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MORAVENADE

AN EARNEST REPRESENTATION

AND

HISTORICAL REMINDER

TO

**Her Majesty Queen Victoria,**

OF

GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND, EMPRESS OF INDIA,  
ETC., ETC.,

*In view of the prevailing Crisis.*

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BY

P. J. JOUBERT.

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PRETORIA :

"LAND EN VOLK" OFFICE, PRETORIUS STREET.

1899.

# AN EARNEST REPRESENTATION

AND

## HISTORICAL REMINDER

TO

Her Majesty Queen Victoria.

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*Pretoria, June 15, 1899.*

*To Her Most Gracious Majesty the Queen*

*of Great Britain and Ireland,*

*Empress of India, etc., etc.*

*Your Majesty,*

It is with feelings of deepest pain and distress that the undersigned ventures to address Your Most Gracious Majesty at this critical period, and in view of the dark future, which as a cloud is hovering over South Africa, the land of his birth and home. This unhappy situation has been brought about by the unjust action of one of Your Majesty's Ministers, who, perhaps in good faith, though upon incorrect information, has allowed himself to be led by unscrupulous fortune-seekers, reckless speculators, and insatiable capitalists.

This matter will be reverted to again during the course of this letter by Your Majesty's lowly petitioner, who desires, first, in all humility, to make known to Your Majesty, who he is. He is a descendant of and great-great-grandson of Pierre Joubert, one of the Huguenots, who, because of their religious belief, were obliged to leave their homes and friends, and to seek refuge from persecution in flight to South Africa, where they could serve their God in freedom. He settled at Fransch Hoek, near Capetown,

which was then under the administration of the "Hollandsche Compagnie," and became soon, through the blessing of God, one of the richest and most influential farmers and landowners there. He resided there until compelled by circumstances to remove to the district of Graaff-Reinet, where he now lies buried—in the land of my birth, that passed for good under the rule of Great Britain in 1806.

Alas! What has our nation not experienced and suffered under that rule. It has perhaps never been brought to Your Majesty's notice why these people could not live peacefully in their land of adoption and birth. And yet, who is there now to tell you thereof? And how would he begin? It would, indeed, be tedious to relate everything minutely, Your Majesty.

The discontent so often and to his detriment ascribed to the Boer was exaggerated and misrepresented, as, for instance, in the matter of the freeing of the slaves, when he was described as being inhumanly against their liberation. No! Your Majesty, it was not the Christian Boers' repugnance to the emancipation, but his opposition to the means employed in effecting same under the blessed British rule. Is Your Majesty perhaps aware how the Boers became possessed of those slaves? They, the Boers, had no ships to convey the slaves from Mozambique and elsewhere, as none other than English vessels were allowed to bring slaves to the Cape market; therefore, it was from English slave ships that the Boers first bought their slaves, and in this manner enjoyed a short season of prosperity; for, assisted by their dearly-bought slaves, they could have their lands ploughed and sown with grain, which, under the blessings of Britannia's laws, could be sold for not more than 18d. per bag. It was thereafter shipped abroad by English merchants and sold at immense profits. And then, Your Majesty, the Boer was suddenly told: "Your slaves are free, and you will receive compensation to such and such an amount for them, which you will have to go and get in England." Your Majesty, how could the Boer be expected with his ox-wagon or horses to go and fetch same? To have undertaken at that time, a voyage so dangerous and lengthy (a hundred days or so being the time required to accomplish same) would have cost more than the small amount of the indemnity he was to receive for his dearly-bought slaves. What could the Boer do? The only means left him was to engage the English dealer, from whom he had purchased the slaves at exorbitant prices, to go and fetch the money for him, or to sell his chance for what he could get.

How many unscrupulous agents and merchants took advantage of the opportunity thus offered, not to reconcile the Boer to the law and authority of the British Government, but to carry out their own designs in order to satisfy their cupidity, thus nurturing the hostility of the Boer against the Government, hoping thereby eventually to acquire possession of his lands,

The population increasing, spread out further and further, gradually enlarging the Colony; and it is perhaps known to Your Majesty how the poor Boers on the frontiers fared, how they were robbed of their cattle, and how, owing to the insufficient protection afforded them, they were often left to their fate, or more frequently persecuted and oppressed, so that it is not to be wondered at (although I do not seek to justify their conduct) that, disgusted and dissatisfied with the treatment meted out to them, they at last rebelled against the Government; thus originating what took place in 1815 and ended so disastrously. For, as Your Majesty is perhaps aware, matters had reached such a pitch that a collision between the British troops and British subjects at length resulted over the quarrel of a Boer with a semi-civilised native, which unfortunate incident has imparted to the place where the British took such extreme measures against the Boers, an irreconcilable and ever-to-be-remembered name—"Slachtbank or Slachtersnek," which it bears even unto this day.

