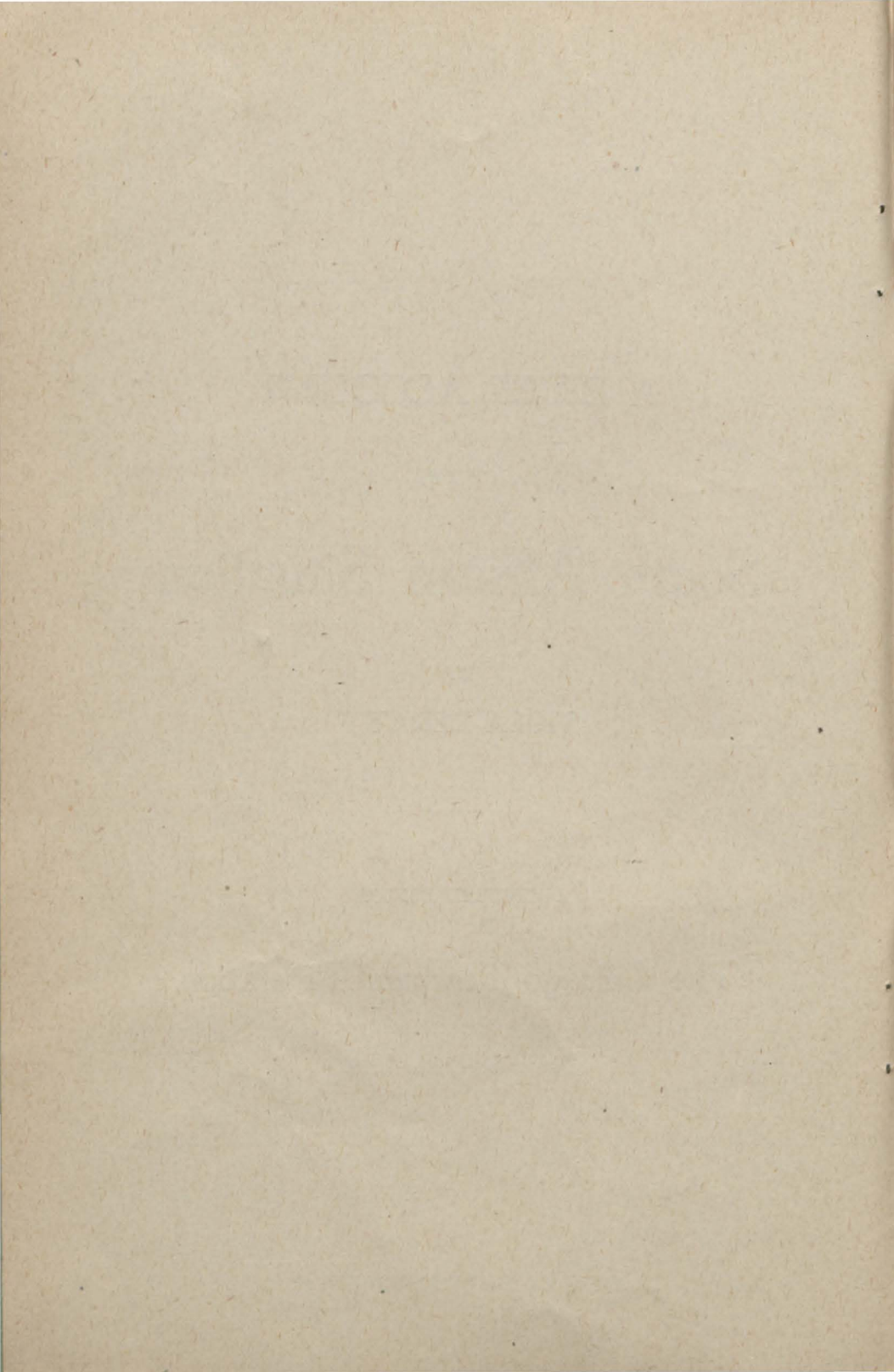
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SOUTH AFRICAN SITUATION.

Before the day that the white civilized man of peace arrived in South Africa, the barbaric Bushmen, Hottentots and Kaffirs were wont to fight with each other on slight provocation. But now civilization with its kindly influences has just come fresh from the Peace Congress to see what can be done with lyddite and Kreusot guns to improve the Dark Continent.

The white man found the Bushmen, Hottentots and Kafirs in possession and apparently constituting the aboriginal population but when explorers were able to penetrate to the far interior regions they found in several localities structures of stone far beyond the skill of the present Blacks. These buildings are well laid up with trimmed stone and ornamented slightly on the eastern side, which may indicate that they are ancient temples. The only fact which can be drawn from them is that they are the handiwork of a people much above the level of the present population. The Kafirs have no traditions concerning them except that they are of supernatural origin and to be avoided on that account.

Second to these ancient architects, who have so completely vanished, the Bushman is the most interesting human type in South Africa. Little and ugly, most primitive in intellect—with his little bow and poisoned arrow, he has kept specimens of himself alive to the present day. In spite of lion and crocodile, in spite of powerful tribes (for he was himself too primitive to know tribal organization), in spite of the white man and his gun—there are still some Bushmen left. When it is stated that he was the most poverty-stricken of natives it is a sad joke to add that he was the artist of old South Africa and has left upon the rocks of veldt and desert drawings of some merit which rank him with the cave man of the old stone age, and with the Eskimo draughtsman on horn and bone.

The Hottentot is a better physical specimen than the Bushman and the Kafir or Bantu is the best of the three. The latter, it is said, often exhibits in single individuals such fine types that more northern blood is suspected—possibly of Arabian derivation.

The white European reaches the shore of South Africa by the western route in sixteen days, landing at Cape Town on Table Bay—the harbor of the Cape of Good Hope. Those who are afraid of a rough passage may take boat at Naples or Marseilles and go by way of the Mediterranean, Suez, Red Sea and Indian Ocean, landing at Beira, Delagoa Bay or Durban. From any of these ports the railroad carries inland to Pretoria, to Kimberley and even to Bulawayo in Matabili land.

