PEACE OR WAR IN SOUTH AFRICA

A·M·S·METHUEN

ENGLISH EDITIONS FIFTY-SEVEN THOUSAND.

METHUEN & Co

LONDON.

ONE SHILLING

(Twenty-four Cents).

American Edition (Reprint)

By

Charles D. Pierce,

Consul General Orange Free State,

136 Liberty Street, . . New York.

PRICE, TEN CENTS.

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136 LIBERTY STREET, - - - NEW YORK.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENT.

This is a reprint of a book written by Mr. A. M. S. Methuen, senior member of the publishing house of Methuen & Co., of London, England, whose object was to procure an extended circulation in England and the English Colonies of the facts therein contained for the purpose of influencing English public opinion against the prolongation of the war in South Africa. The truth of his statements must appeal to every person not blinded by national prejudice. We reprint the book, with acknowledgement to Mr. Methuen, for the purpose of backing up the public opinion he wishes to create in England, with a sturdy American sentiment against an infamous attempt to deprive a free people of their liberty and independence.

The solution of the South African question offered by Mr. Methuen in chapter IX., along the line of what seems to him the "wisdom of compromise," is not in accord with the sentiment of the Boers themselves or their sympathizers in America. What they desire is not "compromise," but independence. Their fealty to England cannot be purchased with any such "mess of pottage" as therein concocted.

May this book accomplish in Amer ica what those who love the Boer cause most ardently desire—the coöperation of American sentiment and English opinion against the continuance of a war which never had the shadow of a real excuse for its beginning.

Charles D. Pierce.

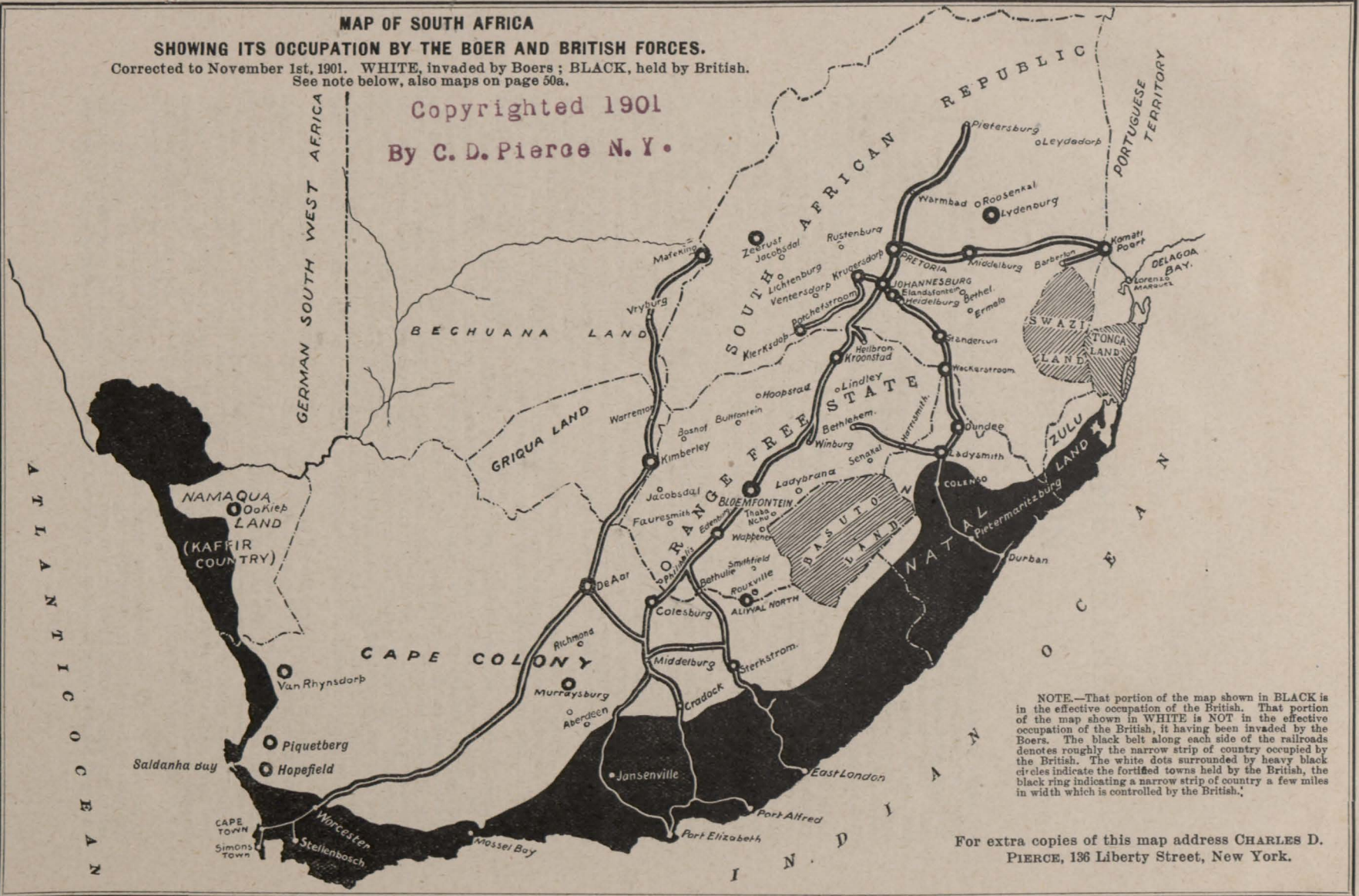
Consul-General Orange Free State,
Trustee and Treasurer Boer Relief Fund,
136 Liberty Street, New York City.

November 1, 1901.

MAP OF SOUTH AFRICA

SHOWING ITS OCCUPATION BY THE BOER AND BRITISH FORCES.

Corrected to November 1st, 1901. WHITE, invaded by Boers ; BLACK, held by British.
See note below, also maps on page 50a.



NOTE.—That portion of the map shown in BLACK is in the effective occupation of the British. That portion of the map shown in WHITE is NOT in the effective occupation of the British, it having been invaded by the Boers. The black belt along each side of the railroads denotes roughly the narrow strip of country occupied by the British. The white dots surrounded by heavy black circles indicate the fortified towns held by the British, the black ring indicating a narrow strip of country a few miles in width which is controlled by the British.

See maps on page 50a.

PREFACE TO THE ORIGINAL EDITION.

THE prospect of a prolongation of the South African War is beginning to shake the confidence of the public in the ability of its Ministers. When we see that after many efforts a powerful Ministry is unable to fulfil any of its predictions, and that all its calculations have been falsified, we must in ordinary prudence conclude that it has totally misjudged the difficulties of its task, that its policy is not based on common sense, and that its wisdom is not equal to its good intentions. Many men who, like myself, have hitherto given an independent but steady support to the Ministerial party begin to ask themselves whether this party is pursuing a policy which is consistent with the safety and the high traditions of England.

The object of this book is, firstly, to provide a narrative in brief of the events which preceded and caused the war, and, secondly, to offer some suggestions for the establishment of an honourable peace. It has seemed to me necessary to describe the errors of our Ministry in its diplomacy and in its conduct of the war, both because similar problems await us in the future, and because it is clear that, if a body of men have made mistakes so enormous in the past, there is no reason why they should not make mistakes equally disastrous in the future.

It must be difficult, even for the trained politician, to decide whether a given policy is wise or well-founded; and because this is so, it is generally impossible to harmonise conflicting views. But definite statements and forecasts are palpable and intelligible things: they can be tried by the test of accuracy or fulfilment; and men who follow the dictates of common sense will soon be able to discover whether their political prophets have shown moderate foresight and wisdom in the past, and whether on the basis of their preceding exploits they are worthy to be trusted with the developments of the future. If we apply such a test, it will be difficult for any reasonable man to assert that our Government has displayed the qualities which we look for in our rulers.

Our first duty, then, is to acquaint ourselves with the facts of the situation. We can then either square them with our preconceived views and wishes, or, what is better, we can face them honestly. But, either from carelessness or passion, to deny facts and to ignore facts—surely this is the height of wilful unwisdom.

The short sketch of South African history to 1899 and the chapter on the Campaign attempt to prove that the attitude of our Ministers was based on faulty information and on a complete misapprehension of the problem before them; while the chapter on the Boers will provide the public with material on which to base an appreciation of our foes somewhat more generous than the one which at present seems fashionable. I have also tried to show that the present policy of the Government is likely to involve us in permanent political danger in South Africa and in an enormous addition to our financial burdens. The suggestion which I have put forward towards a reconciliation and a settlement of the two provinces is necessarily a compromise, but it is none the worse on that account. There are other plans, doubtless better. But such plans, to be successful, must be based on conciliation and consent.

I am conscious that in Chapter IV. I have laid myself open to the charge of impertinent intrusion into a sphere of criticism for which I am unfitted. A layman is not competent to criticise the technical details of a science or an art. But he is, if he possess a moderate amount of common sense, able to decide whether the results of a policy are proportionate to the labour or to the expenditure or to the dangers involved. It may be that my views are held by more people than dare to express them; and if I am wrong in my estimate of our military position, I cannot, at all events, make mistakes more gross than have been committed during the last eighteen months by all but one or two of the most eminent military critics of the day. In any case, the public has been so deluged with optimism that a corrective may be wholesome.

There is one matter which I would willingly have left untouched. The devastation of Boer property, the reduced rations of the women and children—such methods of warfare are unutterably odious to all chivalrous Englishmen; nor can the most ardent supporter of the war regard them without shame. It has been necessary to speak of them because they are a

direct result of the political errors which have prolonged the war beyond all reasonable necessity. But I hope I have not dwelt on them overmuch. They are things which later on we had better hide in decent oblivion.

It is difficult in the treatment of such a problem as this to write or to speak in terms so moderate as to win the approval of one's opponents, but I trust they will believe that I have endeavoured to do justice to views which are honestly, though, as I think, erroneously held. I cannot hope that those who still advocate hostilities *à outrance* will accept the arguments or the proposals contained in this book, but I beg them if they be tempted to call me a Pro-Boer,[1] and my policy a policy of cowardice, to remember that Lord Kitchener is opposed to "a fight to a finish," that he is in favour of offering reasonable terms to the Boers and an amnesty to the Cape rebels, and that of his own initiative he has offered such terms. It is clear, therefore, that if the advocates of conciliation are guilty of cowardice, they possess this unfortunate defect in common with the Commander-in-Chief in South Africa. Those who obstinately oppose the wishes of the one man who is acquainted with the position in South Africa must bear a terrible responsibility.

I hope that many readers who may not agree with my treatment of the origin and conduct of this war may be ready to consider with attention the dangers of continued warfare and the arguments which I have advanced for a policy of peace. However divergent our views on the past may be, we are all bound to frame our policy in the interests of our own country. I have written neither as a Conservative nor as a Liberal, nor as a sentimentalist, but as an Englishman who believes that the time has come when all reasonable and moderate men should attempt to save their country from the costly humiliations that await her if our Ministers pursue their present path. Of one thing I am sure: if the Government is allowed to follow its policy of mingled drift and violence, the result will be disaster.

In a book which covers a period of time so long and so full of important episodes, it is probably impossible to avoid errors of fact or inference. I can only say that I have endeavoured to be accurate in my facts and fair in my conclusions. A. M. S. M.

May 28th, 1901.

In the second, third, fourth, and fifth editions of this book I have made many additions and a few corrections.

June 14th, 1901. *July 12th*, 1901.
June 29th, 1901. *August 5th*, 1901.

The sixth and seventh editions of this book have been again enlarged by the addition of many references and of an index. For these I am indebted to the kindness of a friend. I owe thanks also to the numerous correspondents who have written to me on various points in the controversy. I am glad to say that in no case have I been called a "traitor" or a "criminal."

August 30th, 1901. *September 15th*, 1901.

PREFACE TO THE CHEAP EDITION.

In answer to very numerous requests I have determined to issue a cheap edition of this book.

October 10th, 1901.

[1] This term seems to bear a double meaning. On the one hand it may describe a man who admires the splendid patriotism of the Boers and who believes that the war was unnecessary. In this respect I am a Pro-Boer in common with millions of my fellow-countrymen. This term is also used abusively to denote a man who wishes to see his country beaten and humiliated, and who is infected by the virus of antipatriotism. There are not many thousands of such men, and I am not one of them.