Alas! Your Majesty, what had the Boer not to suffer, then, under the otherwise glorious British rule? Enquire of the border settlers of 1820 to 1834, when their eventful departure from the Colony took place. Is it perhaps known to Your Majesty how they were driven back from the boundaries by the natives, who pursued them far into the country, harassing and molesting them? Yes, even murdering some, robbing them of their cattle, and burning and laying waste their homes. What protection did they enjoy against the savages who had murdered their wives and children, who had lashed young girls to the trunks of trees, ravished them, cut off their breasts, and after performing nameless other cruelties killed them? They, the Boers, were called out for Commando Service at their own expense, under command and control of the British, to fight the kafirs. And with what result? The Boer was impoverished thereby without the kafir being brought to a sense of his duty; for while on commando, his cattle were stolen from his farm and driven away into Kafirland, whither he was prevented from going in order to recover them. No! they had no choice but to wait till the troops re-took the cattle, which were afterwards publicly sold as loot in the presence of the owners thereof, the Boers being informed that they would receive compensation for same. But, Your Majesty, they received no recompense; not in money or goods, neither in rest nor peace, but, instead, abuse and indignities were heaped on them. They were told that they should be satisfied at not being punished as the instigators of the disturbance.

Your Majesty, this was the state of affairs in 1834. The dissatisfaction evinced at such treatment became more and more pronounced. The Boers were told by His Excellency the Governor that all who were not content or would not submit to British rule, were at liberty to migrate beyond the borders of the Colony, out

of British territory. With feelings of deep anguish at the thought of having to leave their motherland and the country of their birth, and with a weary sigh, the question escaped them. "Whither? To the dismal hinterland of savage South Africa?" "Yes! yes! Your Majesty, rather the dangers of the wilderness, midst wild animals and savage men, than to remain longer under the yoke of so iniquitous a Government." And then, "Come friends, come brothers! Pack your wagons, collect your flocks and herds, and let us away over the border. God knows whither, and He will guide us."

The ~~British~~ officials of the British Empire, the ambitious merchants and others, flourished there, Your Majesty, but hither came the Boers in groups and families in search of peace and rest. There being no one to purchase their well cultivated farms, which they could not remove, they were compelled to part with same for a ridiculous price or abandon them entirely. Then into the unknown they wandered; there to face the dangers and suffering inseparable from such a journey. How could they arm themselves against such dangers? They were not permitted to carry arms or ammunition along with them, but were even followed by British officials beyond the Orange River, to try and find out if there were not perhaps still one faithful slave with his master, and if the Boers were not perhaps carrying a quantity of arms and ammunition along with them. Thanks to the kindness of those officials, the Boers were advised of the object of their coming, and were consequently enabled to conceal their guns and ammunition. Does Your Majesty not perceive in the aforementioned some analogy to certain facts in biblical history? For even as Pharaoh drove the Israelites through the Red Sea, were the Boers driven through the Great River. Is it, then, to be wondered at that, sad at heart and with intense bitterness, they preferred the perils of the desert? Your Majesty, who can write the history of their lives? Who can describe the suffering they endured? They ventured forth, trusting in God, rid of all human despotism, surrounded by wild beasts, in search of a free land for their children and children's children. They wandered in small groups further and further, yet ever onward until they arrived at the Vaal River. Here they pitched their tents and regarded the country as their Eldorado. Here were the means of subsistence—fish in the water, game on the veld, and a prospect of being able to sow crops and to live in peace. They could clothe themselves with skins and subsist on flesh until God in his bounty provided other means; at least so reasoned the poor Boers. "Come now, let us erect our tent (our tabernacle) to celebrate the Sabbath, for in our God we believe and trust; He has given unto us this glorious land and we shall live and praise Him here. It needs not that we go beyond the Jordan, we have no Babylon or Jericho to overthrow. No walls to be demolished for us, for our Canaan is an uninhabited

land; therefore, ye Boers, be up and doing, work and live." Thus they thought, and thus they spoke; but how short-lived was their delight, when at break of day, one morning, the dread cry of "Murder! Murder!" awakened them. What could it be? Whence this uproar and confusion? Moselekatse, head of a cruel, unknown Kafir tribe, had come with a large regiment of warriors from the far north through a wild and unpopulated country, a distance of over a hundred miles, and attacked a small detachment of Boers near the river, no warning having reached them of the intended onslaught. "Up, now! Courage, men! Fight for your lives, for your wives and your children." The odds at first were three to one, then seven, and eventually increased to twenty to one; but God gave them courage and strength, and they not only repulsed the horde of savages, but succeeded in rescuing several children and severely wounded women that were captured. Your Majesty, those were anxious days for them. Women wounded—in one, over twenty assegai stabs being counted—no doctor at hand, without medicine, and many widows and orphans destitute of food and clothing left to their care. And what must be done next? Leave the Eldorado? To flee? Whither? Back again? No, no! Not to the flesh pots of Egypt, but to God. He is our refuge!