The Orange River, from its source in the Drackensburg to its outlet on the west coast forms the boundary of the English possessions, Cape Colony. Following a central course across the Orange River the English have a free range northward through the territories of the natives now under British supervision. Their railroad runs along the east of this tract to escape the desert and to take in the Kimberley diamond mines on the way.

In northeastern Bechuanaland lies the country of Khama, King of the Bamangwatos. Khama's story is romantic. In his youth he fell under the influence of the missionaries and became a Christian. Next he refused to take more than one wife, preferring to remain poor rather than to add to his wealth according to the custom of his fathers, who held that a man's wealth was in proportion to the labor he could command, that is, his wives.

Because of this refusal, his father banished him, and Khama and a band of youthful followers maintained themselves at some distance from the tribe. Twice his old father, beaten and driven into a corner by the fierce Matabeles, recalled his son, and twice Khama saved the tribe from destruction.

Khama in peace is a truly Christian prince—a fine and delicate personality. Travelers who have visited him speak of him most admirably.

When the British subdued the Bamangwatos and proposed to establishment of British control, Khama went to England on a visit of remonstrance, being much exercised at the prospect of the future demoralization of his people through the habit of drunkenness.

The natives were not strangers to the state of intoxication before the advent of the white race, but their form of the vice was mild and harmless compared to the expeditious methods of the enlightened races.

North of Khama. Lo Bengula, the King of the warlike Matabeles, subdued the weak Mashonas east of him, made himself feared by all the native tribes then grew rash and hurled his war-bands against the English. Now his kingdom is known as Rhodesia and is ruled by the British South African Company, organized under Mr. Cecil Rhodes.

Thus the whole central region, from the Orange River north to the Congo Free State and east to the Portuguese territory lies in what is termed the "Sphere of British influence."

West of this central region along the western coast is the "Sphere of German influence."

You will see on many maps two little tracts marked Griqualand East and Griqualand West. They mean nothing politically, being in the British sphere, but racially they are groups of mixed descendants of European fathers and Hottentot mothers.

In the highest part of the Drackensburg, where the Orange River rises, lies the Switzerland of South Africa, Basutoland.

Its likeness to Switzerland is found not only in its mountain scenery but in the freedom of its people who are the most independent and enlightened among the natives. The Basutos are under the protec-

tion of England and are well on the way toward civilization. They have managed to get and keep one of the most beautiful portions of South Africa and they possess fine flocks and well tilled fields. They have learned the habit of steady industry so difficult for the barbarian to acquire.

The Basutos owe their happy condition to their great chief, Moshesh, first a warrior, then a statesman and finally a guide and father to his people. He was the only chief who was able to say that his treaty with the English was entered into after he had defeated them in a battle. Among his various capabilities may be reckoned his sense of humor which the following story rather grimly proves:

A cannibal band had captured and eaten the grandparents of Moshesh at a time when the chief had other serious affairs on his hands.

His subjects urged him to take immediate vengeance.

Moshesh replied to them: "I must consider well before I disturb the sepulchers of my ancestors."

From Cape Colony northward along the eastern coast the British claims continue; in Natal, in Zululand, then Tongaland, to where the Portuguese territory begins just south of Delagoa Bay.

Thus surrounded on all sides by the British possessions except for the Portuguese boundary, the two Dutch Republics lie entirely inland and cut off from the Sea.

The Orange Free State might have easily been bounded by the Orange River the Vaal and the Drackensburg, if diamonds had not been discovered in this quarter in 1869.

The discovery drove the British to contrive an arbitrary boundary line just far enough east to keep the mines out of the Free State.

The Free State complained, unreasonably, as the English think since the matter was settled by arbitration. The arbitrator, chosen by England, was the governor of the English colony of Natal. He decided that the mines belonged to England. Thereupon the English, being, without obligation for so doing, gave the Free State a present of \$450,000.

The mines under the management of Mr. Cecil Rhodes yield \$20,000,000 or more yearly—just outside of the Orange Free State.

The English colony of Natal is one of the finest spots in South Africa. It has one of the three good harbors on the eastern coast. The land rises from the coast to the Drackensburg by beautiful and fertile terraces and it is all well watered and swept by healthful sea-breezes. From the port town, Durban, the road and the railroad lead up to Pieter Maritzburg, on past Colenso and Ladysmith, over the mountain pass of the Drackensburg, then by Majuba Hill and Laing's Neck into the Transvaal or South African Republic.

Here where Natal joins the Orange Free State and the Transvaal is the scene of the old conflict between Boer and Briton and the center of the present interest.

The Transvaal occupies part of the great central plateau and has its political limits marked by the Limpopo or Crocodile River on the north and the Vaal in the south, west by the British and east by the Portuguese.

The ports are all in British hands except Delagoa Bay and Beira, which are with the Portuguese. By a former treaty Britain has the first right to buy Delagoa Bay when it is sold. A railroad runs from Delagoa Bay to Pretoria and both road and bay have been of great use to the Dutch in the past two or three years since the Jameson Raid. Some very excellent artillery seems to have come into the Transvaal by this route without, until very recently, attracting the attention of the British.

From the standpoint of time, the Portuguese were the first men on the ground, so to speak, in South Africa. Their settlement on the east coast dates back to 1505. They selected this spot for its harbor and for its access to the gold producing regions at that time; but it is a malaria-breeding district and between malaria and fierce native tribes the colony did not grow.

The Dutch arrived at Table Bay less than forty years after the founding of Plymouth. In point of time, South Africa has had an equal opportunity with America for development. Thirty years after the first Dutch settlement came a band of 300 Huguenots driven from France to Holland by Louis Fourteenth's revocation of the Edict of Nantes. Then came a considerable number of Germans. The Dutch element soon absorbed the French and German and the Africander became a Dutch type.