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"In South Africa two races—the English and the Dutch—have to live together. At the present time the Dutch are in a majority, and it is therefore the duty of every statesman, of every well-wisher of South Africa, to do all in his power to maintain amicable relations between the two races. In our own Cape Colony the Dutch are in a majority. There are tens of thousands of Dutchmen in the Cape Colony who are just as loyal to the throne and to the British connection, as, let me say, our French-Canadian fellow-subjects in the Dominion of Canada. But, at the same time, these Dutch fellow-subjects of ours very naturally feel that they are of the same blood as the Dutchmen in the two Republics, and they sympathise with their compatriots whenever they think that they are subject, or are likely to be subject, to any injustice, or to the arbitrary exercise of force."

Mr. Chamberlain, *April*, 1896.

PEACE OR WAR IN SOUTH AFRICA.

INTRODUCTION.

1775 AND 1899: A PARALLEL.

HISTORICAL parallels are often fanciful, and it is unwise to press them severely. But history is the best teacher of the present, as it is the best prophet of the future; and, though there are many and important points of difference, the most casual student of history cannot fail to notice the painful resemblance between the situation, both military and political, of [1] 1775 to 1783 and the situation of to-day.

The cause of the war of 1775 may be stated in a few words. The King and his Ministers claimed the right of sovereignty over the American Colonies. From this they deduced the right of taxing those colonies for Imperial purposes. The Americans, admitting the abstract right of sovereignty, denied the right of taxation by an English Parliament in which they were not represented. The English Ministers were determined to maintain, defend, and test this right; the Colonists were equally determined to resist its practical exercise. The English, believing that the Americans would yield to pressure, proceeded to coercive measures; and in six years England was defeated, and her American Colonies were lost. It may not be uninteresting or unfruitful to examine in some detail the political and social conditions which preceded and caused the crisis.

The middle years of the eighteenth century were years of gross and material prosperity. The moral and intellectual aims of the day were low; the ideal was languishing; wealth and the influence of wealth were growing; and most of the population were plunged in torpor and indifference to any but material concerns. With prosperity came a jealous insolence in the public spirit, a brutality of ambition which could brook no rival, and a hopeless vulgarity in political thought. All classes were pervaded by it, from the King to the cobbler. The wealth which had followed the great conquests of Chatham in Asia and America during the last years of George II. brought with it extravagant habits of life; and with them came the necessity for making money fast, and the temptation to make it corruptly. The standard of financial morality was steadily sinking lower, and society was vulgarised by ambitious *parvenus* from the East and West Indies. The old and respectable ideals of commerce were rejected in favour of swifter and more questionable ones. Men and women in the highest ranks of society thought it no shame to consort with vulgar millionaires who had fattened on war contracts, with stock-jobbers who had made vast fortunes by dishonest means, with speculators and slave-drivers and usurers. Serious observers, who saw the frantic and successful efforts which the over-gorged and bloated "peculators of the public gold"

[1] The War of the Revolution in America.

made to enter high society, felt something of the indignation which inspired Juvenal's burning satire.

The increasing luxury and the rise in the price of the necessities of life drove our public men to seek sources of revenue which their forefathers would have scorned. The sale of public offices, of seats in Parliament, and of influence, had created a system of jobbery so gigantic that it is to-day almost impossible to appreciate its far-reaching effects. The Paymaster of the Forces thought it no disgrace to use hundreds of thousands of pounds of the public money for private ends; Ministers did not shrink from open bribery, from receiving fees and percentages, and from sharing the profit on contracts of every kind.

The picture is not an exaggerated one. The memoirs, letters and novels of the day paint it in even stronger colors, and there is no reason to doubt that in 1770 public morality and public spirit were at their lowest ebb.

On the other side of the Atlantic a new race, sprung from the same stock, was making for itself a very different social scheme. The American Colonists, in whose blood the stern love of civil and religious liberty which inspired Cromwell's troopers had lost none of its strength, had passed through long and bitter struggles. They had emerged from the first phases of colonisation. The New England States were beginning to show signs of prosperity and of an ordered civilisation. Agriculture was flourishing, public schools and libraries were being established in every town, and in 1775 the population of the Colonies was not less than two millions.

The character of the American Colonists has been drawn for us in its main, and, it may be added, in its most pleasing, features by Burke. The dominant note of the American character was a fierce love of freedom, a love so strong that it ill bore any restraint, and would brook no coercion. The Colonists were, in many cases, descendants of men who had left their homes in England because they would not suffer the persecution of the Church and Monarchy. That stubborn spirit, which gave them the courage to brave tempestuous seas and the perilous unknown, they bequeathed to their heirs, together with a religious creed which, hard and narrow, was yet a source of strength, an inspiration, and a vital force. They had, through their provincial assemblies, practically acquired the right of self-government and self-taxation. Living at wide distances from one another, they gained the strength and self-reliance which isolation often brings. Life on their farms and the chase of wild animals gave them vigour and a sturdy spirit, while in the Southern States the possession of large bands of slaves made them haughty and impatient of control. Travellers in America were unanimous in their eulogy of American hospitality, kindliness and simplicity. The extremes of wealth and poverty were, in most States, absent. Every one seemed comfortable, courteous and dignified.

The defects of the Americans were the defects of their qualities. They were stubborn, litigious, and bitterly suspicious. Strenuous and active in their daily lives, they made no allowance for the temptations of a civilisation which was some centuries older than their own. They were adepts at driving hard bargains, and their methods were not always consistent with the highest commercial honour. They yielded with a bad grace, and could not bear defeat. In a word, they were not an easy or pleasing people in their business dealings, and they were a most dangerous people with whom to embark on a political dispute.

There could be little sympathy between such men and the English Ministers. To the officials who had been sent to America because their debts or their amours made England too hot for them, their austerity was odious and ridiculous. To them the Colonists appeared as did the Roundheads to the Cavaliers—canting, hypocritical, and cowardly. The Colonists, on their side, chafed under the unsympathetic hands of the English Governors; they were repelled and shocked by a profligacy and want of principle to which they were unaccustomed, and they were angered by the constant, if petty, invasions of rights which they held dear.

For England and the King, as the impersonation of all that was highest and best in the English character, the Colonists entertained a warm and pathetic affection. They had been oftentimes willing to shed their blood, to give their money and their time, for the Imperial interests of England. They did not understand, and they could not believe, that the policy which was so fast making them into rebels proceeded from the King's obstinate character, and they discriminated between the King and his officials.

From such a body of men, so simple and yet so shrewd, so fierce and yet so affectionate, with all its crude qualities so attractive, the United States of America have sprung; and what soon will be the mightiest nation on earth was lost to the English Crown by the perversity of a foolish King and the obstinacy and ignorance of an English Cabinet and English officials.

The war between England and her American Colonies was the culmination of a discontent which might be traced back at least eighty years. America had long fretted under the regulations of the English Parliament. Whether these regulations were justifiable or not, is beside the question; they were vexatious, and they bore no fruit but irritation. The Colonists complained that their trade was crippled by the Mother Country, that customs and duties were forced upon them, that they were expected to maintain a large number of English troops, and that they were charged with the salaries of English Governors and officials. The imposition of the Stamp Act of 1765 was received by the Americans with an indignation which found vent in serious riots, and though this Act was repealed in 1766, the good effect of the repeal was soon nullified by the imposition of new duties on the import from Great Britain of various articles of commerce, including tea and glass. The duties were both irritating and barren. The Colonists quickly found means of evading the imposts, either by legal methods, in which their skill was supreme, or by declining to allow the import and use of the articles on which the duties were laid. The English officials were forced to retire discomfited from the unequal contest, and their defeat begat in the minds of the King and his Ministers the conclusion that force was the only remedy.

The earnest protests of the Colonists were received with little consideration. They were not in accord with the temper of the time, and the King regarded them as a derogation of his sovereign power. He saw in the action of the Colonists the misconduct of rebellious and forward subjects. He read in their irritation a desire to break away from the British Empire. He was told that a great conspiracy was on foot, and that the leaders of American opinion were definitely aiming at complete freedom from English control. Unwise counsellors assured him that the repeal of the Stamp Act and a policy of magnanimity had already created a dangerous insolence among the Americans, and that if he did not decide to stem the rising waters of insubordination, America would be lost to the Empire.

There were a large number of Colonists who were unwilling to oppose the King's policy, either from a sentiment of pure loyalty or because they were political opponents of the champions of American rights. These men were called Loyalists, and their counsel was for stern measures. They assured the Ministers that they had only to be firm to conquer, that the "traitors," haughty as they were in speech, were cowards at heart, and that chastisement with a high and unsparing hand was the only cure for an intolerable position.

In vain did Benjamin Franklin warn the Ministers that it was dangerous to place too great a strain on the loyalty of the Americans. He was heard before the Privy Council, and was answered and attacked by Wedderburn with studied insolence. The Privy Councillors shook in their seats with laughter. Franklin said not a word, but stood composed and erect. He wore a full dress suit of velvet, and the next time he wore that suit was when, in 1778, he signed the treaty with France which gave to the United States the rank of an independent nation.

The decay of public morality and public spirit is generally accompanied by the decay of Parliament. The authority of the House of Commons was at a low

ebb; and the Ministry, backed by a powerful and submissive majority, did not conceal their contempt for the representatives of the people. The fortunes of England were in the hands of her King. George III. had become not only King of England, but the absolute ruler of his Ministers. They were his servants, trained to execute his decrees, and to sink their will in his. North, who had become Prime Minister after the retirement of Grafton in 1770, was a man of considerable parts and of a kindly nature. He was uneasy about the King's policy, and the most respectable members of his own Cabinet had similar misgivings. But North's character was fatally weak. In the House of Commons he was constantly asleep, and, gifted though he was with clearness of vision and common sense, he was too proud or too indolent to assert his own will. Such men are not rare in our political history, and their tenure of office has not infrequently been a time of national disaster. They yield their own prudence to the rash obstinacy of a stronger and less refined will. The dangers, which they foresaw, approach, the storm rises, and the rocks appear; they wring their hands, the rudder slips from their grasp, and the ship is wrecked.

Rigby, Wedderburn, and Thurlow, the three chief advocates of the Ministerial policy, were men of great ability, considerable force of character, and absolutely unscrupulous methods. Wedderburn's career was typical of the political standards of the day. He was an apostate from the Whigs because he saw among the Tories higher hopes of success. He soon justified his promotion by his violence. His tongue was as bitter as his character was corrupt. Master of lucid and incisive speech, he was able to dominate a weak House of Commons and to hide his ambitions under the mask of patriotism. He had no sense of political morality. To him the highest form of Parliamentary success was to browbeat those whose arguments he could not refute, and to denounce as traitors men whose characters were, as compared with his own, as white as snow. He had not even the excuse of ignorance. Before his apostasy he had been a determined opponent of that detestable policy of which he was now the champion, and the speeches which he had in his saner days delivered against this policy would have formed a complete armoury for the Opposition. His own party feared as much as they admired him: his opponents hated him: no one trusted him. In the bitter phrase of Junius, there was something about him which even treachery would not trust.

A determined and united Opposition would have prevented the approach of the crisis. But in 1773 the Whigs were divided by jealousies and disheartened by constant defeat. It requires a high degree of moral courage to stand up night after night in the House of Commons in opposition to a powerful Ministry, when that Ministry is unscrupulous, and when it has the enormous advantage of being able to say that any opposition is unpatriotic and a direct incentive to war.

We need not be surprised, therefore, that the Opposition was languid and impotent. Rockingham and Richmond were men of the highest honour; but they withdrew in despair from the hopeless contest. They confessed that nothing would restore common sense to the country "except the dreadful consequences which must follow from the diabolical policy of the Government." Horace Walpole, in a pungent sentence, disposes of the charge that Colonists were strengthened in their resistance by the Whigs. "The cruellest thing that has been said of the Americans by the Court is that they were encouraged by the Opposition. You might as soon light a fire with a wet dish-clout." Burke in vain attemped to rouse both the Opposition and the public from their apathy. He advocated the assertion of the great principles of liberty and justice which had brought England to her present supremacy. The people, he said, were asleep or intoxicated; they were not answerable for their supine acquiescence; God never made them to think or act without guidance. But the guides were cowed into silence.