Other parties of the Boers had gone eastwards. With these they now decided to combine. But did the undaunted Moselekatse allow these few Boers to escape him? On the contrary, he immediately sent a second expedition, much stronger than the previous one, commanding it not to return so long as there remained a Boer living; that he did not thereafter wish to hear of a living Boer. Thus it came to pass that this small party of fleeing Boers, (38 only being capable of bearing arms), with their wives and children, together with cattle and 34 wagons, were followed by that great commando of savages, until they reached that ever memorable spot in the Orange Free State known as "Vechtkop," where the Boers, recognising the futility of continuing their flight, drew up a lager or camp with their wagons, surrounding same with branches of trees, and calmly awaited their pitiless foe who did not long delay in attacking them with all the fiendish courage of savages. Prepared to die in the face of overwhelming odds, they, nevertheless, determined to fight manfully to the last, trusting in God. The impending danger was awaited in earnest supplications before the Throne of the Triune God. As the enemy pressed on each Boer made use of his rifle, causing the smoke to ascend in such volumes to heaven, that even the flying enemy imagined the Boers had been vanquished, that their lager was in flames and that they had been utterly annihilated. We were afterwards told that when the intelligence reached Grahamstown, Cape Colony, Your Majesty's subjects were so elated thereat that they celebrated the receipt of the news by bonfires and other illuminations,

thinking that the last of the Boers had fallen, and that the extravagant expectations of the discontented rebels had now all ended in smoke. But no! Your Majesty, our God in heaven had another destiny for the Boer. For, notwithstanding 1333 assegais were hurled into the small lager, only two men were killed and six wounded, and their little camp, unlike the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, was not laid waste. There were still to be found five just men before God whose prayers had warded off disaster and thwarted the wishes of Your Majesty's Grahamstown subjects. Not only did our God cause the smoke and mist to disappear, but He touched the heart of a noble native, Marroco, who, when he heard of the wretched plight that had overtaken the Boers, sent them without delay succour in the shape of milk, kafircorn and pack-oxen, thereby enabling them to rejoin their friends who had passed over the Drakensberg into Natal.

Before further recording the history of this party, I would like to relate to Your Majesty about two other ill-fated parties of trekkers—that of Jansen van Rensburg, which proceeded northwards beyond Zoutpansberg, never to be heard of again, for all record of them is as absolutely lost to the world as that of the ten tribes of Israel. It was stated that, owing to the want of ammunition, which was denied them by the Government of the British Cape Colony on their departure into the wilds, they were massacred, everyone of them. However, what actually became of them we do not know.

The other party under Louis Trichardt also ventured as far as Zoutpansberg, thence proceeding south-eastwards until Delagoa Bay was reached, where he, the leader, and others succumbed to the there prevailing fever, and from which place the few survivors together with their children were conveyed by vessel to Natal, where they were enabled to rejoin their friends. The misery and suffering experienced and endured by these pioneers is likewise indescribable, and distresses one even to think of.

But now, let us return to the history of those who passed over the Drakensberg and attached themselves to Piet Retief, Gert Maritz and Uys, and let us see, Your Majesty, how they fared. Did they go to attack a peaceful people? Did they go as freebooters into a strange or friendly country? Did they go purposing to wrest territory from a lot of defenceless savages, or did they go to revenge themselves on the brother of Moselekatse for the iniquitous attack on them at the instigation of the latter? Did they seek to avenge the blood of Van Rensburg and others, who were murdered by the same race of savages as that to which Dingaan belonged? No! Your Majesty, nothing of the kind. First they held communion with the Almighty God, and then approached the savage ruler of the land, King Dingaan, who had already promised them a tract of country, and requested him to grant them a written agreement to that effect. It is doubtless

known to Your Majesty how this cruel and barbarous chief, after having given them the land, and after duly signing the agreement thereanent, mercilessly and treacherously murdered Piet Retief and his seventy men, immediately afterwards sending out his commandos to massacre those awaiting the return of Piet Retief and the unsuspecting women and children. Thus without warning were 600 helpless old men, women, and children butchered in cold blood. What a panic, what dismay, this caused among the Boers scattered about the country! Those remaining were robbed of all their cattle; and what could they do? Should they await other such onslaughts and perish eventually at the hands of a savage people or die of hunger in the wilderness? Alas, how dismal their outlook seemed! Whither must they go? Whence could they expect help? From Great Britain? Yes, and help came too! A vessel arrived at Port Natal, and Captain Jarvis stepped on shore. "Thank God, assistance was at hand; now no more starvation. No more fear of the sword of Dingaan. Succour has come at last!" Such were the thoughts of many a simple-minded Boer. But, alas! how soon was their joy to be turned into grief and indignation, for how horribly surprised were they to learn that, instead of having come to their aid, he was sent to forbid them to fight with the natives and to disarm them. What was to be done? Should they offer Captain Jarvis resistance? Yes! Rather would they fight to the death than hand over their firearms. But what then, if the kafirs should come to his aid? The Boers found their prospects more cheerless now than ever. They acted, therefore, with great cunning, yet with submissiveness. Rather than show antagonism they hid their guns and ammunition, and submitted to the inspection and search of Captain Jarvis, anxiously praying to God to give them refuge. Captain Jarvis, having ascertained that there was no booty to be got from the poor Boers, and as Natal offered but few attractions then, was glad to take his departure.

Poor deserted Boer, what was now your outlook? In a savage land, in the vicinity of a powerful and barbarous tribe, ruled over by the tyrant Dingaan. What was there to do but to avenge the murders committed and restore peace with the sword? Therefore, it behoved Pieter Uys, Hdk. Potgieter and everyone to punish Dingaan and his tribe, and to re-establish peace, otherwise the Boers would not have been able to live in the country. Therefore, "200 men of you up and away to the mighty Dingaan!" This, however, was not owing to a lust for fighting, Your Majesty, but because the Boer adjudged it absolutely necessary, and no one in the world could have done otherwise.