From the settlement under the shelter of Table Mountain, the pioneers fought their way inland against wild animals, Bushman and Hottentot. They had a very able ally in the smallpox germ which was especially fatal to Hottentots, and well nigh extinguished the race.

We know the type of man that pioneer life has produced on our own borders and we can judge from that something of what this heroic discipline must have wrought in the Africanders. The Bible went with them in their advance and they smote the heathen with a healthy conscience.

The slaves which they imported from the west coast and others of Malay extraction have made, by admixture, the race problem in Cape Colony very complicated and difficult of analysis.

Near the end of the eighteenth century when the English began to realize their coming ascendancy in India, the advantage of the Cape as a half way point became apparent.

They made several attempts to secure the position and finally obtained it in the general settling up of 1814 after the Napoleonic wars. They paid to the Dutch Stadtholder \$30,000,000 for the Cape and certain South American territories.

The New English government proceeded rather arrogantly. It injudiciously interfered with some customary individual rights and substituted English for Dutch in legal proceedings.

These measures were irritating to a people so long removed from the active interference of European powers.

The principal cause of quarrel, however, came with England's emancipation of slavery in the colonies.

According to the English solution of the slavery question, the government purchased the slaves from their owners in order to free them.

The share of the apportionment to the Africanders was much less than the value of the slaves and the sum awarded each slave-owner was made payable in London. Thus the Africanders had to sell their claim at a great reduction or go to London to collect.

The result to them was financial ruin.

Finally a tribe of Kafirs swept down upon the colony, burning houses, destroying crops and carrying off most of the cattle.

The sturdy Boers followed them back into their mountain stronghold and recovered the cattle.

The English government, on hearing this, being distant from the scene of action and feeling philanthropically inclined, was moved to judge that the Kafirs had been harshly dealt with and provoked to war.

The Kafirs were permitted to come back into the territory from which the Boers had driven them and the Cape government, seeing what difficulty the Boers might have in identifying their own cattle, confiscated all of them.

This determined the course of Boer history. Their remedy for such provocations was the trek. It happened just at this time that the Kafir tribes warring among themselves had become greatly weakened in the territories north of Cape Colony.

The way was thus cleared and in 1833 occurred the Great Trek or departure of discontented Boers into the interior. Before they went they took the precaution to question the British governor as to their freedom when once outside of English ground.

The governor must have exceeded his authority for he told them that they would not be interfered with beyond the British boundaries.

Their resolve thus sealed, a formal statement of their grievances was drawn up by their leader, Piet Retief, closing with the words: "We are now leaving the fruitful land of our birth in which we have suffered enormous losses and continual vexations and are about to enter a strange and dangerous territory; but we go with a firm reliance on an all-seeing, just and merciful God whom we shall always fear and humbly endeavor to obey."

The first two hundred Voortrekkers went over the Orange River and northward, where they met the forces of the Matebele. They stood a siege inside their circle of wagons, or laager, they lost fifty men and ten thousand head of cattle and sheep, which meant almost their entire property. Nevertheless, the natives were defeated and from this beginning arose the Orange Free State.

The second expedition set out in 1835. Retief led the trek and Paul Krueger, then ten years of age, was one of the company. From 1835 to 1837 something like 10,000 Boers trekked northward from

Cape Colony. They were obliged to travel in small bands and by different routes on account of the scant grazing for cattle. The smallness of the separate bands increased the danger of native attacks.

Those led by Retief made their way to where Durban is now. They found there a little colony of Englishmen living under a provisional government of their own. The tiny republic had asked England to take them under her protection, but she had so far not decided to grant their wish. They were glad to see the Dutchmen, as their own position was precarious. Not far from them dwelt the powerful Zulu chief Dingaan. Retief and his men thought it a good plan to bargain with the Zulus for some land. Dingaan had just lost a hundred head of cattle—carried off by a neighboring tribe. The Boers took their guns, went after the cattle, and restored them to Dingaan. He was seemingly pleased and granted to Retief and his men the most of that finest spot in South Africa, Natal. Then he invited the Boer leaders to a friendly meeting in his hut, where they were to drink to the contract. They left their arms outside and entered. While they were drinking Dingaan gave the war signal to the Zulus. The seventy Boers were massacred and the war bands set forth in search of the rest of the white men. Five hundred were slain on the site of the town afterwards called "Weenen" (to weep) by the Dutch.

The following story is taken from Hillegas' Oom Paul and His People:

"Fourteen men and boys took refuge on a hill and held their assailants at bay while they improvised a 'laager.'

"When the ammunition was almost exhausted a white man on horseback was observed in the rear of the Zulus. The hard-pressed emigrants signalled to him, and his ready mind, strained to the utmost tension, grasped the situation at a glance. He fearlessly turned his horse and rode to the abandoned wagons, almost a mile away, to secure some of the ammunition that had been left behind by the Boers when they were attacked by the Zulus. He loaded himself and his horse with powder and ball from the wagons, and with a courage that has never been surpassed rode headlong through the Zulu battle lines and bore to the beleaguered Boers the means of their subsequent salvation."

The hero of that ride was Marthinus Oosthuysen, and his fame in South Africa rivals that of Paul Revere in American history.

The stragglers from the various parties of Boers gathered together to the number of four hundred and sixty men and set out to encounter Dingaan's army of twelve thousand. The Boers were mounted and won the battle by charging upon the Zulus, firing, and then wheeling and retreating to a safe distance to reload. By these tactics they slew three thousand of the Zulus and drove the rest back into the wilderness beyond the Tugela river. December 16 the Boers observe as Dingaan's Day, the anniversary of the great battle.