There were, indeed, noble exceptions. Chatham, the most splendid and generous of our Ministers, was beloved by the Americans as the incarnation of all that was great in the English character; and though by the irony of fate the

Ministry of which he was the nominal head imposed the duty which was the penultimate cause of the rebellion, he continued to advocate their claims to our sympathy, to attack with fierce eloquence and scathing irony the Ministers who were drifting nearer to ruin, and to denounce the use of German mercenaries and Indian savages against an Anglo-Saxon people. He defended the action of the Americans. "I rejoice that America has resisted," he said; and his brave words were received with a torrent of abuse by the Ministerial party and by the petty scribblers of the day. But Chatham was undaunted. Again he attacked the policy of the Ministers. It would be "an impious war," he said, "with a people contending in the great cause of public liberty. All attempts to impose servitude upon such men—to establish despotism over a mighty continental nation —must be vain and futile. *We shall be forced ultimately to retract; let us retract when we can, not when we must.*"

Two years after the war had begun, he used words which came naturally from the mouth of a noble and chivalrous Englishman: "*If I were an American, as I am an Englishman, while a foreign troop was landed in my country, I never would lay down my arms—never*—NEVER—NEVER."

Burke, the wisest of our political writers and the greatest of English orators, was equally outspoken. He defended the right of the Colonists to resist an attack on their liberties, and inveighed against the "impious" demand of the Ministers for "unconditional submission." In two speeches which contain the very essence of political wisdom, he laid down the rules which should govern our relations with our Colonies, rules which must remain for all time the basis of our Imperial system. With that clear insight into the phenomena of the moment which distinguished him, he saw that the Americans were fighting the battle of civil liberty all over the world; and two years after the war had begun he dared to say that he could not wish the Colonists to be subdued by arms. He knew that such a subjugation could only be effective by maintaining a great body of standing forces, and perhaps of foreign forces. He foresaw the growth of military influence with results fatal to English interests and English liberty.

Charles James Fox spoke with a voice as clear and vigorous. Brushing aside the cheap fallacy that any opposition to the Ministry of the day is unpatriotic, he attacked the insane policy that was leading England into a disastrous war. He did not hesitate to express his admiration of the American leaders, and to compare their resolute and heroic struggle for liberty with the fatuous mixture of violence and weakness which was dignified by the title of the Ministerial policy.

These great men, refusing to prophesy smooth things to a blinded public, and courageous to hold their own country in the wrong, were shouted down in Parliament, and assailed with every form of virulent abuse by the supporters of the war, who had few facts to bring forward and no arguments to interpret those facts. They were called "traitors," "friends of the Americans," [1] "enemies to the King," "enemies of England," and "emissaries of the enemy."

It is too true that these violent counsels were popular both in high social circles and among the body of the people. The English public was intensely irritated by what it considered a purely vexatious resistance on the part of the Colonists. The average mind has no means of testing the statements of interested officials; the newspapers of the day gave little guidance; and what guidance they did give was in the direction of a "strong" policy. The most potent cause of political error is ignorance. Involuntary ignorance is comparatively harmless, and can be cured; but wilful ignorance, the ignorance that results from prejudice and passion and foolish pride, has generally been the parent of grave national disaster. The ignorance which despises every other nation, which closes its eyes to

[1] Burke was even called "an American" (*Letter to the Sheriffs*). There was apparently no use of "pro-" then.

every danger, which refuses to receive warning or advice, was the direct cause of the disaster of 1775. The King and the Ministry knew nothing of the temper of the American Colonists; and all their information was derived from officials. These officials were either the victims of the grossest illusions or guilty of the grossest falsehood. The language in which they described the character of the Colonists, their disloyal ambitions, their dishonesty, their hypocrisy, and the certainty of their submission at the first stroke of the whip was both ludicrous and tragical.

An English officer wrote: "As to what you hear of their taking arms, it is mere bullying, and will go no further than words. Whenever it comes to blows he that can run fastest will think himself best off. Any two regiments here ought to be decimated if they did not beat in the field the whole force of the Massachusetts province, for though they are numerous, they are but a mere mob without order or discipline, and very awkward in handling their arms." According to General Gage, the Bostonians were "sly traitors" and "turbulent puritans," "scoundrels," "ruffians," and "cowards," "the worst of subjects," and the most "immoral" of men. With that extraordinary facility for saying the wrong thing which always distinguishes the foolish ruler, he issued a Proclamation against Hypocrisy: a characteristic example of the tact and consideration of the English Colonial Governor of that day.

In vain did those who knew the American spirit and character warn the public and the Ministry of the dangers of their policy. General Lee wrote that there were 200,000 able-bodied men, hardy, active, ready to encounter every danger for their liberty. The Government, ignorant and self-complacent, sent 10,000 men to Boston, reinforcements numerous enough to irritate the Colonists, but absurdly inadequate to hold down a district so vast and a people so valiant. The King readily believed what he wished to believe; the Ministry followed his wishes; and the public received its instructions from the Ministers.

Many of the English officials were men of high character and ability. But they were utterly deficient in common sense and imagination and they took their ideas from the Loyalists, whose violence and folly saw in a "strong policy" the only cure for political trouble. Of the English Governors and officials Franklin wrote:

> "Their office makes them insolent; their insolence makes them odious; and, being conscious that they are hated, they become malicious. Their malice urges them to continual abuse of the inhabitants in their letters to Administration, representing them as disaffected and rebellious, and (to encourage the use of severity) as weak, divided, timid, and cowardly. Government believes all; thinks it necessary to support and countenance its officers. Their quarrelling with the people is deemed a mark and consequence of their fidelity. They are, therefore, more highly rewarded, and this makes their conduct still more insolent and provoking."

Ignorance so enormous, misinformation so wanton, miscalculation so gross and so disastrous, have probably been displayed by a political party only at one other period of English history.

Meantime, the temper on both sides was rising fast. The Ministers were discussing preambles when they should have thought of conciliation, and logic when they should have looked to facts. In Parliament coercive measures were passed by large majorities, strong bodies of troops were despatched to America, and the King and Ministers were determined to teach the Americans "a sharp lesson." On the other hand, the Colonists, threatened by penal and coercive measures, lost neither their dignity nor their courage. They recognised that their choice must lie between submission with its infamy and ruin, and resistance to the enormous power of an Empire which had beaten every rival. Boston, with her 5,000 citizens able to bear arms, did not take long to make her choice. Quietly, but firmly, she prepared for what seemed to her the inevitable conflict. The various townships of the Colony were not slow to promise their assistance, and the other States, under stress of common menace, prepared to take their stand with

Massachusetts. The ministers of religion, with the exception of the priests of the Church of England, preached resistance from their pulpits; and the stirring phrases which the Jewish prophets had used thousands of years before were making the blood of the Colonists tingle in their veins.

The conflict could no longer be averted, and on April 19, 1775, the first blood was spilt at Lexington. The storm had at last burst, and the King, with the blind folly which had characterised his policy, expressed himself as relieved and pleased. The sword must now do what diplomacy had failed to do. The conciliatory advances of the Colonists were roughly refused, absolute surrender was demanded, and thus with light hearts did George III. and his Ministers embark on their career of shame and disaster.

It is not necessary for our purpose to narrate in any detail the history of the American War. It is a war interesting to the strategist and the tactician, and particularly to the political student; but for the general reader it is the narrative of a long and tedious struggle in which the balance of victory inclined now to one side and now to the other; in which the pomp and circumstance of war were wanting, and in which the final victory was to the side which could avoid exhaustion the longer. The Americans were fortunate in the possession of leaders of high character and absolute self-sacrifice; but if George Washington had not been their commander and guide, it is conceivable that the result of the war of 1775 might have been different.

Washington's difficulties were enormous. He could count on only a section of the American population; at least one-half were Loyalist or neutral. His numbers continually sank from 15,000 to 5,000, his men were bootless, his stock of muskets and gunpowder often ran so low that only every third man was an effective fighter, and his financial position was almost desperate.

But the difficulties of the English, though of another order, were as great as Washington's, and finally proved fatal. The war bore a double character. It was at one time and in one district a regular war carried on between large bodies of troops, and according to the normal rules of warfare. At another time and in another district it partook of the nature of a guerilla war waged by small and mobile columns of the enemy against a foe whom they could not hope to defeat, but whom they could harass and wear down by constant attacks. It is possible that the Americans owed much of their success to these minor operations. Nothing so quickly disheartens a great army as the persistent onset of a fierce and rapid foe who, appearing suddenly from the void, delivers a swift attack, and retreating with equal rapidity, leaves his unwieldy enemy impotent and demoralised.

The English Army had never before been engaged in war against irregular white troops. They had fought against the regular armies of France and Spain, and had almost always won the day, even against great odds. They had fought, the few with the many, against black troops in India; they had seldom been defeated; and in the end their campaign had always been successful. But this war was bewildering in its character, in its constant changes, and particularly in its frequent reverses. Officers and troops who, against a foe who fought by the set rules of war seldom knew defeat, were irritated and maddened by the elusive tactics and by the substantial successes of the American farmers. They had been told, and they had told themselves, that the Colonists were a rabble who could not shoot; that their troops were mere bands of marauding miscreants who would fly from the royal soldiers at the first puff of smoke. The bloody experience of Bunker's Hill, and the surrender of Saratoga, had indeed cured them of this illusion, but they could not yet regard the Colonists as serious foes. They concluded that their stubbornness was inspired by their politicians, and must be met by stern measures.

The war was conducted with the greatest rigour, and menacing proclamations were scattered broadcast. The English Ministers, alarmed at the long

continuance of the war and the entry of France into the struggle, sent a Peace Commission to America. But it was now too late, and terms which a year ago might have been accepted were declined by the Colonists. In revenge for this rebuff, the Commissioners flew to violence. The Colonists were described as an "infatuated multitude" who "affected" to fight against the royal troops. Those who, even at the eleventh hour, were wise enough to desert their "misguided leaders" would be pardoned by their royal Master; but for the leader themselves the proclamations held out no hopes of mercy. If, on the other hand, the Colonists neglected "the forgiveness offered by a considerate monarch," it would be necessary for his generals to devastate America, and to render it useless both to the Colonists and their allies.

The brutal and deliberate policy of devastation, by which the Government attempted to intimidate a foe whom they could not conquer, was supported by the Tories on the ground of "military exigencies." Even the clergy and bishops, degenerate servants forgetful of the precepts of their Master, approved these barbarous methods. There were indeed two noble exceptions—the Bishops of Peterborough and St. Asaph. The former attacked the barbarous and cruel policy of the Government and the generals.

> "It is principally owing to the mild influence of Christianity that every nation professing the belief of it, as it were by common consent, set bounds to the savage fierceness of revenge and cruelty. Shall we, then, be the first among the nations of Europe to forget so very essential a part of its excellence as the humanity and benevolence it inspires? Shall we, I say, be the first to establish desolation upon system? And, to gratify an impotent resentment, deal fruitless destruction on the wives and children of an enemy we cannot conquer, and of friends we can no longer protect?"

And again—

> "If such is the Christianity we are to propagate among the natives, it is better for their teachers, and better for themselves, that they should live and die in ignorance. If they are to be involved in our guilt, take not from them their plea for mercy. Let them still have it to urge at the Throne of God that they have never heard the name of Christ."

Two years before the same wise Bishop had pointed out the folly of the Ministers, who hoped to hold in subjection a race so stubborn as the Americans.

> "Experience must surely have convinced us that it is not a single battle or campaign that, as among the effeminate inhabitants of Asia, is to decide the fate of the Western world. The vanquished must fly, but they will rally again; and while the love of liberty remains, there will be some sparks of courage ever ready to take fire on the slightest occasion. The cities must be burnt, the country laid waste, and many a brave man must perish, ere the miserable remnant is brought to absolute submission; and when that is done what advantage can we expect?"