A return to the Colony was not to be thought of. The only conclusion they could arrive at was to endeavour to compel Dingaan, at the edge of the sword, to promote peace. How unfortunate, though, was the outcome of this desperate effort of only 200 men to advance



against the might of Dingaan in the midst of his people and in his own dangerous land, without the support of cannon or other instruments of war, but simply mounted on their horses armed with flintlock guns. And yet they had no choice but to do it. The issue was only as could have been expected. Dingaan's regiments were too powerful for the little handful of Boers, who were forced to take refuge in flight, not however until after hundreds of the foe had bitten the dust. Their small stock of ammunition had run out; their brave commander Piet Uys, his never-to-be-forgotten little son and eight others lost their lives in this conflict. But in vain! Dingaan was conqueror and his courage revived immediately. He now sent a larger and more powerful commando than before with instructions to completely destroy the Boers. This time, however, the Boers were on their guard. They had constructed a laager on the banks of the Bosmansriver, where the flourishing village of Escourt now lies, close to the village Weenen (to wail), so called in memory of the many wailing women and children massacred there.

It was here that Dingaan was to learn that, although but a mere handful of whites, the Boers with righteousness as their cause, were not to be overthrown by his iniquitous hosts. No! they did not rely in the strength of their horses or the heroism of their men, but in the omnipotence of their God, who gave them the victory. For although the Boers were surrounded by overwhelming odds and repeatedly stormed by thousands and thousands of the enemy, they lost but one killed. The Zulus, however, after three days' fighting, were forced to retire leaving so many of their dead on the field that, for years after, the veld was white with their bones testifying to the frightful carnage that took place there. God had protected the Boers and delivered the dearly bought land of Natal into their hands. They had, however, been robbed of all their cattle and knew not what to do. Their God and his word still remained to them, and so they were comforted—for he who has faith in God has not built upon the sand—and in the sight of heaven their cause was just; therefore, He sent them help from above. Andries Pretorius had in company with other Boers, recently arrived from the Cape, and he, having called together all the Boers to be found in Natal, and even as many of those to be found in the territory known as the Orange Free State, formed a commando about 400 strong, with which he hazarded to invade Dingaan's country, and notwithstanding the fact that his men were armed only with flintlock guns, they succeeded on December 16 1838 in not only defeating him (Dingaan) in this battle but in overthrowing his kingdom and destroying his chief kraal, driving him so far inland that he was never more able to return. In token of their gratitude for the victory gained, the Boers made a vow to ever afterwards keep the date thereof as a day of thanks-

giving, and so the 16th of December is always commemorated at Paardekraal.

One would have thought, Your Majesty, that the Boer after this would have been left alone to live peaceably, praising his God in the country he had bought so dear. But no! the yoke of oppression had not yet been broken. Their cup of bitterness was not yet emptied. Scarcely had the Boers laid out the village, Pietermaritzburg, dug a water-furrow, erected a church, started a small school for their children and built a court-house and prison, when lo! threatening clouds began to gather and the alarm to sound again. What can it be—the kafirs? No! a thousand—thousand times worse. The English have come; an officer with a company of soldiers equipped with cannon and shell is here! “It is Captain Jarvis, that good—that brave old soldier. We will soon be able to adjust matters with him; he will presently be gone again.” No! my poor fellow Boers, you are deluded. The officer is Captain Smith; he has come to annex the country as a possession of that mighty empire, Great Britain—to make an end to our boasted independence and to destroy our peace.

Your Majesty, it is with a shudder I recall this deplorable incident. It cannot be wondered at that the Boers, who had endured and suffered so much to obtain this land and to form an independent people, should have declined to voluntarily submit to such an injustice, and have resisted any attempts to achieve the same. When they discovered that argument and fair words were of no avail and that Major Smith was steadfast in his purpose to take possession of the country and crush the Boers, and as a step in that direction had already declared the bay annexed, they were driven to the verge of despair and so resorted to arms. Having hastily collected together to the number of about 200, for they were but few and much scattered, they advanced toward the Congella. Major Smith, vainly imagining that this mere handful of Boers would be disconcerted and put to flight at the first firing of his cannon, advanced along the shore under cover of darkness, until he had almost reached the sleeping lager, when he opened fire on the picket guard, comprising about 28 men, with the fatal result that one Boer was killed, Jan Greyling. The remainder of the Boers repelled the attack, and obliged the Major to retreat, leaving his cannon behind. I may here mention that more of the troops got drowned in the sea than succumbed to the bullets of the Boers. Now they had to face the fact that, although thankful to God for his many mercies and in deep sorrow at the loss of one of the bravest of their young men and for the many soldiers drowned, they had opposed the might of Britain. It was awful to contemplate; so young a nation as they, which had suffered so many hardships at the hands of the savages during the great trek and that had just been visited by an epidemic of measles, which, owing to the lack of