The country which the Trekkers now found themselves possessed of by treaty and by force of arms was so favorably located and in all ways so agreeable that they could not but consider themselves fortunate in having left Cape Colony. They formed a small republic with its center in Pietermaritzburg, and soon became so strong that they attracted the attention of the English. The home government was notified of the existence of the little Boer state and some trouble with the Kafirs having arisen and the importance of the position being noted, the British government at last decided to take possession, not only of that portion first settled by the English but also of the Dutch republic of Natalia. Their title to this territory seems to consist in their determination to get it.

A small force of soldiers was sent to make good the decision, but the Boers rose up and had the Englishmen all but defeated when overwhelming reinforcements arrived.

All but five hundred of the Boer families gathered their possessions together, yoked their oxen and left the fair land of Natalia for a region far less promising.

They crossed the Drackensburg, and entered upon the high plateau, which forms the interior or "hinterland." There they have remained to the present day and there they are still confronted with their old antagonist, who insists on his prerogative. Numerous books have been written by hunters and other adventurous spirits describing their travels over these regions, so thoroughly explored by Boer hunters and herds-men.

Railroads into the interior have come into existence only within the past eight or ten years. Before that time the traveler had to adopt the Boer means of transportation. He had, in other words, to trek. First he bought himself an imported wagon at the seaport, paying several hundred dollars therefor. Then he bought from eight to twelve yoke of oxen, which were guaranteed immune from the many deadly cattle diseases of the interior, their immunity being the result of a previous attack and recovery from the disease. Possibly he also secured a horse or two of poor and scraggy appearance, with dim eye, rusty coat and little enthusiasm, paying high for these points, which were signs that the horse had experienced the horse-sickness. In case of the death of horse or ox thus declared immune, the buyer could collect damages in full from the seller, provided he had a white witness to the death and cause. The traveler frequently found himself, when fairly launched, the object of a widespread conspiracy among English and Blacks, the purpose of which was to so obstruct and discourage him that he would sell his outfit at reduced rates and return by stage-coach. The conspirators drove a pretty business in this way by buying in these periods of depression and selling again to the ignorant the sanguine newcomer at most exorbitant prices.

The traveler loads his wagon with guns and ammunition, canned food and cattle provender, the last being of the utmost importance, owing to the poor grazing in many localities. He then hires several

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natives to accompany him, one skilled driver, one man at the whip and a "voorloper," or man who runs ahead and leads the first yoke of oxen.

Both driver and oxen must be trained and experienced in the profession of trekking. The oxen are much respected by native and Boer drivers, and deservedly, by reason of their intelligence and dignity. The oxen of most experience and character are given the positions of responsibility at the wheel or in the lead.

The oxen are "inspanned" or hitched to the long chain (trek-tau) that runs from yoke to yoke. The driver shouts "Amaga trek!" the whip goes off like a pistol and the traveler has set out upon a sea of troubles.

They trek from four in the afternoon to perhaps ten at night and then "uitspan" for rest. They inspan at one and travel until daylight, then rest again until four, thus avoiding the heat of the day and taking advantage of the cool—or even cold—African night.

The work is so arduous that the oxen must rest for a longer period than they labor.

A constant watch had to be kept by the Boers in the days of the Great Trek to keep the lions from seizing the cattle. They slew six thousand lions on their way from the Cape to the Transvaal. Two hundred of these were killed by the young Paul Krueger as his quota.

If the traveler has chosen the dry season for his journey his greatest anxiety will be the problem of providing water, for in spite of the considerable number of rivers marked down on the maps of South Africa, in the dry season they are merely dry beds or a succession of shallow and stagnant pools. The want of a steady supply of water has always been the most serious matter to men and animals in these regions. The native has invented a device for obtaining a drink in places seemingly dry. He takes a hollow reed and ties a bundle of dry grass to one end; then he digs down in the bed of a stream and thrusts the grass into the hole. The moisture collects in the grass and he sucks it up through the reed and lets it run down the outside of a straw which leads from his mouth to a vessel. Thus he painfully collects a small and unclean supply to keep him to the next dry river bed.

If, on the other hand, the rainy season has been chosen for travel, there are all the discomforts of living out of doors in the rain; the traveler is delayed day after day by the now roaring and unfordable streams or finds his wheels deep set in the mud until another or several other drivers come up and lend their oxen to help extricate him.

Every crossing of a stream, "drift," as it is called, is a perilous adventure. First comes the steep descent down which the oxen run wildly, escaping from control; the whole cavalcade swims the river, then scrambles up the opposite bank—or sticks there waiting for help.

It is a maxim of the Africander not to uitspan on the hither side of a stream, for a few hours may convert a dry channel into a torrent which is not passable for days.

The road from Durban leads up from terrace to terrace of Natal to the Drackensburg, that is, from sea level to about six thousand feet above. The descent on the inland side of the Drackensburg is slight, as the interior plateau varies in height from four to five thousand feet above sea level. The surface of this high plateau, the "veldt," is a vast rolling plain, reddish brown in color—or green in the season of rains. It is occasionally interrupted by isolated hills (kopjes). The interminable stretch of veldt, with seldom a tree to cast a shade, is matched by a sky usually without cloud. The air that sweeps across the veldt is dry, clear and bracing. The sun unobstructed by cloud or tree sends a light of a most searching quality through the clear atmosphere.

This extraordinary landscape, made up of measureless spaces and vivid light, cannot have been without effect upon the men living under its constant influence. The result upon the Boer character is without witness in the shape of literature or other art. Yet the Boers' intense conviction of the immediate presence of God and of His direct guidance is not usually fostered by the frontier life (as we know it in America), and the children of the Pilgrim Fathers soon cast off the belief in a personal God which their forefathers bequeathed them. The power of the vast spaces of the veldt and sky may be seen also perhaps in the Boer's love of solitude. He tills a few acres and grazes his herds upon more, but he insists that a farm should contain six thousand acres for breathing space. Anything less than six thousand acres he terms part of a farm. The love of solitude and the demand for a free prospect on such a scale is in itself a movement of the imagination of as much validity as a work of art. Furthermore, the Boer is today staking his life on a pure ideal. He is not fighting for anything so material even as the protection of his property, but for the preservation of his national type and his right to determine the nature of his own government.