Such a policy deserved to fail, and it did fail.[1] It is needless to say that the sight of their burning farms and ruined villages inspired the Americans with a hatred more bitter and a determination more stubborn. They wreaked their vengeance on those unfortunate Loyalists who, confiding in the ultimate success

[1] "Indeed, our affairs are in a bad condition. I do assure those gentlemen who have prayed for war and obtained the blessing they sought that they are at this instant in very great straits. The abused wealth of the country continues a little longer to feed its distemper. . . . But America is not subdued. Not one unattacked village which was originally adverse throughout that continent has yet submitted from love or terror. You have the ground you encamp on and you have no more. The cantonments of your troops and your dominions are exactly of the same extent. *You spread devastation, but you do not enlarge the sphere of authority.*"

EDMUND BURKE.
(*Letter to the Sheriffs of Bristol*, 1777.)

of England, had refused to join the ranks of the Colonists. The position of these men was a difficult and a painful one. On the one hand, if they aided the English army they were liable to be shot by the Americans, and on the other, if they assisted the Colonists they were liable to be hanged by the English.

At home it was necessary to sustain the fast-waning interest of the public. The most atrocious calumnies were spread abroad concerning the conduct of the war by the Colonists. They were said to be cruel to their prisoners, and to break the rules of honourable warfare. It was asserted that poisoned bullets had been found in the pouches of the rebels. The Ministry went so far as to publish in the *London Gazette* an official statement that the Americans had scalped the wounded.[1] The condition of the American Army was represented to be hopeless, and the most sanguine reports were laid before the English Ministry. It was stated on the authority of the English generals and Governors that the Colonial troops were discontented and ready for mutiny; that they could secure no recruits; that their army was perishing of starvation and fatigue; that they had few supplies, and that for these they were obliged to pay in depreciated paper money. The public were regularly and constantly assured that the war was practically over; that the Colonies were awaiting an opportunity to submit to the King's authority; that it was only with the greatest difficulty that Washington was able to prevent his officers and his army from deserting to the royal troops, and that the desire for peace was universal.

The real position of the English Army was carefully concealed from the public. The awful wastage which a long and indecisive campaign in a distant country always brings, the fever, the fatigue, the heart-sickness, were producing their inevitable effect on the unhappy English forces. Ministers were obviously uneasy, and it was difficult to obtain from them either precise information or a general estimate of the military situation. Where they had no comfortable news to give, it seemed to them an impertinence that the Opposition should demand facts.

In September, 1780, the English Parliament was suddenly dissolved; and though the resentment of the country at the mistakes of the politicians and the prolongation of the war was considerable, the Opposition was still weak. The Ministers demanded that their hands, in view of the dangers which threatened England, should be strengthened, and the Ministerial party was returned by a slightly increased majority. The Ministers regarded their victory at the polls both as a condonation of any mistakes they might have made and as a mandate for the vigorous prosecution of the war. In vain the Opposition pleaded for a return to common sense and for the opening of negotiations with a foe whom they could never hope to conquer. Fox's motion of conciliation was rejected by a large majority, and the Ministers proceeded on their policy of violence and drift.

But in their very hour of triumph the crisis was approaching. It is possible that neither the Ministry nor the public appreciated the enormous difficulties against which the English generals had to contend, difficulties which were, in fact, insuperable, and which made success almost impossible. In the first place, the English were fighting against the most dangerous foe whom they had hitherto met, a foe of their own blood, of the same stubborn spirit, and with the same unconquerable love of freedom. Though there were many cowards and incapables among the Colonists, it is certain that, man for man, they were superior to the English soldiers in intelligence, in physique, in skill with the rifle, in knowledge of the country, and in a passionate and individual devotion to their cause. They had, too, the enormous advantage which the English Army did

[1] As a matter of fact, the English officers and privates who had been taken prisoners by the Colonists, loudly praised the tenderness and care with which they had been nursed by their "savage" enemy.

not, and could not, possess; they were fighting in their own country and for their freedom; they were filled with an enthusiasm which was not only patriotic but religious, and which made the struggle bear in their eyes the character of a Holy War.

The English Army, though of a considerable size, was scattered over a vast district, with bad roads, and sparsely populated. It was obliged to operate against an elusive foe and among a hostile population. It was difficult to bring the enemy to decisive action; the capture of an important town, which in a land of higher development would have been a blow at the heart of the country, had no lasting effect; and the English were quite unable to follow up their successes. The great towns of the Colonists fell one by one into the hands of the English, but the struggle continued, and the Americans hung still at the very gates. Great tracts of country submitted to the English troops, but, on their retirement, fell away from their allegiance. The English could not effectively occupy the country, and where that is impossible, ultimate success is impossible. Above all, the labour of feeding a large army in scattered positions at great distances from their bases and depôts was a task of supreme difficulty.* These bases were 3,000 miles from England: the lines of communication were imperfectly held, and were liable to interruption by a mobile foe at any moment.

It was beginning to be seen, even by the King's advisers, that to conquer such a country was almost beyond their power, while to hold in subjection a land so vast, so thinly populated, where more than half of the fiercer spirits of the population would be permanently disaffected, would require an immense army, and would entail the greatest dangers and an enormous expense. They were anxious for peace, and for any honourable means of escape from an impossible position. But the Americans could accept nothing less than independence, and this the King refused to grant.

The English Commander-in-Chief, Sir Henry Clinton, saw at last that the operations of his troops at great distances from the sea were involving him in serious difficulties. In the autumn of 1781 he recalled Cornwallis, who, at the head of 7,000 troops, had been laying waste Virginia with fire and sword, and ordered him to retire to the sea and fortify himself in York Town, where it was hoped that the British fleet would be able to co-operate with him. To York Town Cornwallis retreated, followed by Lafayette, who, later on, was joined by Washington with a considerable body of troops. The end was near. Cornwallis was invested from the land side, and from the sea he was blockaded by a powerful French squadron, which had been able to forestall the English fleet and to take up its position at the mouth of the harbour. Against such odds it was impossible long to struggle, and, on October 19, 1781, after a siege of 21 days, 6,000 English troops and 100 guns surrendered to Washington.

The disastrous news of the surrender of York Town reached England a month after the event. When the intelligence was taken to North he burst into an agony of grief. "It is all over," he cried. The Ministers and the public recognised that it was indeed "all over," and the Opposition redoubled their efforts and assailed the Ministry with the utmost violence. The King himself displayed a courage which it is impossible not to admire. He would never yield to America or encourage the traitors who formed the Opposition. To acknowledge the independence of America was to acknowledge that the sun of England had set for ever. We should be humiliated in the sight of the whole world, we should lose the West Indies and our Indian Empire, we should sink to the state of a third-rate Power, and be confined within our own shores. But the King could find no one to support him against facts so stubborn and so overwhelming. He accepted the resignation of North's Ministry, and a Whig Ministry was formed. Negotiations were opened with America, and, after the signature of

* So it is in South Africa.

preliminaries of peace, a final peace was signed in 1783 by which the independence of the American Colonies was fully recognised.

The defeat of the English had been ascribed to many causes. The Ministers attributed it to the incapacity of the generals, and the army to the mistakes of the politicians. The English generals were, indeed, men of inferior capacity, and deserved North's pathetic reproach: "I do not know whether our generals will frighten the enemy, but I know they frighten me whenever I think of them." As Pitt said, the war was "a series of ineffective victories or severe defeats." Carlisle, in 1778, speaking of the great scale of everything in America, wrote:* "We have nothing on a great scale with us but our blunders, our misconduct, our ruin, our losses, our disgraces, and misfortunes."

But the army might have retorted with equal justice that never had generals been so badly supported by Government. The Ministers made nearly every mistake which it was possible for Ministers to make. They had hopelessly underestimated the strength and determination of the Colonists. They sent out incapable generals, and they failed to feed the army with a constant flow of reinforcements. They conducted their peace negotiations as though they were certain of military success, and their warfare as though peace were a matter of to-morrow. No estimate or prophecy was fulfilled by events, and they seemed inspired by a weak and incurable optimism which always saw in the coming week a decisive victory and the end of the war.

The partial loss of the command of the sea was a disastrous blow to England. It was difficult enough to feed and reinforce a great army at such a distance; but when a foreign fleet could interrupt our supplies and blockade our troops, the position became almost untenable. We must not, however, assign too high an importance to the intervention of France. The essential difficulties of the situation were enormous, and though the entry of France and Spain and Holland into the struggle undoubtedly hastened the end, the ultimate failure of England was certain. It is true that Washington's army was in the last stage of exhaustion, and it is possible that if England could have raised and despatched another army, and had been willing to continue hostilities for one or two years more, the submission of the Colonists might have been secured. But such a submission could only be temporary. From the day when the first blood was shed at Lexington, America was lost to England. It was impossible to hold America without the consent of the Americans.

In any case the weariness of the public forbade the prolongation of the struggle. At its beginning and in its first stages the war was popular, but the supply of volunteers had soon ceased, and the hire of German mercenaries and Indian auxiliaries, and the cruel devastations of the English geenrals, had given to the struggle an odious character in the eyes of the English people. A very different spirit indeed was seen when France and Spain entered the lists. The whole country rose in loyalty; and the men who would not volunteer for service in America came forward in tens of thousands to defend their country against their hereditary foes.

The English people had at least awakened from its apathy. It was disgusted by the miscalculations and the falsified prophecies of its leaders. It had been told, day after day, that the conquest of America was practically complete, and the disappointment was bitter and overwhelming. Six years of war, of ever-increasing debt,[1] of shocking loss of life, of a never-ending series of disasters, and of increasing dangers from our continental rivals, had completely weaned the public mind from its early affection for the war. It saw, too, that a temporary victory at the cost of further sacrifices would be unavailing. It saw that

* History repeats.

[1] The war cost England over £100,000,000. The cost of the war against the Boers has been over $1,000,000,000, and the end is not yet.

to hold America in subjection it would be necessary to maintain there a large standing army amid a hostile population, nursed in bitter hatred of our rule, 3,000 miles from England: a population waiting silently but eagerly for the moment when European complications might bind our hands. A rebellion raised at such a time it would be impossible to resist, and Great Britain would be obliged to retire in defeat and in a humiliation more bitter and more costly than the humiliation of the present peace.

Thus ended the most unhappy war that England had ever undertaken. It was a war which in its inception and its conduct owed most of its disasters to the obstinacy and incapacity of its King and his Ministers.* Their first mistake was to insist on the enforcement of a right which was both vexatious and unfruitful. Their second error was to trust to the advice of ignorant and prejudiced officials. The third mistake of the Ministers was to present to the Americans the alternative of starvation or rebellion, of unconditional submission or a war of extermination. Their final folly was the failure to recognise that they had wholly misjudged the character and resources of the Americans. They had raised a problem which, deficient as they were in imagination and common sense, they were unable to solve. They were unwilling to face stubborn facts, and to proportion their policy to their strength; they were, therefore, compelled to continue a policy of drifting impotence, of which the end was disaster.

* A parallel case is the war with the Boers.

CHAPTER I.

THE NATION, 1895-1900.

WITH the close of the nineteenth century England seemed to many observers to be entering on a period of decline. From every quarter and in every society the same ominous tale was told. Some lamented an England of little men; the overgrowth of Cabinet rule; the decay of representative institutions; a Parliament of mediocrities; a Ministry of blunderers, likely to perish by virtue of its very size; an Oppostion weak, timid, and divided; the absence of efficiency in the public service; a growing expenditure and a lessening trade; a declining birth-rate; an army unequal to its task. Others lamented an England no longer supreme in Asia, threatened on the seas by France and Russia, in its commerce by Germany and America. They foresaw graver troubles in the future: constant retreats and constant rebuffs, India threatened by Russia, China absorbed by the same devouring colossus, Germany cold, France hostile, and England isolated and hated by every nation. The weary Titan was becoming conscious of his burden. A disquiet, indefinite but profound, haunted the minds of men.

By the idealist a similar decay was discerned in the moral sphere. The material side of life was victorious; religious faith was weakening. Money had brought luxury and enervation, and the desire of money was gratified by crooked paths. The vast wealth of cosmopolitan speculators was spreading everywhere its influence, sometimes by open bribery, often by methods more subtle but not less dangerous. The golden calf was openly set up in the temple, and the high-born thronged to worship. The standard of political life had declined. It was no longer held ignoble for politicians to traffic in contracts, and the sensitiveness which felt a stain like a wound was out of favour. Great nobles thought it no humiliation to sell their titles for gold, and thousands of men and women were decoyed into ruin by the glamour of a great name. Gambling and betting were the amusement of multitudes and the business of not a few.