medical assistance and proper nourishment, had carried off many of them. Should they fight or surrender, was the question asked. Certainly; fight for their just rights. But, see, there come two ships now; it is madness for this little handful of Boers to offer further resistance. They were not trained nor armed with cannon; and thus could not prevent the landing of a force stronger than they themselves. They dared not longer fight the English for the kafirs had already commenced to harass them from the rear. A Boer had been killed on his farm and another, named Van Rooyen, murdered, his wife and daughter being subjected to the most inhuman treatment, ravished and driven away naked. Others were assaulted and barely escaped with their lives. In this way the Kafirs proved of great service to Major Smith and his soldiers, who were besieged by the Boers and had already been driven to the extremity of eating crows and horseflesh, and who would undoubtedly have been obliged to capitulate had it not been for the harassing attacks of the Kafirs in the rear of the Boers, which necessitated them hastening out to their farms in order to save their families from certain death. And thus it came to pass that the Boers lost their sacred right to the territory of Natal, which had been purchased with the blood of their slain. What was to be done next? There was no other remedy for it but to trek again, and trek inland, whither the English would not follow them, for if they remained they would once more have had to submit to the British yoke. They would, nevertheless, first give the latter a trial. "We will submit," they said, "perhaps England will deal with us kindlier here than she did in the Cape Colony, our motherland. Come, let us wait and see!" What happened after this, Your Majesty? The first thing Your Majesty's servants did was to banish certain of the Boers, who had to flee for their lives. This was not all, however; for, when the Kafirs stole their cattle and brought them to Major Smith, the Boers were told they could not get same back, as he had run short of provisions and would require them as food. Thus were the prospects of the Boer growing darker and darker. Colonel Cloete had arrived. What had he to tell them? Firstly, that they were to consider themselves the conquered subjects of Her Majesty; And, as such, what would they enjoy? Each one who had occupied a piece of ground could make application for same, which after certain investigations would be granted him. The country had been won and acquired by the Boers; consequently the Boer Volksraad had granted to each Boer capable of bearing arms two farms and one erf at Pietermaritzburg. These farms were inspected, registered, and declared as marketable property some time before the appearance of the English. When, however, several of the Boers, dissatisfied with the principle of British rule, began to leave the country, and tried to barter their farms and erven for wagons, trek-cattle, clothing, and other requisites for their fresh

trek inland, they, as well as the few Boers, who intended to remain under British rule in Natal and had bought or given something in exchange for the erven and farms, were profoundly astonished, not to say disappointed, when they approached Colonel Cloete for transfer of the property they had secured, to hear that as the erven and farms had not been *bona fide* occupied, they had therefore reverted to the Government and were now declared as crownlands. "The wagon and oxen or money and goods you gave for same can only be regarded as a dead loss to yourself," was the reply they got.

This was how the British Government in Natal introduced itself to the defeated Boers. Many and bitter were the tears shed by the thus oppressed and impoverished Boers.

Is Your Majesty, perhaps, acquainted with the fact, that the Boers sent a delegate to lay their grievances before Your Majesty, who, after many weeks travelling on horseback, reached Governor Pottinger, and entreated him to listen to their complaints? But, Your Majesty, this emissary was not even given an audience. Thus it was obvious to all that the doors had been closed against their being heard, and that they would have to patiently tolerate all that befell them, without the slightest prospect of ever obtaining justice or relief. Is it a matter for wonder, Your Majesty, that under these circumstances, every Boer took advantage of the first opportunity that offered to leave the Colony of Natal and trek beyond the Drakensberg to a haven of rest, where there was no British authority, and where they could live and die in peace?

It was upon these trek-Boers that various deceptions were practised in Your Majesty's name. They were called together by the late General Pretorius, to meet the Governor, Sir Harry Smith, who, it was stated, wished personally to see the Boers and to learn what the majority desired. It was announced that if the majority would remain under Her Majesty's rule, he, the Governor, would give them land and would treat the minority with every degree of kindness and patience, always endeavouring to persuade them to be reconciled to British authority; but, on the other hand, should it appear that the majority were for freedom and antagonistic towards the authority of the British, they could go to perdition; Her Majesty's Government would not trouble itself further about them. On this pretext as many of the Boers as could were prevailed upon to proceed to Winburg, a newly-laid out village, for the purpose of meeting Sir Harry Smith. But how ineffably deceived were they, for, instead of finding Sir Harry Smith and obtaining a peaceful settlement of all their grievances, an ultimatum was presented to them reading as follows:—"Your headman or leader is a rebel. I have put a price of a thousand pounds on his head; and woe unto any of you who connive at his escape. I will treat such as rebels." Who can describe the feelings of disappointment and resentment that arose in the breasts of the

Boers at these words, and to which can only be attributed what subsequently took place at Boomplaats on the 29th August, 1849? It is true that the forces of Sir Harry, reinforced by bastards and Griquas, suffered a heavy reverse. The Boers, however, being armed only with flintlock guns, could not for long withstand a larger and better armed force, supported by cannon, and were eventually obliged to retreat, leaving six of their number dead on the field and several others prisoners in the hands of the English, none of whom were ever after seen or heard of.