What the landscape has done in forming the character of the Africander is less easy of demonstration than the effects of certain other influences. What has been wrought in him by the necessities of his life and the discipline of hardships is much more evident.

The hunter who treks through Africa in pursuit of game gets a taste of the ordeal through which the Africander passes from season to season. He finds his horses and oxen dying of other South African diseases which are not down in the guaranteed articles of sale. Drought, rinderpest, malarial fever, locusts are the beginning of a long and deadly category. Great tracts of South Africa are subject to malaria. A season of rinderpest destroys most of the cattle. A little increase in the usual severity of drought is most disastrous. Swarms of locusts invade any quarter unexpectedly and in numbers undreamed of in Kansas. In extensive regions the tse-tse fly makes it impossible for domesticated animals to live there or even to pass through.

The wild animals, however, have been of the greatest service to the Boer. They have often furnished him clothing and always food.

Good hunting has made him a good hunter, and out of respect to his marksmanship the English officers have been obliged to don the clothing of the common soldier. With the disappearance of the game from the veldt there was some danger of a loss of this skill with the gun, which the Boers prize so highly and find of such present value. In order to preserve their cunning they have frequent meetings for target practice. A traveler tells of one very unique competition. A pit is dug in the ground large enough to admit a guinea hen. Over this is stretched a piece of canvas with a hole in it about the size of the guinea hen's head. The marksmen form a circle within a radius of a hundred yards, and fire when the bird's head comes to view. It is practice of this kind which makes the British officers so discreet in the present war.

The vigorous personal exertion called forth by the absolute self-dependence of an isolated life has developed in the African an extraordinary individualism—opposed to organization and government and consequently opposed, no doubt, to the genius of modern life.

The Boer has sustained and defended himself so long by his own unaided efforts that he has become physically as well as spiritually adapted to isolation.

South Africa provides him with little food—he has learned to live upon what she provides. While the Uitlanders are compelled to import food by the carload, European butter, American meal, Australian potatoes and canned foods of all kinds, the Boer can live healthfully and cheerfully upon his easily obtained and highly durable and portable food—strips of meat dried hard in the African fashion. A five-pound slice of this dried beef, or bultong, will keep a Boer in good spirits for ten or fifteen days. He takes it with him on his hunting and herding expeditions and it forms an ideal commissariat in time of war.

The stories of Paul Kruger in his youth give evidence of the hardihood and endurance of this people. One of them tells of a foot race which Krueger ran with a native,—a twelve-hour race, in which Krueger won in sufficient time to stalk and kill a deer and bring it home before his adversary arrived.

The travelers' descriptions of the Boers vary considerably with the nationality of the writer. Some English travelers, Anthony Trollope, for instance, go so far as to say that there are several sorts of Boers and none of them so bad. Most of the English accounts, however, describe all Boers without distinction as ignorant, stupid, sluggish and filthy. The most isolated herdsman of the veldt is taken as the type of the whole nation, as though the classes of ignorant and educated frontiersman and town-dweller did not exist among these people.

An English periodical a few months back displayed two pictures, one called "The Native Under Boer Administration," and the other, "A Native Marriage Under English Auspices." The first was a picture of black convicts at work on the streets; the second was a highly

decorous wedding procession in European costume. From this it would hardly be supposed that in most Dutch towns are to be found native churches, and that in the sphere of British influence polygamy is prevalent.

It will be difficult for England to make the civilized world believe that she has the same warrant for subjugating the Boers that has been claimed in the case of the North American Indians and the black tribes of Africa. It is a poor warrant at best and certainly does not apply to the offspring of Holland, that ancient home of freedom and of all the best results of civilization.

Among all the books and articles on the South African question, that of Mr. James Bryce appears to be most impartial and scientific. He says of the Boers:

"They are a slow, quiet, well-meaning people, extremely conservative in their opinions as well as their habits, very sparing, because they have little ready money, very suspicious, because afraid of being outwitted by the English traders. The general equality of conditions has produced a freedom from assumption on the one hand and from servility on the other, and indeed a general absence of snobbishness, which is quite refreshing to the European visitor. Manners are simple, and being simple, they are good. If there is less polish than in some countries, there is an unaffected heartiness and kindness. The Dutch have a sense of personal dignity which respects the dignity of their fellows and which expresses itself in direct and natural forms of address."

In other travelers' accounts the general testimony is that the Boer is good in his family relations and faithful to his neighborly duties. There is a very small percentage of crime in his domains. The British have accused him of cruelty, but present reports from the seat of war indicate that the British are rapidly distancing him in that particular.

On the whole, it is not profitable to quibble about the character of the Boer. He is not a barbarian. He is the descendant of a most Christian civilized nation, subject for many years to a peculiar set of conditions, which have created in him characteristics similar to those developed in other races, German, English and French, whenever they have been subjected to the same environment. For years he has been cut off from the rest of the world, but when once he has been brought again into the circle of world activities, how long will it take him to assume his place in it? And he will bring to it the forces with which the life on the veldt have equipped him.

Having given a brief history of the emigration and settlement of the Boers it remains for me to complete the tale of their dealings with England.

It was in 1836-7 that the Great Trek occurred. In 1843 the British occupation of Natal drove the Boers over the Drakensburg.