Things were seen in false perspective. The education which was to be a source of refinement seemed rather to have brought the capacity to admire wrongly; and the cheap journalist corrupted and degraded whatever he touched. Hence sprang the worship of the violence which masquerades as strength: of the vulgarity which passed for native force. In our eagerness to be sincere we had thrown off the conventions which redeem life from half its grossness. It was in politics as in literature, in social life as in international intercourse. The sober ideals and decent modesty of our forefathers were to us mere cant and sentiment. The simple formulæ of life which sufficed for them were not good enough for us. Force was held the only remedy: material success the only standard.

We saw the other nations pressing at our heels: we must be up and doing. A restless and suspicious egotism possessed us; the dignity and self-control and proud patience of the English seemed lost gifts. Hence came the neurotic excitement of our crowds, the hysteria of the music hall, the sensations of the cheap paper, the violence of our fashionable politicians. Hence, too, came our impatience with all that is not born of strength, our scorn of the ideals which inspired our fathers and made possible the splendid activities of a past genera-

tion. Hence came our contempt for the rights of small nations whom once it was our pride to defend, our irritation with the stubborn race who turned a deaf ear to our counsels and demands. We could not bear to find a little nation in our path: self-conscious and irritable, we saw in them only vermin to be exterminated from the face of our earth. On them was vented the resentment which we had been bearing within our bosoms since first our pre-eminence was questioned by our rivals.

Such is the picture which men painted as their own special fears affected them. It is needless to say that it was too dark. That there were grave symptoms in the social organism and the political outlook of 1895-1900 is true. But each man exaggerates his own particular hopes or fears, and in the main England is as sound to-day as she was fifty years ago. Our worst enemies cannot deny that we bore the first disasters of this war with a self-control which did honour to our race. To see things as alarmists see them is to lose proportion. If the perfectly good man or the perfectly wise nation does not exist, yet experience tells us that the majority of mankind are passably good and moderately sensible, that they do not consciously act from wrong motives, and that, where they err greatly, they err through ignorance. The English people have always been an honest, a shrewd, and a generous people; and at the worst the fault which has been at the root of the troubles of the last two years is the fault from which we have suffered and recovered before. We have been weakened by a certain lassitude, born of past energy, and, it may be, of too much prosperity: a good-natured indifference which did not permit us to examine with intelligence the statements and the counsels of our advisers, and which has left us the easy victims of hare-brained adventurers.

It is an old tale, and will be told again when another century has passed away. A nation lives by successive periods of strength and weakness, of energy and languor. The costly results of our error we are now beginning dimly to see, and we shall quickly become again the England which after 1781 arose from its sleep: the England alert, strong, silent, and self-controlled, which was able, after countless humiliations, to save herself by her exertions and Europe by her example.

CHAPTER II.

SOUTH AFRICA TO 1896.

THE history of South Africa is in the main the history of the antagonism of the English and the Dutch and of the dealings of the two races with the natives. From the interconnection of these two causes have sprung nearly all the troubles which have made South Africa the despair of statesmen and the grave of reputations, and which seem likely for many years to make it a land of racial unrest.

The first discoverers of South Africa were the Portuguese, who, neglecting the healthier districts of Cape Colony, made their settlements on the southeast coast in a district which they still hold. In the middle of the seventeenth century a Dutch crew, who had been shipwrecked in Table Bay, bore to Holland a glowing description of the great advantages of such a port as a half-way house to the East Indies. The Dutch East India Company sent out a body of settlers who raised a fort, and in 1689 the number of the colonists was increased by three hundred French Huguenots who were flying from the persecutions which seemed to await them in France. The Dutch and the Huguenots soon blended by intermarriage, and the whole body of settlers, casting off those ties of home and blood which bind most emigrants to the mother country, formed a new nation with individual characteristics and a patriotism of its own.

They were a pastoral people, not given to agriculture in the strict sense of the word, but living isolated lives, and journeying in their waggons from spot to spot with their flocks and herds. They became rearers of cattle and great hunters, and they developed not only the qualities of self-reliance and courage which were necessary to their lives, but also that stubborn love of freedom which has given them both a stamp of individuality, and an impatience of control, and has made them the most difficult of subjects. They became known as Boers; *i. e.*, farmers or peasants, and though they were ruled by a Dutch governor, they were continually at issue with their rulers until, during the Napoleonic war, an English force was in 1806 landed at Cape Town, and in 1814 the Colony became a part of the British Empire.

It does not appear that during the early years of the British occupation the Dutch were treated with harshness, but in the years from 1815 to 1836 constant disputes arose, caused in the main by a misunderstanding of the Dutch character and by an unwillingness on the part of the English to frame their policy in reasonable accordance with the prejudices and wants of the governed.

The emancipation of the slaves[1] throughout the British Empire, a measure framed with the best intentions, was worked in South Africa without discretion and without fairness. There was a general willingness there to abolish slavery;[2] and measures were voluntarily taken to extinguish it by making all female children free at birth. But our officials aimed rather at coercion than at persuasion. The crowning evil was that of the inadequate sum allotted to the compensation of slave-owners at the Cape—£1,200,000, instead of the £3,000,000 to

[1] It may be noted that when the British first sought the lordship of the Cape they promised to *maintain* slavery, as against the French, who were then proposing to abolish it. Comp. Theal's "History of South Africa," ii. 293-4, 314-5; iii. 79; and his "History of the Boers," 1887, p. 64.

[2] Theal, "History of the Boers," p. 64.

which they would have been entitled at market rates—only a fraction was really paid, by reason of the utterly unjust method of payment. All claims had to be presented in England, so that every claimant was obliged to forfeit a large proportion to agents and speculators, and many never received anything, some disdaining later to accept the fractions offered them. The whole process of agriculture was upset and paralysed by the act of emancipation, and most of the natives refused to do any further work. The Dutch found themselves deprived of the labour that was necessary for the rearing of their cattle, and they were threatened with ruin.[1]

Within a period of a few years nearly ten thousand Dutch left Cape Colony to seek a new home in an unknown land. Many of them perished by the way of fever or starvation or at the hands of natives. The greater number crossed the Orange River, passed through the great plains of the land which became afterwards the Orange Free State, and advanced northward until they came in contact with the Matabele. With this brave and savage tribe they had many a battle, finally defeating and driving them beyond the Limpopo River, where they set up a new kingdom which lasted until its destruction in 1893 by the British South Africa Company.

Of the territories thus left vacant by the Matabele, territories now known as the Transvaal, the Boers took possession. Another body of Boers, under the guidance of Pieter Retief, made a trek into the southeast of the country now known as Natal, and established there a Dutch republic. But this action, which gave the Dutch a dangerous command of the sea, alarmed the Government at Cape Town, and the English drove the Boers from these districts and proclaimed them a British Colony.[2]

The Boers who dwelt between the Orange River and the Vaal River, and those who made their homes between the Vaal and the Limpopo, gradually came to form two separate communities, each composed of still smaller communities united by the slender tie of mutual protection.

The Southern Boers who bordered on the British territory of Cape Colony were of weaker fibre than their northern kinsmen, and were unable to keep order among the natives who surrounded them. The English Governor held that their weakness was a menace to the peace of Cape Colony, and he annexed their land to the British Empire in 1848, under the name of the Orange River Sovereignty.[3] But the annexation brought little peace, and, not wishing to be troubled by refractory subjects, the Government in 1854 guaranteed the independence of the country, to which the name of the Orange Free State was given.[4] The history of this State up to 1899 was one of peaceful progress. It was fortunate in securing as its first President a man of great tact and prudence; and it has been always distinguished by the purity of its administration and the excellence of its institutions.

The Boers north of the Vaal were of a more warlike and determined character, and the English Government, unwilling to increase its responsibilities, determined to allow them also to work out their destiny alone. In 1852 the Sand River Convention was concluded, by which the British Government guaranteed independence to the Transvaal Boers.

Their history is chequered. Jealousies arose among them; and in 1852 they were divided into four communities or republics. But self-interest and the necessity for common action were gradually forming these communities into

[1] Comp. Theal, "Hist. of South Africa," iii. 413 *sq.*; Cloete, "Hist. of the Great Boer Trek," ed. 1900, pp. 35-58; Theal, "History of the Boers," pp. 60-70.

[2] Of this episode a full and apparently fair narrative is given in "The Great Boer Trek," by Cloete. Comp. Theal's "History of the Boers." ch. v.

[3] Theal, "History of South Africa," vol. iv. ch. xlvi.

[4] This policy was only after long dispute decided on by the British Government. See Theal, iv. 491. It was strongly opposed by many of the Cape Dutch. *Id.*, p. 534.

one; and in 1864 M. W. Pretorius was chosen as President of the South African Republic, while a body of law and a constitution were drafted and adopted by the Volksraad.

The white population of the South African Republic in 1864 was about thirty thousand; and the ties that bound the population together were somewhat loose. It was difficult and almost impossible for the central Government to collect taxes and to carry on the administration of the country. In 1872 Pretorius was obliged to resign his office, and was succeeded by Mr. Burgers, a Cape Dutchman, a man of upright life but of little force of character. The financial position of the country was becoming deplorable; there was little trade; and the Kaffirs at various points menaced the sparse population with invasion.

The welfare of the Boers of the two Republics was naturally a matter of concern to the Dutch population of Cape Colony. The Boers were in many cases their brothers and sisters or sons and daughters, and the claims of blood and race are paramount. On the other hand, the English population of Cape Colony regarded them with unconcealed dislike. The Loyalists, as those of English birth were called, formed the smaller section of the inhabitants of the Colony, and they had not been long enough resident in Africa to acquire a local patriotism. They were therefore still in close touch with English politicians. There had always been a rivalry, tacit or expressed, between the English and the Dutch, and this rivalry gradually became rather political than racial. On the whole it may be said that the Loyalist party consisted of townsmen engaged in trade, while the Dutch were the country gentry and the agricultural population. Thus to the cleavage of race there was added a divergence of life and occupation, and it is necessary to bear in mind these essential differences, for they go far to explain the unhappy rivalry which has brought ruin on South Africa.

The difficulties of the Boers were purposely exaggerated by those colonial politicians who had for some time seen in the straits of the Boers a ground for intervening in their affairs and annexing their land. While Shepstone is charged with telling the Boers that if he "took his hand from the Zulus" the latter would overwhelm them, he has put on record, by way of disproof of the charge, the statement that the Boers, to his knowledge, had no fear of the Zulus, considering themselves perfectly able to defeat any native attack. And as it is certain that no considerable body of Boers ever petitioned for annexation, the summing-up of history must be that the achievement of that process by Sir Theophilus Shepstone, with the reluctant and bewildered consent of President Burgers, was a result of the sheer lack of organisation incident to the first stages of a pastoral community with an unpractical and unpopular head, and was due neither to the absolute needs nor to the avowed wishes of the people.

The annexation of the Republic in April, 1877, was scarcely noticed in England, and though it was resented by the Dutch in Cape Colony, it seemed likely that its results would be those which had followed a hundred similar actions, and that our new subjects would accept the situation and the privileges of English citizenship. But the fatal ignorance that has generally dogged the steps of English statesmen in their dealings with South Africa did not permit the English Ministry to see that the Boers preferred freedom and their own constitution to the most civilised government in the world. A series of mistakes resulted in a dangerous outbreak. The Transvaal Boers were indignant that their Republic should have been annexed without their consent and against their will. Their indignation increased when they were refused the representative institutions which Sir T. Shepstone had definitely promised;[1] and, moved by a destiny which seems omnipotent and omnipresent in our dealings with

[1] See the admissions of Sir Bartle Frere in a letter of April 20, 1879. "Life of Sir Bartle Frere," 1895, ii. 311. Comp. p. 306.

South Africa, the English Government had chosen as administrator of the Transvaal a military officer who may have had admirable qualities in his own profession, but who was, from his want of sympathy and of adaptability, totally unfit to rule men of the temper and character of the Boers.[1]

The new Liberal Ministry of 1880, though they had opposed the annexation of the Transvaal, found themselves in a difficult position. They sought the advice of the South African officials, and were assured by them that the discontent in the Republic was factitious and of no account. The Dutch, they were told, were prone to patriotic meetings, but were quite unwilling to fight; and a little timely severity and the parade of a few hundred British troops would soon bring them to their senses. The Boers, therefore, were told that the annexation of their Republic could not be annulled.