Thus ended this act in the drama of South Africa, creating new miseries for the Boers, who could not immediately trek or escape in flight beyond the Vaal River, where the Portuguese had conceded them a tract of country, decimated of its native population by the raiding of Moselekatse, previous to his attack upon the Boers in 1836, and for which he had been severely punished already by Piet Uys and Hendrik Potgieter. The country had, so to say, been cleared by the Boers; and they now availed themselves of the permission given them by the Portuguese to settle down north of the Vaal River, where they immediately founded a village which they named Potchefstroom. Having built a church and gaol, they proceeded with the election of a Parliament and the enactment of Laws, etc.

It had by this time begun to dawn upon Her Majesty's Government that it was more politic to leave the Boer severely alone, than to be everlastingly pursuing him from place to place like a small bird, hopping from branch to branch and tree to tree. With the object of assuring the Boers that they would not be interfered with north of the Vaal River, and could administer their own affairs, Her Majesty's Special Commissioner, Mr. C. M. Owen, was sent, with the result that a Convention was entered into on the 16th January, 1852, signed by Your Majesty's Commissioners, Major W. S. Hogg and Mr. C. M. Owen, the first three Articles of which read somewhat as follows:—

Art. 1. Her Majesty's Commissioners, on behalf of the British Government, do absolutely guarantee to the emigrant Boers north of the Vaal River the right of administering their own affairs and of governing in accordance with their own laws, without interference whatsoever on the part of the British Government, and that no extension shall be made by the said Government north of the Vaal; with the additional assurance that it is the fervent desire of the British Government to maintain peace and free trade, and to promote a friendly understanding with the emigrant Boers occupying or still to occupy the said territory; and it is further understood that these terms are to be mutually adhered to.

Art. 2. Should there arise any misunderstanding regarding the meaning of the word Vaalrivier, more particularly with respect

to the tributaries of the Vaal, the question shall be decided by a mutually appointed commission.

Art. 3. That Her Majesty's Commissioners disavow all compacts of whatever nature with the coloured nations north of the Vaal.

HAVE ANY OF THESE ARTICLES BEEN CARRIED OUT BY  
YOUR MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT ?

See also the protocol which defines the boundary along the Vaal River and the Orange Free State right unto the sea. The British evidently concluded that the Orange Free State was not worthy of being retained by so wealthy and good a Government as that of England. Therefore, Her Majesty's Government sent Sir Russel Clark on the 4th February, 1854, to abolish the suzerainty and give the Boers absolute independence and free government.

This just action on the part of the British Government, Your Majesty, was lauded and magnified by the Boer, whose confidence in the equity of the British had revived. No one dare say aught detrimental to the English. No! an Englishman was as good as any other man. This feeling toward the English can be testified to by the many soldiers who deserted hither, by every trader, and by the first gold-diggers in the country. Have not English persons served as members of our Executive Council and as Landdrosts? Have not Englishmen sat as members of our Volksraad? Yes! even several who did not understand Dutch. Did not perfect harmony, co-operation, confidence and friendship prevail then between the Englishman and the Boer all over South Africa? Would not in this wise, all the people of South Africa, irrespective of nationality, soon have been blended into one common people or nation?

Whence came this antagonism, this disruption then? Your Majesty, it is to be ascribed to the diamonds, to the Basutoland question—ask but Theophilus Shepstone—to what took place on the 12th April, 1878. Yes! Lord Carnarvon knows as also does Sir Michael Hicks-Beach. Did the Boers not have to submit to the diamond-fields south of the Vaal being taken from them? Was not the glory of having vanquished the Basutos after a long and bloody struggle, and after having endured so much, snatched from the Orange Free State? Was not the trust assured them by the Convention abused when they were dispossessed of a stretch of country where the diamond mines were situated, and for which they were subsequently obliged to accept a sum of ninety thousand pounds sterling—a ridiculously inadequate sum, considering that in one week the value of the diamonds procured exceeded this amount? Was not the Transvaal annexed after all the native tribes had been subdued by the Boers? Did not the Boers for three whole years implore Lord Carnarvon, and also later Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, as it were on their knees, for a restitution of their

rights, sending two deputations to England for that purpose, yet without obtaining the least hope of ever having their legitimate rights restored to them? It was therefore in desperation that the Boers resolved, on the 13th December, 1880, at Paardekraal, to recall the Government to resume their official duties, which had been interrupted owing to the annexation, and to govern the people in accordance with the laws of the land.

Your Majesty is probably aware that when the country was annexed on the 12th April, 1877, against which act President Thos. Burgers, however, resolutely protested, a proclamation was printed at Pretoria in the name of the British, without let or hindrance from the side of the Boer. No! the Boers, notwithstanding their indignation at this great wrong submitted to the law and preserved order, intending to petition Your Majesty against this manifestly unjust breach of the Convention, committed in the name of Your Majesty. They, therefore, without murmur permitted the publication of the document. When, however, they wanted to have a proclamation printed, declaring to the world their rights, Major Clark ordered his men to open fire on them—and this without previous warning or the proclaiming of war—wounding two and killing one of their horses. Thus, on December 16th, 1880, war was declared by England against the Boers, regardless of the Convention of 1852, wherein their independence, etc., etc., was guaranteed to them.