Small republican communities grew up north and south of the Vaal. Troubles between these communities and the natives made things uncomfortable for the Cape Colony people, who called upon the British

government to interfere and settle the disturbances to the north of the Orange river. Although England specifically claimed the northern Boers as her subjects, she was reluctant to undertake the care and expense required of her by the Cape government. After long urging she finally sent troops to the region between the Orange and Vaal to keep order there. In 1848 she annexed the same region. The Dutch resisted. They summoned their kinsmen from the north of the Vaal and gave battle. Together they drove out the English garrison. Then the governor of the Cape took the matter in hand and met the Dutch at Boomplatz. Paul Kruger, then about twenty-two, fired the first shot on the Dutch side. The Dutch were defeated and the British authority restored. The conditions of this arrangement were unsatisfactory and productive of constant troubles to both sides, until finally Andries Pretorius, commandant of the Boers north of the Vaal, declared that he and his men wished a definite and settled agreement. The result was the Sand River conference, in which England withdrew from her position of "Once an Englishman, always an Englishman," and guaranteed to the emigrant farmers beyond the Vaal river the right to manage their own affairs and govern themselves by their own laws without intervention on the part of the British government. It was stipulated in this convention that England should enter into no alliances with the natives north of the Vaal, and that the Boers should not keep slaves. Thus was formed in 1852 the South African Republic.

Two years later the British voluntarily withdrew from the Orange sovereignty south of the Vaal and the Orange Free State was established.

The South African Republic did not prosper as a government. The people could not subordinate their individuality to governmental needs. The republic was torn by dissensions; it could raise no money; the natives made head against it. The weakness and disorder of the government and the discord with the natives became a danger to English residents and to the English colonies.

Therefore, in 1877, England sent Sir Theophilus Shepstone to examine into the affairs of the Transvaal. He had secret instructions to annex the country as a last resort, if the conditions in his judgment seemed to justify it and if the majority of the people would assent to it. He exercised his full powers, as many think, without sufficiently attempting other means and without warrant from the inhabitants. Still their troubles had been so sore that they virtually acquiesced in the hope that England would give them peace and immunity from the natives. Paul Krueger and several other leaders remonstrated and were sent as delegates to England to protest.

England now dealt most unwisely with her new colony. Shepstone, whom they liked, was recalled and in his place was sent an incapable and tyrannical governor. A military rule was set up and the people were subjected to a rigid and irritating dictatorship. They began to fear that England did not intend to grant them their rights of local self-government. All their old prejudices and suspicions were aroused.

At the same time the British troops subdued the natives on the border, thus removing the chief inducement for accepting British rule. The revolution headed by Krueger, Joubert and Pretorius broke forth on Dingaan's Day, 1880. The four-color flag was hoisted and the manifesto made:

"We declare before God, who knows the heart, and before the world, that the people of the South African Republic have never been subjects of Her Majesty and never will be."

The governor's soldiers fired first upon a small party of Boers who carried the proclamation. The Boers defeated and captured Col. Anstruther's force of two hundred and sixty men at Bronkhorst Sprint, and then prepared to meet the thousand soldiers summoned from Natal. The road which the Natal troops had to follow led over a long ridge, Laing's Nek. The Boers entrenched themselves on the north side of the ridge. The English were approaching from the south. The English charged up the ridge, but the fire was so severe that they were compelled to retreat. To the west of Laing's Nek, and fourteen hundred feet above it, lay Majuba Hill. General Colley reconnoitered for the purpose of finding some route into the Transvaal other than that over Laing's Nek. He found it possible to ascend the western slope of Majuba Hill. A position at the summit of the hill would command the Boer entrenchments on the ridge. General Colley and six hundred men climbed the hill in the night. They left a force to guard the path by which they ascended and the remainder of the troops were to advance to the Nek. The side of the hill facing the Boers was steep and difficult.

In the morning when the Boers saw the British on the height they seemed at first alarmed, but soon were seen to gather for the prayer and hymn singing usual before battle. A body of about four hundred and fifty advanced to the base of the hill. One hundred and fifty began to climb from rock to rock and from bush to bush, shooting as they came. They sheltered themselves so skillfully that but one man was killed before they reached the summit. Then still others came on and fairly surrounded the British on the flat top of the hill. Some of the British soldiers rolled and scrambled down the south and west sides of the hill, but ninety-four of their number, including General Colley, were killed, one hundred and thirty-four wounded and fifty-nine taken prisoner. The Boers had one man killed and five wounded.

Visitors to this battle ground regard Majuba victory as a remarkable feat of arms, and it remains in the British memory as a disgrace and blot upon their military annals. Unfortunately, the individual British soldier feels called upon to take an unworthy revenge, and private letters tell of how, at Elandslaagte, disarmed and petitioning Boers were bayoneted most barbarously to the cry of "Remember Majuba!"

When the news of the defeat reached England, a fierce controversy arose as to the course to be pursued. The war party urged that England must immediately retrieve these losses or forfeit

her prestige in South Africa, to her everlasting failure and disgrace. The peace party argued that the annexation had been countenanced in England under a misconception of the true feelings of the Boers; but now that the passion for liberty existing among this people was surely known, the only course was undoubtedly to reinstate them in their rights.

The peace party prevailed and in 1881 a partial restoration of the independence of the South African Republic was made with a recognition of the suzerainty of England. The Boers remained dissatisfied and Paul Kruger continually importuned England for a new arrangement.

They succeeded in 1884 in obtaining a new convention, now called the Convention of London. In this England withdrew all right to interfere in the internal affairs of the Republic, retaining only the veto power upon treaties made with other states, except the Orange Free State.

The whole point of the London Convention, and the object of Paul Krueger's visit to London, was the withdrawal of the suzerainty, but now Mr. Chamberlain maintains that the articles only of the 1884 convention supersede the articles of the convention of 1881 and that the preamble of 1881 has not been superseded and is still in force, consequently that the suzerainty mentioned in the preamble of 1881 is still in force. This despite the fact that the new convention had also a new preamble.