But the English Government did not know with what men they had to deal. In December, 1880, the Boers chose three leaders, M. W. Pretorius, Paul Kruger, and P. Joubert, and proclaimed the revival of the South African Republic. The Boer farmers rose to a man in support of the triumvirate, and the isolated bands of British troops were soon defeated or besieged. Sir George Colley, the Governor of Natal, raised a body of troops and marched to the border, but he was defeated by Joubert at Laing's Nek, and later on at Ingogo. On February 26th our forces were completely routed on Majuba Hill, and Colley himself was killed.

The British Government despatched considerable reinforcements and appointed Sir Frederick Roberts as Commander-in-Chief. What the final issue would have been, if the campaign had been allowed to proceed, it is difficult to say. The British troops were numerous, their commander was a skilful and successful soldier, and the Boers were few in number and not used to regular warfare. But, in spite of their detractors, they were splendid fighters, admirable marksmen, filled with the fire of patriotic and religious fervour, and they were fighting in a country of which they knew every inch.[2] It is almost certain that they would have been assisted by their brothers of the Orange Free State; and they would undoubtedly have received the passive, if not the active, assistance of their kinsmen in Cape Colony. The English Ministry, faced by such a resistance, realised that the annexation of the South African Republic had been undertaken in ignorance and through imperfect information. They recognised that the temporary conquest and submission of the Boers would inevitably lead to permanent disaffection in the Transvaal, to another rising in ten or twenty years, and to a dangerous resentment among the Dutch in Cape Colony. They accordingly determined that a policy of "magnanimity" was both more prudent and more honourable than the policy of crushing the Boers with an overwhelming force. An armistice was arranged, and a fortnight later preliminary terms were settled by which the Transvaal State recovered its independence under the suzerainty of the British Crown. These terms were formally inserted in the Convention of Pretoria of 1881.

The effects of this act of "surrender" are somewhat difficult to estimate. The supporters of Mr. Gladstone's policy have always pointed to the danger of

[1] See the admissions made by Mr. J. S. Fitzpatrick in "The Transvaal from Within," ed. 1900, pp. 14, 21, 25.

[2] "It has been proved to us that the Boers are at all events brave soldiers; that they are skilled in the use of arms; that they are physically at least a match even for English soldiers. The Transvaal is a country as large as France—a wild and difficult country—and it is perfectly evident to every one that if we are to hold it down by force we must permanently maintain a number of troops at least equal to the number of our possible opponents. Well we know also that the Orange Free State, which is a neighbouring territory, would make common cause with their co-religionists and men of the same nationality in the Transvaal; and therefore I say that it is perfectly certain that not less than from 15,000 to 20,000 English troops must be permanently stationed there if we are to hold the country by force against the will of the inhabitants." Mr. CHAMBERLAIN, 1881.

a racial conflict which the Convention removed; while the opponents of the Convention have deemed it a proof of weakness, a loss of prestige, and a direct cause of all the troubles which have clouded the history of South Africa during the last twenty years.[1] There is much to be said for either view. On the one hand, England, both by tradition and sympathy, has generally protected the rights of free communities; and it was contrary to her ideal that she should annex a free nation against the declared wishes of a vast majority of the population. Four facts, which confront us to-day, support the practical side of the "surrender" policy: the extraordinary strength of the Boers in war, the support of the Orange Free State, the undisguised sympathy of the Cape Dutch, and the difficulty of holding a vast and disaffected district.

On the other hand, the Loyalists and their supporters in England held that England had forfeited her high place among nations by submitting to the disgrace of Majuba; that the Boers would not appreciate a policy of magnanimity; and that every concession would increase in the Boer minds the sense of their own importance and their contempt for their English neighbours. The bitterness of this mortification has remained to the present day; and it has been turned to account with fatal effect by the South African Press in their support of a policy of "firmness."

It is the duty of a cool observer to attempt to disentangle facts from prejudices, to allow sentiment its due weight, and above all things to let common sense be the basis of decision. That the policy of the British Government was a proof of its weakness is scarcely true. It is too often assumed that the Ministry did not think of negotiating with the Boers until after the disaster at Majuba, and that the policy of generosity was born of defeat. This is inconsistent with the facts. The fault of the Gladstone Ministry was that it accepted too implicitly the assurances of Sir Owen Lanyon; but when the Boers rose in revolt and it was certain that the Boers were in earnest in their desire for independence, the Government were at once committed by their pledges at the General Election to a policy of compromise. Negotiations had begun even before Laing's Nek, and the negotiations after Majuba were not the beginning of a new policy but the continuation of an old. It would have been far easier for the Ministers to continue the war, to yield to the pressure of the Loyalists in Cape Colony and of the war party at home. They chose the more difficult part, and the one which would almost certainly bring upon them the greater unpopularity. On the whole, it seems that in very difficult circumstances, and where the wisest could scarcely forecast the future, they arrived at the more prudent decision. This opinion at the present moment may be an unpopular one; but it is probable that, when the history of the last two years comes to be written, our embarrassments will justify the unwillingness of the Gladstone Ministry to continue a policy which threatened to embroil the whole of South Africa.

The history of the South African Republic during the next few years is chiefly concerned with attempts on the part of Boer adventurers to enlarge the territory of the Transvaal and to seek an outlet to the sea—attempts which were in every case successfully opposed by the British authorities. It was held to be necessary that the Transvaal should not be permitted to annex territory which might give her a seaport and enable her, in union with a European Power, to become a serious menace to British interests.

In 1884 a deputation of Boers came to London to secure a modification of the Convention of 1881. Their representations were successful; and Lord Derby, the Colonial Secretary, drew up, in concert with them, a new Convention which is known as the Convention of London of 1884. In this treaty the

[1] It is instructive to remember that the repeal of the Stamp Act was regarded by the foolish counsellors of George III. as a cause of the American rebellion.

Articles of the Convention of 1881 were replaced by a new set of Articles, in which the declaration of the control of Great Britain was considerably modified.

The most important point, and the one which bears most directly upon the diplomacy precedent to the present war, is the omission of the word "Suzerainty" which appeared in the preamble to the Convention of 1881. It is certain that Lord Derby absolutely omitted that preamble and replaced it by a new preamble. In the draft of the Convention which is now in the possession of the Transvaal Government, and a facsimile of which was printed in a despatch from the State Secretary, Lord Derby's *ipsissima verba* are quoted. He says that the preamble of 1881, being enclosed "within a black line," is proposed to be omitted. Moreover, the following words in the preamble of 1881, "subject to the Suzerainty of Her Majesty, her heirs, and successors," have been crossed through by Lord Derby's pen.[1] This evidence is clear, and it seems to be an unanswerable refutation of Mr. Chamberlain's argument, in his despatch of October, 1897, that Her Majesty's Suzerainty still existed, and that it justified the action of Great Britain and her refusal to submit the questions at issue to arbitration. It is necessary to lay stress on this matter, for a study of the despatches will make it quite plain that the claim of Suzerainty and the consequent fear and suspicion which such a claim engendered among the Boers were a powerful obstacle in the path of a friendly compromise, and of a peaceful issue to the negotiations.

In 1885 occurred an event of cardinal importance in the history of South Africa. The gold beds of the Witwatersrand were discovered, and the immigration of aliens made enormous strides. Within ten years from this date there were nearly one hundred thousand men, women, and children of European or American birth at Johannesburg and other mining towns, while the Boers—men, women, and children—hardly numbered seventy thousand souls.[2] An influx so overwhelming was not welcome to President Kruger and to the ruling class, while the pastoral Boers looked upon the new-comers with undisguised dislike. They were men of various nationalities, shrewd, keen, and pushing. It would be extravagant to expect a high code of social or financial morality among the inhabitants of a new mining town; and the men who were fast making of Johannesburg the greatest and richest town of South Africa were, it must be allowed, a somewhat motley crew. The greater number of them were British subjects, a fact which in itself was sufficient to alarm the Boers, while those who came from other countries were in many cases men of questionable antecedents. Those of the new-comers who seemed likely to gain the greatest influence and the greatest wealth were Jews. The Boers quickly found that their officials and the members of their parliamentary assembly were being corrupted by the money of the new-comers, and they viewed with alarm the time when the aliens should secure the franchise and completely outvote the old citizens of the Transvaal. They could not prevent or delay immigration, and they took in self-defence the only step which seeemd to them possible. Alterations were made in the franchise, and the term of years which had been necessary to qualify for this franchise was gradually extended until it was impossible for a stranger to acquire the full rights of citizenship before he had been in the country fourteen years. The inevitable results followed. The Outlanders, as they were called, resented a legislation which was obviously aimed at them, and they were irritated by a number of vexatious restrictions and petty grievances, of which, though the individual item might be small, the aggregate effect was serious.

[1] See the reduced facsimile of the alterations.

[2] According to the census of 1890—imperfect, but the chief source of knowledge—the *white population of the whole Republic* then was only 119,128, of whom 66,498 were men, and 52,630 women. Johannesburg had only 70,000—*i. e.*, men, women, and children. Mr. Chamberlain puts it at that figure in a despatch of January 15, 1896.

Though the limitation of the franchise was in no way a contravention of the Articles of the Convention,[1] it was an unfortunate policy, and the President would have been better advised if he had allowed the inhabitants of Johannesburg to elect some members to the Volksraad. It is not difficult, however, to appreciate the reluctance of the Boers to admit new-comers to the franchise. They distrusted the English, who had conquered their ancestors and driven them out into the wilderness, who had annexed their country and had closed them in from the sea. They believed, and honestly believed, that England was on the watch to absorb the Transvaal Republic, and they were unwilling that it should be absorbed either by arms or by the slower but no less sure process of legislation.

The difficulties of the situation increased, and the leaders of the mining industry, for the most part rich German Jews, endeavoured to secure by bribes that which they could not secure by constitutional methods. Transvaal officials were corrupted, and the natural slowness of a primitive community to effect reforms in sanitation and changes in its laws was sought to be overcome by financial pressure of all kinds. As a matter of fact, reform after reform was carried; and it has been avowed by many Outlanders that the Transvaal laws for the control of natives were substantially in the interest of the mine-owners, and that the much-debated liquor law was, on the whole, as well worked during the last two years as the difficult circumstances permitted. But other grievances of various sorts remained. The Outlanders complained of heavy taxes, of the dynamite monopoly, of the unjust railway charges, and of a system of State education which made inadequate provision for the teaching of the English language.[2]

The agitation was at first confined to the middle class of the Outlanders, nor did the great capitalists, until 1895, take any open part in it; while it is doubtful whether the English miners ever felt any enthusiasm for the franchise or much resentment against their Boer rulers. In 1895, however, the leaders of the mining industry began to be alarmed by the growth of a movement which was causing a dangerous unrest in their industry. The rapid increase of mining profits and the growing hope that the future would disclose even greater sources of wealth, induced them to throw in their lot with the agitators, to endeavour to reduce the burden of taxation, and particularly to secure such regulations for the control of native labour as would ensure both a plentiful supply and a lower rate of payment. It is easy to see that the second reform was in the eyes of the capitalists far more important than the other, and it is natural that this should be so. It was calculated that by a judicious application of force the natives might be obliged to work for such low wages as to increase the profits of one of the great companies by at least two millions a year.

The mine-owners took advantage of the growing quarrel between England and the Transvaal to urge upon the English Ministry the necessity of an unyielding attitude. Their motives were obviously and naturally selfish. Their only ambition, in a word, was to increase the profits of the mines. The leader of the financial group said openly that he "did not care a fig" for the franchise. Mr. Hays Hammand's utterance in London on November 18, 1899, is significant,[3] and Mr. Rudd, a colleague of the above gentleman, took no pains

[1] As to this, it has to be noted that a new franchise law, effecting a restraint, was passed as early as 1882, under the first Convention, and that no objection was ever made to this by the "Suzerain" power.

[2] No English children were *forced* to be taught in the Dutch language.

[3] "There are in South Africa millions of Kaffirs, and it does seem preposterous that we are not able to obtain 70,000 or 80,000 Kaffirs to work upon the mines. . . . With good government there should be an abundance of labour, and with an abundance of labour *there will be no difficulty in cutting down wages*, because it is preposterous to pay a Kaffir the present wages. He would be quite as well satisfied—*in fact, he would work longer—if you*

to conceal the policy of the capitalists, a policy which was practically a system of slavery.[1]

We may, therefore, without injustice, regard the wages question as the most powerful motive of an agitation which involved the Transvaal in the calamity of the Jameson Raid in 1896 and in the South African War of 1899.