This was how the war, which lasted almost three months, originated.

The wretched Boers had no experienced soldiers, nor did they possess cannon, ammunition, modern weapons or a full treasury; indeed, they were almost destitute of food and clothing. They were armed only with antique flintlock guns, and had at the most a hundred rounds of ammunition. Their officers had but recently been chosen; the majority of them had never been under fire before, and in fact knew not what war meant. Such were the men who were now obliged to take up arms and to do battle. Against whom? Against Your Majesty? Against Great Britain? No! Your Majesty, happily not; but against those persons who through misrepresentation had beguiled the British Empire into the committal of a shameful deed, thereby seeking to cast a lasting reproach on Your Majesty's honoured name, and that of the noble British race, at the same time straining to crush a people to whom Your Majesty had, by the terms of the Zandrivier Convention, etc., guaranteed their independence.

In this wise the unfortunate struggle between the Boers and English came about. The Boers, perceiving that they could not move their pitiless oppressors by their protests and petitions, resolved to re-purchase liberty with their blood. Although many more brave English soldiers fell than Boers, the loss of the Boer, however, was greater and more acutely felt, considering the status

of the British soldier and how considerably it differs from that of the Boer. The Boer was fighting for his property, his home, and for his country. He is invariably the father of a family, and if he gets killed, then he leaves behind him a widow and children, or, perhaps, the only son of a widow or of aged and decrepit parents, whose support he was, is killed. A soldier knows none of these tender anxieties. He is instructed in the science of war, and thinks of nothing else; his greatest ambition is to carry out the orders of his commander, and to gain a medal for bravery in the fight. They do not concern themselves with the question as to whether they are fighting in a good or bad, a just or unjust, cause. No! it matters little to them; those in high positions (who sit in safety) should know, for they have calculated how much glory and honour they can gain or purchase with the life blood of the soldier; but they do not consider the amount of suffering and pain they inflict, and what their responsibility will be when they come before the judgment seat of the Great Judge of Heaven and Earth, before whom everyone will one day have to stand, face to face with those who stood under their authority, and were used to the destruction and downfall of others.

In this war, however, such was not the outcome, for although the struggle was fierce and arduous and the Boers lost heavily, their God gave them the ultimate victory. There arose a man, Mr. Gladstone, at the head of affairs in Great Britain, an upright God-fearing man, who could discern the directing finger of the Almighty and was not too high-minded to acknowledge same and boldly declare that righteousness exalteth a nation—his nation, Your Majesty's nation—while injustice and wrong-doing sullies the fame of a nation. Actuated thereto by a generous and noble impulse, he caused the unjust war to cease and restored the honour of Great Britain, by transforming an act of violence into a magnanimous deed. Peace was thereupon concluded at Langs Nek, and the Boers might have again exulted at being in amity with Great Britain, although burdened now with a heavy debt—a liability which they respectfully protest they never incurred—an empty treasury, broken firearms, ammunition all spent, and a Convention that cannot be conformed with; which can be declared as infringed every day with no impartial tribunal to determine one way or the other. The Boers were, however, free again, and they hoped it would now go better with them. They vainly imagined so, and frequently declared so. But, alas! Poor Transvaal! You have hardly survived one disaster, when two others stand staring you in the face.

Unfortunately a rich gold mine has been discovered in your country. It is surely not meant for the poor down-trodden Boer. Poor and abandoned men began soon to flock to this New Eldorado and were presently followed by a legion of unscrupulous speculators. Afterwards certain ambitious capitalists arrived on the



scene, who knew how to use their influence, and were indifferent as to what rôle they played or of what became of the country as long as they could increase their wealth tenfold. And to what end did they eventually apply their gold, derived from the Transvaal mines? Let history tell Your Majesty, and it will prove that it was not devoted to the good of the country or the welfare of their fellowmen; but, on the contrary, to the detriment of the country whose hospitality they were enjoying.

Their object was to overthrow the Government and to rob the people of their liberty, by force if necessary. As they had money in abundance, the proceeds of the gold they had won from the mines, they bought thousands of rifles and maxim cannons—smuggled these, concealed in oil-casks, into the country for the purpose of using them against the people of the Transvaal to oust them out of their country, whither the capitalist had come and possessed himself of the goldfields. With this aim in view they had made a compact with one Cecil Rhodes to undertake a raid into the Transvaal, Dr. Jameson acting as the tool.

Behold! Your Majesty, the conduct of these men—the same men who are to-day clamouring about grievances. Yes! grievances which have made them rich, richer than ever any of the Voortrekkers was or any of their children will be.

They then—who tried to overthrow the South African Republic, who stirred up strife in Johannesburg, on account of which many anxious and timid people fled from the City to escape probable hardships—are responsible for that dreadful railway accident in Natal, through which so many mothers and their children lost their lives. They shall also have to answer before the judgment seat of God, for the blood that was spilt during this contemptible Jameson Raid. Here, again, Your Majesty, six Boers fell defending their rights and the independence of their country.

Thus have the Boers, from time to time, been aggravated and harassed.