How did the English nation regard this question when the convention of 1884 was made? The answer to this query is found in the following quotation from a dispatch sent by Mr. Chamberlain himself to the High Commissioner of South Africa in 1896:

"It is necessary that I should state clearly and unequivocally what is the position which Her Majesty's government claims to hold towards the government of the South African Republic.

"Since the convention of 1884 Her Majesty's government has recognized the South African Republic as a free and independent government as regards all its internal affairs not touched by that convention, but, as regards its external relations, it is subject to this country in accordance with the provisions of Article IV."

Dr. Karl Blind has an article on the suzerainty question in the November Fortnightly Review. Dr. Blind was a witness of the negotiations in 1881 and '84. He held many conversations at the time with Krueger, Joubert and other interested personages.

Dr. Blind makes the following points:

1. The new treaty was provided with a new preamble.
2. The name "South African Republic" was restored.
3. Lord Derby declared it to be a new treaty, in substitution for that of 1881.
4. The British Resident at Pretoria was withdrawn and in his place an officer substituted "with functions analogous to those of a consul."

5. In Mr. Chamberlain's dispatch, written at the time of the Jameson raid, the South African Republic was termed "a foreign state, a foreign power with which Her Majesty is at peace and in treaty relations."

Further, Dr. Blind says: "When in the English House of Commons questions were asked about that point in 1890 and 1895, Conservative and Liberal secretaries declared that no reservation of the Queen's suzerainty was expressed in the new treaty of 1884; and that, although Her Majesty retains the power of refusing to sanction certain treaties, it is a cardinal principle of that settlement that the internal government and legislation of the South African Republic shall not be interfered with."

Thus the intentions of the English government at the time of the signing of the Convention seem plain, and any other interpretation is mere quibbling:

A year after the Transvaalers supposed that their independence had been restored to them, the gold ledges of the Witwatersrand came to light. Unfortunately for the Republic, the Rand did not lie, as did the Kimberley mines, where the boundary line could be juggled with, but in the very midst of the Transvaal. The curse of the "Hoard" now fell upon the Dutch. Swarms of gold hunters moved in upon them and speculators began to turn their attention in that direction.

Opposite the old Dutch capital of Pretoria arose the hustling mining town, Johannesburg. Before the bewildered Dutch could realize what had befallen them they were clamorously set upon by the Uitlanders, who exclaimed that they did not like the taxes, nor the monopolies, nor the schools, nor the Dutch language. The sanitation of the city was poor and so was the police service. In fact, they lacked all the comforts of modern life, which the stupid Boers would not give them.

The Boers, on their side, saw themselves about to be submerged by the flood of new and strange life, which might be good or might be bad, and could not be immediately accepted. Possibly a money-grabbing horde may not represent progress in an attractive light to the unaccustomed eye.

The Boers began clumsily to attempt to ward off the threatened danger. They restricted the franchise and debarred the Uitlanders from a share in the government. The Uitlanders, being in the majority, began to think of revolution. They were encouraged by some plotters outside the borders of the Republic. Then came the bold attempt to steal a country outright, without sanction or warrant from any government. But the Boers had been underestimated. The foolhardy Dr. Jameson and his brave band were captured and imprisoned.

If the Boers in their righteous wrath had slain the invaders it would not have been much to wonder at, but they buried the dead of their enemies, tenderly cared for the wounded and praised the courage of the soldiers who had bravely followed their chief and to whom no blame was attached.

The leader was sent home to be tried by his own government for his lawless attempt upon a nation at peace with England.

The whole transaction, including the trial, served as a warning to the Boers of the future in store for them, and from that day to this they have been steadily preparing for what they knew must come. It has been said by so-called military experts that the English will win their way to Pretoria at a cost of no less than fifty thousand men.

The partisans of the British make much of the exclusion of the Uitlanders from a share in the government, and certainly the action of the Boers in this respect must strike Americans as retrogressive and reprehensible. Yet what were the considerations which President Krueger's government had to face? The foreign element did not enter by degrees and by degrees become assimilated. In a day, almost, it entered in numbers far beyond the citizens. It did not come out of a desire to live under the institutions peculiar to this community, nor even for the choice of this particular spot of nature, but it came to get the wealth that was there and then to go elsewhere to distribute it. Could such a body of men be safely allowed to take a hand in the government for the interests of the true Africander?

The American people believes in the right of a government to legislate against a foreign element for the protection of its own citizens, and has, by virtue of a logic similar to the Boers, debarred the Chinese from even setting foot upon American ground.

The English in the Colony of Natal do not like the East Indian, who has come in considerable numbers to their shores, because he can underbid them in labor and outwit them in commerce. They have thoughtfully framed a law which says that no alien may obtain the franchise in Natal, if he comes from a country not under representative government.

In British Guiana the Dutch element is equal to the English in numbers, but is allowed no voice in the legislative or administrative departments of the government. The Dutch have made many appeals to the British government for redress, but none have been granted.

Thus, if the Boers are primitive in their political measures, they are not alone in that; they have respectable company.

England says she feels bound to protect the interests of her citizens who dwell abroad. Will she, then, demand that Russia, for instance, modify her laws because they conflict with what an English resident regards as his right?

When a nation errs in the solution of a political problem is it in the international code that another power may step in and assume the position of dictator?

Furthermore, although the Uitlanders were hampered and inconvenienced, was their suffering so real and past remedy that a war like the present one was an immediate necessity?

Three years ago Mr. Chamberlain spoke eloquently upon this point and Sir William Harcourt has very inconsiderately exhumed and quoted the eloquent words. They are as follows:

"In some quarters the idea is put forward that the government ought to have issued an ultimatum to President Krueger—an ultimatum which would have certainly been regretted, and which must have led to war. Sir, I do not propose to discuss such a contingency as that. A war in South Africa would be one of the most serious wars that could possibly be waged. It would be in the nature of a civil war. It would be a long war, a bitter war, and a costly war. As I have pointed out, it would leave behind it the embers of a strife which I believe generations would hardly be long enough to extinguish. To go to war with President Krueger in order to force upon him reforms in the internal affairs of his state, with which successive Secretaries of State standing in this place have repudiated all right of interference,—that would have been a course of action as immoral as it would have been unwise.