The leaders of the capitalist party had intimate relations with Mr. Cecil Rhodes, who was Prime Minister of Cape Colony, Managing Director of the British South Africa Company, and a Director and a large shareholder of one of the great mining and finance companies of the Rand. Mr. Rhodes was apparently encouraged by many Imperial officers in South Africa, and, it has been persistently stated, by the English Colonial Office. He obtained permission from the Colonial Secretary to incorporate a corner of Bechuanaland into the territory of the Chartered Company; and this position was chosen as the head-quarters of a body of troops raised by the Company and under the command of English regular officers.

It was arranged that the capitalists should gather together and arm a force of volunteers in Johannesburg, and that on the ground of a possible danger to the peaceful inhabitants an invitation should be sent to the Imperial troops. A particularly nauseous element in the conspiracy was the concoction of a letter some weeks before the proposed outbreak, signed by the principal conspirators, imploring help for the sake of the defenceless women and children. This letter, cunningly calculated to appeal to the credulity and pity of the English public, was placed in the hands of the leader of the Imperial troops to be dated and published when occasion should serve. A touch of comedy was given to the tragic event by its premature publication in an English paper. On a given day the English troops were to start from Pitsani, ride rapidly across the Transvaal, and arrive at Johannesburg at the moment when the Outlanders had arisen in rebellion. A *coup d'état* would then be effected, the Boer oligarchy would be taken by surprise, and the conspiracy would meet with immediate success.

It is unnecessary to relate the circumstances which led to a ludicrous but well-deserved fiasco—how the troops started before the Outlanders were ready; how they were met at Krugersdorp by a small body of Boers, defeated in a few hours, and taken prisoners; how the Outlanders, who had little courage and no discipline and were torn by internal dissension, were forced to surrender their arms.

Their leaders were arrested, tried, convicted of treason and sentenced to very moderate punishment; while the troopers themselves, by the exercise of a clemency on the part of the Boer President no less magnanimous than diplomatic, were handed over to the English authorities on the understanding that they should receive a trial and the proper punishment for their misconduct. They were conveyed to England, and after a trial the rank and file were acquitted and the officers sentenced to short terms of easy imprisonment from which they were soon relieved. The sympathy of the public with the ill-starred expedition made it practically impossible for the Government to impose any other than a nominal penalty. An inquiry into the origin and conduct of the Jameson Raid was made by the Cape Parliament, and it was proved that Mr. Rhodes, in spite of his position as Prime Minister of Cape Colony, had, without the knowledge

gave him half the amount. His wages are altogether disproportionate to his requirements."

[1] "If they could only get one-half the natives to work three months of the year, it would work wonders. He was not pleading for the mines, or urging the views of capitalists, but from the point of view of progress, agriculture, public works, mines, and the general prosperity of the country. *They should try some cogent form of inducement or practically compel the native,* through taxation or in some other way, to contribute his quota to the good of the community, and to a certain extent he would then have to work. . . . If under the cry of civilisation we in Egypt lately mowed down 10,000 or 20,000 Dervishes with Maxims, surely *it cannot be considered a hardship to compel the natives in South Africa to give three months in the year to do a little honest work.*"

of his colleagues, made arrangements for the invasion of a friendly country. Another inquiry was instituted by the British Parliament, but little new evidence was discovered; and various documents, which might have thrown light on the movements of the organisers of the Raid, were withheld in spite of the protests of some of the members of the Parliamentary Committee.

The result of the inquiry was profoundly unsatisfactory. It was felt by every one that facts of supreme importance were hidden from sight; and dissatisfaction was increased when Mr. Chamberlain, who had concurred in the condemnation of Mr. Rhodes's treachery, rose in the House of Commons to deliver a eulogy on that gentleman which was inconsistent with the verdict of the Committee and was apparently unnecessary.

It was asserted at the time, and the assertion has been persistently repeated, that the Jameson Raid was arranged with the cognisance of some of the officials of the Colonial Office[1] and not without the support and sympathy of august members of English society. It was stated that Mr. Rhodes's friends had threatened to make known the complicity of the Colonial Office unless Mr. Chamberlain consented to whitewash Mr. Rhodes in the House of Commons and to reinstate him in the position which he formerly occupied in the regard of the British public. It is impossible to separate facts from fiction in a mystery so dark; but one thing is certain. There was a secret which it was deemed impolitic to expose, and its concealment had the worst possible effect in increasing the suspicion and resentment of the Transvaal people.

Probably no event has ever wrought such mischief in South Africa as the Jameson Raid of 1896. Its immediate effect was the fall of Mr. Rhodes from power, the resignation of his English Ministry, and the alienation of Dutch support and sentiment. For some years previous to this event the two races had been slowly but surely drawing together,[2] and Mr. Rhodes, with a prudence and a tact which his subsequent error throws into strong relief, had taken every means to conciliate the Dutch and to secure the support of the Afrikander Bond to his political measures. English and Dutch, though still in some measure distinguished by differences of temperament, arising out of different modes of life, were learning to respect one another, and most observers thought it not too sanguine to look forward to the time when the races would be united in common political aims and would consent to work together for the prosperity of South Africa. In a moment the whole edifice of conciliation was cast to the ground; and like a storm from a summer sky, the sinister episode of the Raid fell upon a quiet land. Every bitter suspicion, every fear, every feeling of jealousy, which the events of the last few years had apparently laid to rest, was reawakened in Cape Colony.

The Orange Free State, which had for some time consistently urged reforms upon President Kruger, and which was before this date more in sympathy with the progressive policy of Cape Colony than with the policy of the Transvaal Ministry, put aside all its hesitation and concluded a defensive alliance with the State which had been so treacherously invaded. In the Transvaal the Progressive party, which had long advocated the adoption of moderate reforms, was silenced by the unwarrantable attack on the liberties of their State. Mr. Kruger believed, and the majority of the burghers were of his opinion, that the Jameson Raid was the indirect, if not the direct, outcome of British policy. He saw in it the preliminary to a stronger and more dangerous onslaught, and he determined that, come what might, any future attack should find the Boers united, ready and strong. Fortifications were built, immense quantities of arms

[1] Miss Flora Shaw's evidence at the inquiry apparently favours this theory.

[2] This is admitted by Mr. Fitzpatrick, ed. cited, p. 48.

were imported, and from the beginning of 1896 till the declaration of war in 1899 the Transvaal was arming with quiet determination.[1]

It cannot be denied that such preparations were both prudent and reasonable. The Boers were justified in their suspicion, for no impartial man who remembers that the Jameson Raid was organised by the Prime Minister of an English colony; that Imperial officials of high rank in South Africa were directly implicated; that the troopers of the Chartered Company were under English regular officers, and had encamped on land which had been granted by the Colonial Office to Mr. Rhodes for this special purpose; that the good-will, if not the collusion, of the Colonial Office had been secured; that the troopers had been pardoned and the officers had been punished with nominal penalties; that the instigator of the conspiracy had been welcomed with effusion by English society and defended with unction from his place in Parliament by the Colonial Secretary—no reasonable man can deny that a chain of circumstances so strong must inevitably engender in the minds of the Boers the fear that England had designs upon their independence. That this fear was much exaggerated is true. The British Government, as a whole, had no wish to attack the independence of the Transvaal; but that Mr. Rhodes and the English in South Africa, supported by a powerful body of opinion in England, were watching the opportunity to annex to the Empire the Transvaal with its gold mines, is equally true.

Thus the two powerful and fatal motives of hatred and suspicion were at work; and every advance or proposal made by the British Government was regarded by the Transvaal rulers as either a piece of hypocrisy or a veiled attempt upon their independence. These suspicions proved the most potent cause of the misunderstandings which have borne their fruit in the war of 1899.

[1] *Some* arming there was shortly before the Raid, the "Drifts" question having had a serious aspect, and the Boer Executive having reason to apprehend some outbreak; but the main process of armament occurred later. See p. 32 and p. 45. See also Mr. Fitzpatrick's final admissions, "The Transvaal from Within," p. 98.

CHAPTER III.

SOUTH AFRICA, 1896-1899.

IN 1896 the horizon seemed to be clearing. In Cape Colony the only serious point at issue between the Dutch and the Ministry in England was the attitude of Great Britain towards the two Republics. On all other points the Dutch were devoted subjects and good friends; and the future of Cape Colony and South Africa depended entirely on the willingness of the English Ministry to take up a conciliatory attitude towards the Transvaal, and to avoid every suspicion of an encroachment on its rights. The Dutch saw that the Loyalists in South Africa were open advocates of a coercive policy which might lead to annexation, and they were suspicious of the attitude of the English officials; but, though the Colonial Secretary was in no favour, they had complete confidence in the noble character of the Queen and in the honour of the English Ministry as a whole.

The situation of the English Ministers was a difficult one. It was believed, and honestly believed, that the Transvaal was too weak to resist pressure continuously and firmly applied; and Mr. Chamberlain determined that, though it would be injudicious and ungracious[1] at such a moment to insist on a reorganisation of Transvaal methods, he would lose no opportunity of pressing reforms on the Boers. Lord Rosmead retired in 1896, and with the cordial approval of both political parties in England, the Colonial Secretary appointed Sir Alfred Milner to be Governor-General of Cape Colony and High Commissioner of South Africa.

It is not known, and it probably never will be known, what instructions were given to the new Governor-General. He was probably instructed to acquaint himself with the salient facts of the situation, to find out how strong were the feelings of the Loyalists, and how far the English Government could safely go on a path of coercion. He was probably told that it was time now for the English Government to cease from ineffectual criticism and protest, and to take its stand on its rights under the Convention as the paramount power in South Africa.

In the Transvaal the storm had apparently subsided. The failure of the Johannesburg conspiracy and the punishment inflicted on the ringleaders prevented for some time any further extension of the capitalist agitation. But fierce fires were burning under the quiet surface. The financiers who controlled the gold mines of the Rand were not inclined to overlook any means which might make their industry more profitable. Armed conspiracy had proved a dangerous method, and they now turned to two other courses, which were in the end fatal to peace. They determined to secure the support of the South African Press and with it of the English Press, and to obtain the sympathy and influence of the new Governor-General of Cape Colony, and, through him, of the English Ministry.

The financial leaders of Johannesburg were men not only of considerable business capacity: they were absolutely unscrupulous. They were determined to gain their ends by any means within their power, and, though it would be

[1] As a matter of fact, Mr. Chamberlain cabled to Sir H. Robinson (Lord Rosmead) on January 7, 1896, that the Ministry were considering the advisability of sending considerable forces to South Africa.

ungenerous to accuse them of indifference to the loss of thousands of human lives, it is certainly true to say that the risk of a terrible war did not affect their calculations. Most of them were cosmopolitan financiers, and, being men of no country, it was natural that they should not regard with much compunction the risk of a war which might involve the ruin of the whole of South Africa, and might plunge England into a struggle, the end of which no one could foresee.

The control of the South African Press gave the capitalists an enormous advantage. It was the policy of Mr. Rhodes and the Rand leaders to buy up the established newspapers in Cape Colony, Natal, and the Transvaal, or to found others, in order that their political views might be promulgated. Editors were appointed and instructed to press for reforms, especially for the removal of the present burden of taxation and for the better regulation of native labour. In order that these demands might be supported and that the public both in England and in South Africa might be informed of the enormities of the Transvaal Government, every grievance was exaggerated, and petty acts of misconduct on the part of the Boers were magnified into gross outrages on British subjects. It is not too much to say that during the nine months before the outbreak of the war the South African Press became a manufactory of outrages. No story was too absurd or too improbable to be printed with an appropriate commentary; and passions were excited to a dangerous point.

It is also to be noticed that the editors of the newspapers owned by the capitalists were in many cases the South African correspondents of the great London newspapers. Each outrage, therefore, served a double purpose. It inflamed public opinion in South Africa, and it was telegraphed over, with indignant protests, by the South African editors to the English Press, where its recital prepared the minds of the public for Mr. Chamberlain's diplomacy.