But even in these troubles they were not deserted by their God, who gave them refuge and enabled them to prove to the world that they are a meek and enlightened people; for although they had it in their power to refuse to grant quarter or pardon to Jameson and his gang of freebooters, they did not shoot them down as perhaps another military force would have done, or even follow the example set them at Slachtersnek. The thought alone that they were British subjects sufficed the Boers not to treat them according to their deserts, but to hand them over to the law officers of Your Majesty to be dealt with as Your Majesty deemed fit. And what is the thanks we get for our magnanimity in liberating Jameson, Rhodes' henchman? Instead of thanks, we are cursed with the revival of the Johannesburg agitation of 1895 and 1896.

These are the men who, encouraged and assisted by Mr.

Chamberlain, are trying once again to bring misery upon the Transvaal, and as a means to this end and in order to mislead the generous British public, have caused a false document, stated to have been voluntarily signed by 21,000 oppressed aliens, to be addressed to Your Majesty. If your Majesty would have that petition sent to Johannesburg to be publicly and impartially scrutinized, it would soon be made manifest how many thousands of the names appended thereto are of persons who had neither read nor seen it, and of numerous others who have long been dead. Armed with such a document they are now endeavouring to bring another calamity upon the Transvaal, and perhaps upon the whole of South Africa. Were such a scrutiny to take place it could be positively proved that many whose names appear as signatories, rather than being against the continuance of the independence of the Transvaal, have grievances against the framers of that notorious petition, and would like to bring them up for withholding their wages or ill-treatment. Such we are sure will faithfully stand by the Boers and fight for their adopted country; unlike the authors of that petition, whose guilty consciences are prompting them to leave the country or send their wives and money away to Natal or the Cape Colony. All this for fear of the consequences of their own wickedness. They have insured the works at their gold mines against damage, which they recklessly wish to cause to others. The wire pullers of this vile scheme are Messrs. Rhodes, Chamberlain and Jameson.

Your Majesty, what are we expected to do? We are told to-day, they demand the franchise. Would it not be better for the people and for the independence of the country to give a vote to every raw Englishman, just arrived in the country, or even to an army deserter, than to such unscrupulous capitalists and dishonest speculators, whose only object is to rob the South African Republic of its independence, in order to be enabled to do the same here with the Gold Mines as they did with the Diamond Mines at Kimberley under British rule?

Your Majesty, it was with a deep sense of pain at the critical state of affairs in South Africa, that I commenced to write this letter, but my pain and indignation has been intensified by what I have lately read in the newspapers of Mr. Chamberlain and his statements anent the Transvaal, which he fondly hopes will be accepted as gospel truth by everyone. He has never yet been in the Transvaal. I have been to London, and yet I do not imagine that I know all about it. Would it not be presumption on my part to think so? And does he alone know everything about the Transvaal? No! Your Majesty. Now I see clearly that he has been misled, that he has believed in fiction; for how otherwise could he have uttered such language? Witness his bitter speech at Birmingham, when he referred to the shooting of Edgar. Your Majesty, this man had struck another a mortal blow, and when

the police tried to arrest him, he struck and almost killed one of them, who thereupon shot him dead. It was indeed a regrettable incident; but has it not often occurred at Hyde Park and Trafalgar Square, that the English Police have found it necessary to fire on an unarmed mob thereby killing and wounding private citizens? And did ever any foreign minister dream of declaring war against England or make unreasonable demands on account of such action? Mr. Chamberlain is alarmed, forsooth, because a woman is murdered in the streets of Johannesburg—a circumstance which we all deplore, yet cannot discover the murderer. We have offered a reward of £500 to anyone giving information that will lead to the conviction of the person who committed this crime, but up to the present we have failed in tracking the culprit. Now, Your Majesty, how many women were murdered in London by the so-called Jack-the-Ripper, who, notwithstanding Mr. Chamberlain, has never been caught? AlD yet who would ever dream of going to war with England because of this Jack-the-Ripper? Mr. Chamberlain, however, would set the whole of South Africa ablaze just because we have not captured a murderer, or because a jury has not convicted an Englishman in our police service of a certain murder.

Will Your Majesty permit a small, weak State, that has time after time relinquished its rights, and has ever tried to live in peace and harmony with Your Majesty's people and Government, to be oppressed and overthrown by the world-renowned power and might of Great Britain, simply owing to the misrepresentations of the persons I have already mentioned?

Such is the inquiry of him who considers it an honour and privilege to extol Your Majesty, the Queen of Great Britain and Ireland and Empress of India, and to acknowledge the generosity of the British nation and of several British statesmen.

No! Your Majesty, ever in supplication to the Almighty, who ruleth over Kings and Princes, and inclineth all to His great will, I, Your Majesty's humble petitioner, will never believe that Your Majesty will suffer the sacred rights of a weak, peace-loving people to be violated in your name, and South Africa to be cast into grief and mourning. On the contrary, I pray Your Majesty that peace, rest, prosperity, union and co-operation will reign in Your Majesty's name throughout South Africa, and endure as long as there remains a Boer or an Englishman on earth.

Such is the wish and prayer of Your Majesty's most humble petitioner,

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