"Is it beyond the resources of diplomacy to retrieve a false position like this on both sides and to restore this offer of August which has now fallen through? We hear a great deal of talk about supremacy, of the paramountcy. They are big words, and these big words you ought to consider and understand what they mean, and how far they go, and how far they will lead.

"In some senses, of course, we are supreme in South Africa. We have the command of force. We can do what we like. We can crush these Dutchmen in the Transvaal, and you will have to crush these Dutchmen all over South Africa. You may send out a corps d'armee and you can do that; of that there is no doubt. But that, I hope, is not the question. For us it is not what we can do, but what it is right to do. That is the only supremacy which I claim for the English nation.

"When you talk of supremacy does it mean that you have the right to override and destroy the convention into which you entered in 1884, and interfere whenever you like and in whatever matters you like in the international government of the Transvaal after you have guaranteed to the government of the Transvaal internal autonomy?

"To the man who can feel and think it is hard to conceive the horror of a war waged by Christian men against each other in the presence of savage tribes, a war waged against people deeply attached to the independence of their country, an independence which was guaranteed and which they honestly believe to be at stake. A war between the Dutch and British races throughout South Africa, when your superiority is asserted, as, of course, it will be—will leave behind it an inheritance of undying hatred in the hearts of the people among whom you will still have to live. Such a war will be a dreadful close to an expiring century and a glorious reign. While the voice of reason may still be heard and the path of peace is still open, something may yet be done before it is too late to avert such a shameful catastrophe."

The provocation must have been very severe when a man of these noble and humanitarian sentiments is compelled to set in motion the very war which has seemed to him so unwarranted. It would appear that the English residents in the Transvaal must have been in imme-

diate danger of loss of life or property. Yet the worst that they complain of is the 2½ per cent. tax on the yield of the mines and the deprivation of franchise privileges when they do not want to remain in the country for a lifetime.

The tax on mines in the Canadian Klondike is in the neighborhood of 11 per cent. Paul Krueger was offering more favorable franchise laws in exchange for a formal disavowal of the suzerainty claimed on the preamble of 1881, when the British government commenced to mass troops on the frontiers of the two Dutch republics.

If the Uitlanders did not like their life in the Transvaal why did they not take the advice Cecil Rhodes gave them when they complained to him several years ago—and leave the country—in other words, why did they not do as the Dutch did when they disliked British government—trek to where they liked it better.

The most consistent of the English writers on England's attitude in South Africa abandon all discussion of conventions, grievances and similar considerations, basing their entire contention upon the bold declaration that all South Africa ought to form one united whole under the leadership of England. That England should long ago have taken determined steps to bring this about, and any other course at present would be weak, paltering and sentimental.

The divine British right is most clearly set forth in Cecil Rhodes' philosophy of the conduct of his own life. The scheme as he sees it is something like this: Man's life is short and unsatisfactory. What would he best do in the time allotted him? Plainly throw in his force, such as it is, with what he perceives that God is working out.

How determine God's plan?

By the study of history.

What does history show to be the plan of God?

The unification of the human race for the purposes of civilization.

What power does the Divine Mind appear to be using to bring about such an organized whole?

Answer—The English-speaking race.

In other words, the British Empire must now absorb the Transvaal and Orange Free State. When God wills a thing all other considerations vanish, covenants and treaties are abrogated, the hopes and strivings of the unfavored people as are nothing, the sacrifice of life and the destruction of the world's peace are not our affair. For the method of God is evolution, the survival of the fittest.

Undoubtedly God works his will by processes which we term evolutionary—but that man should propose to himself the same method does not precisely follow. So far in man's history it has seemed that the only safe path for man to follow is the path marked out by the highest moral we know—wherein the law is not "The Survival of the Fittest, but Man His Brother's Keeper."

What the English plainly see to be the destiny of South Africa is not patent to the Africander. Twenty years ago the Africander Bund

was formed from those men who believed far otherwise, men who looked with longing and admiration toward America, who had read the story of our Revolution and gathered hope, and who felt that a new republic of Confederate South African states might look to a greater future than a dependency of England. The Bund was not ready for war and had perhaps no definite plans, but the Transvaal has been preparing for her own defense and is as fit to meet the shock as a small state could well be.

Every household is supplied with good rifles and with ammunition. The women and children even have been trained to the use of weapons. The best of guns have been bought in France and Germany and experts of various nationalities have been teaching in the military schools, training the Boers to the handling of the big guns, and planning out in detail the defense of the whole country.

The passes leading into the Transvaal have been most strongly fortified and garrisoned and Pretoria and Johannesburg are fairly impregnable. It is said that Pretoria is fitted to stand a siege of three years' duration.

Should the Cape Dutch decide to rise, should the blacks give trouble, should England's rivals take advantage of her preoccupation, events might turn out differently from our anticipations. Already the English have ordered out more than twice as many troops as they determined on at first, and the first levy was thought to be much larger than necessary. Sir Redvers Buller said that he would not need so many to settle the Boers, but that he had other difficulties arising from the native population, which made it unsafe to take a smaller force.

The Boers are not sure that they are to be beaten. They have the flag of the United South African Republic ready to unfurl.

There is no possibility of their being able to accomplish this. Yet I cannot help but think: what if Cecil Rhodes were mistaken and God were on the other side!

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- Impressions of South Africa.....James Bryce
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- The South African Question.....Olive Schreiner
(Few valuable facts, but interesting as the point of view of an Anglo-Africander.)
- The Great Thirst Land.....P. Gillmore
(Story of a hunting expedition. A good picture of scenery, people and animals.)
- Oom Paul's People.....H. Hillegas
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