The next development of the situation was the successful attempt of the mining leaders to secure the adhesion of the Imperial officials in Cape Colony. In many cases such support had been long secured. There is probably no country in the world in which "influence" plays so powerful a part as in South Africa. The natural instinct of loyalty and nationality, the resentful memory, still acute, of the "surrender" of 1881, and the social power which can be exerted by rich men who will allow no obstacle to frustrate their ambitions, were sufficient to predispose the English officials in favour of the demands of the capitalists. The latter were able to employ all the arguments of patriotism to support the claims of finance. They painted in strong colours the intolerable grievances of the Outlanders, the growing contempt of the Boers, the dangerous unrest of the Transvaal, which would certainly bring in its train a corresponding disquietude in the surrounding colonies. Their editors pictured an England of waning prestige, flouted by a Dutch Republic of 100,000 souls, and exposed to the jeers of a scornful world.

The negotiations which had been passing between Mr. Chamberlain and the Boer Government since the Jameson Raid had therefore little practical result. Suspicion and misunderstanding were rife on both sides. In 1897 the Colonial Secretary made a false step which had the most fatal results. In answer to a despatch from the Transvaal Government, offering to submit the various points at issue to arbitration, he claimed that it was impossible that a Suzerain Power should submit to arbitration matters at issue between herself and her vassal.[1] To those who remember the negotiations[2] which preceded the annulment of the Convention of 1881 in favour of the Convention of 1884, the general claim of Suzerainty must appear preposterous, and it is difficult to understand by what arguments Mr. Chamberlain could justify the assertion of such a claim. Nothing can be clearer than that Lord Derby cancelled the

[1] Bluebook C. 8,721, No. 7, October, 1897.

[2] See Note, pp. 19-20.

preamble of 1881 in which the statement of Suzerainty occurred. The word itself was crossed through by his pen, and the whole preamble was definitely omitted. For Mr. Chamberlain to reclaim Suzerainty in the face of such evidence of its withdrawal was to convict himself either of ignorance or of insincerity. It was, as Sir Edward Clarke declared, a claim "made in defiance of fact, and a breach of national faith."

Driven from this position, Mr. Chamberlain claimed that Suzerainty was, though not mentioned in the Convention of 1884, carried over from the Convention of 1881 into the second Convention. Such a claim can be justified only by a quibble which to the ordinary mind seems not only foolish but dishonest. Even if the claim of Suzerainty could be sustained, it is quite clear that such Suzerainty related only to the power of the Republic to make treaties with foreign nations, and that its power is limited by the fourth article of the second Convention. Even if the word "Suzerainty" had occurred in the preamble of the second Convention (and as a matter of fact it was carefully eliminated by Lord Derby), its use would have afforded no justification for any interference with the internal politics and arrangements of the Transvaal, and the British Government in several despatches expressed their opinion that it possessed no such right.[1]

The Colonial Secretary, finding that the assertion of this claim had produced a most unfortunate effect, and finding also that it was impossible to sustain it in international law, did not press it. But the effect remained, and it was to the Boers another proof of the intention of the English Ministry to interfere with their Government and to undermine their independence.

For some time the public heard little of the new Governor-General, and it was hoped that the grievances of the Outlanders and the suspicions of the Boers were being allayed by mutual consideration. Sir Alfred Milner, to whom the friends of peace looked with eager hopes, returned to England in 1898, and his interviews with Mr. Chamberlain evidently resulted in instructions from the British Government to take strong measures and to insist with firmness and, if necessary, with menace, on the removal of grievances and the necessity of reform. When Sir Alfred Milner returned to South Africa it was easy to see that his new instructions were likely to be carried out to the letter. He seemed like a man determined to provoke a quarrel. His attitude to the Dutch in Cape Colony became critical and even unfriendly.[2] Soon he threw himself, without reserve, into the arms of the Loyalist party. He listened to their advice, and in his despatches quoted their journals as oracles of colonial wisdom. He eagerly snatched at the tittle-tattle of officials and Loyalists, and embodied their gossip in his letters to the Colonial Office. Sir Alfred Milner's "diplomatic" correspondence with the Transvaal Ministry was becoming more embittered, and in the beginning of 1899 the situation was evidently one of tension and growing danger. On the one hand, the Cape Dutch resented the partisan attitude of the Governor-General, while the Transvaal Boers held firmly to the belief that he was, in conjunction with the capitalist conspirators of Johannesburg, preparing new methods of sapping the independence of the Transvaal. On the other hand, the English in Johannesburg were humiliated by the failure of the Jameson Raid, and irritated by the non-removal of their grievances; while the Loyalists in Cape Colony and Natal, moved by sympathy with fellow-

[1] See Mr. Chamberlain's express statements in his speeches of February 13 and April 12, 1896. Even under the first Convention Lord Kimberley declared that "entire freedom of action will be accorded to the Transvaal Government" apart from the rights "expressly reserved to the Suzerain power."

[2] Comp. the letter of the Cape Town correspondent of the *Daily Chronicle*, published July 27, 1899, and the statement by Mr. James Molteno, M.L.A., as to Sir Alfred's avowed determination to "break the dominion of Afrikanderdom." These words the Governor has officially repudiated, but they express his clear and declared policy.

Englishmen, suspicious of Dutch ambitions, and maddened by the ferocious incitements of the capitalist newspapers, were urging Sir Alfred Milner to make fresh and stronger demands. They assured him and the English Ministry that the Boers had become lazy and effete, that their military system was antiquated and useless, that their older men had forgotten and their younger men did not know how to handle the rifle. The Boers, they repeated, would yield to pressure, and certainly to a display of force. They were cowards and corrupt, and at the firm touch of Mr. Chamberlain's hand the whole rotten edifice of Transvaal misgovernment would fall to the ground.

At the beginning of 1899 Sir Alfred Milner had openly undertaken the championship of the Outlanders, and in March a petition was presented to the Queen, through him, signed by over 21,000 British residents, reciting their grievances and praying Her Majesty to intervene for their removal. A counter-petition, signed by as many Outlanders, expressing themselves satisfied with their position, was presented to the Transvaal Government. Probably a large number of signatures were obtained on either side by bribery, and it would be wise not to attach decisive importance to either petition.

It is undeniable that many of the grievances were vexatious, and that a wise government would have removed them. But the Transvaal Government was not a wise one. It was obstinate, narrow, and to a certain extent corrupt. The municipal administration of Jahannesburg was inefficient, and there were numerous petty burdens which were both irritating and unnecessary. As a matter of fact, the majority of the Outlanders did not desire the franchise, *per se;* and a large number would not have taken it. They asked for it in order that they might, by pressure in the Volksraad, be able to remove some of the minor grievances which weighed upon them in their daily life. Those of the Outlanders who cared nothing for the franchise and only wanted to make money under an efficient administration were driven to agitate for a franchise which they despised. The chief grievances of the Outlanders were therefore such as might have been removed by any clear-sighted Government with a business capacity. It was absurd for the President to say that the Outlanders need not come unless they liked, or that they knew what to expect when they did come. He was trying to make the best of two worlds, to get all that he could out of the Outlanders and to refuse them the privileges which most civilised States would have granted them. He was unwilling to learn the lessons of history, and to recognise the fact that misgovernment is generally more fatal to the governor than to the governed.

On the other hand, those who will take the trouble to put themselves in President Kruger's place will admit that he might reasonably fear trouble from the sudden admission to the franchise of a large number of Outlanders, many of whom had openly avowed their hope that the British flag would again fly over Pretoria. The situation, in short, was made the worst of on both sides, the Outlanders showing no consideration for the difficulties of a small State confronted by a perplexing problem, and the Boer Government failing to realise the danger of delay in solving that problem. It is impossible to acquit President Kruger of a very considerable share in the responsibility for the events which preceded and followed the Conference and for the hostilities which ensued. But if we are to apportion the responsibility, it is difficult not to assign the greater weight of it to the English negotiators, or to deny that Mr. Chamberlain's diplomacy was either ignorant or insincere. He had a good case, but he preferred to spoil it by over-statement, by a want of proportion, and by an apparently wilful ignorance.

That the general administration of the South African Republic was faulty and below the standard of some European countries is true. But it was a little State, and it has been very poor. The administration of justice was good, and the educational system was advancing swiftly. The Transvaal Government was able to point out to Mr. Chamberlain that though the gold industry was heavily

taxed, at all events the burden of taxation was much lighter in the Transvaal than in the territories of the Chartered Company, where the mines were liable to be taxed by a royalty of 50 per cent., or even in England, where the small amount of gold produced in Wales some years ago was taxed by a royalty of 25 per cent. The taxation in the Transvaal was not more than 5 per cent. on *admitted profits*, or about one-seventieth of the total value of the annual output. In like manner, when Mr. Chamberlain complained of the excessive cost of the necessities of life, the Transvaal Secretary met his statement by the crushing rejoinder that whereas in the Transvaal the duties on bread stuffs were only about 7½ per cent., the duties imposed in Cape Colony were at least 30 per cent. He also pointed out that the charges of the Netherlands Railway and the heavy price of dynamite had been considerably reduced.

On May 5, 1899, Sir A. Milner sent to Mr. Chamberlain a long and sensational cablegram, in which he set forth the grievances of the Outlanders, the necessity of a reform in the Transvaal franchise, and the intolerable position of Englishmen, who were treated as "helots." He demanded from the Queen's Government "a striking proof" of their paramount power in South Africa.

On May 10th Mr. Chamberlain, in the course of a despatch to Sir Alfred Milner, laid before the Transvaal Government his opinion of the political situation and called for a removal of the grievances of which the Outlanders complained. He suggested that a meeting should be arranged between President Kruger and the High Commissioner in order that the situation might be discussed "in a conciliatory spirit." The invitation was accepted by the President, and a conference was held at Bloemfontein on May 31st.

The legal position of the British Government was a somewhat difficult one. In the first place, the Convention of 1884 entitled her to complain if any articles of that Convention had been broken to the prejudice of her subjects, and she had the right to remedy such contravention by force. But it is clear that most of the grievances of which the Outlanders complained did not come under the scope of any of the articles of that Convention. They were vexatious, and it is possible that the burdens laid on the mining industry were too heavy. Life[1] and property, however, were practically as safe in Johannesburg as in London; and it was somewhat ludicrous that capitalists who were making millions out of gold mines, and were living in Corinthian luxury at Johannesburg, that traders and miners who were making money and earning wages which enabled them to live in comfort, should complain of the intolerable burdens which a corrupt Government imposed upon them.

The only title which England possessed was the right which any nation possesses of protesting against a state of unrest at its very gates. If political or social agitation were to assume an acute form on the French frontier of Germany, and were to threaten similar unrest in a German province, the German Government would be quite within its rights in protesting against the continuance of such a state of affairs. It would earnestly counsel the French Government to take measures, not only for its own safety, but for the safety of its neighbors; and if the French Government, through apathy or impotence, were to allow a continuance of anarchy, the German Ministers would be entitled to take such measures for self-defence as seemed to them necessary.

In the same way, the English Government were entitled to protest against a state of affairs in the Transvaal which were productive of unrest, and which threatened to produce an agitation dangerous not only to the interests of the South African Republic, but to peace and good feeling in the adjoining English

[1] The importance of the Edgar case has been ludicrously exaggerated. The facts are simple. Edgar, an English Outlander, had quarrelled with another Outlander, and had struck him blows so severe that he died. Edgar was pursued into his house by the police, and attacking them with a life-preserver, was by them, in self-defence, shot. It was an unfortunate incident, but to call it murder is foolish.

territories. How far the English Government were justified in following up their protests by military action, whether their vague rights as to the paramount power entitled them to make war upon the Transvaal if their protests were unheeded, is a question which probably most men will answer in accordance with their political or racial sympathies. It was, however, pre-eminently a question of prudence, and it was absolutely necessary for the British Government, in making such protests and following them up by energetic action, to remember that it was a great Power dealing with a small Power, and that this small Power had been recently and unjustly attacked by English soldiers and officials. Above all, England had to remember that the great attraction of the Transvaal was its gold, and that any attack made by the Empire on the Boers would be at once and naturally interpreted by every foreign nation as a move for the possession of gold mines, rather than for the redress of grievances. It was her manifest duty and interest to see that she did not confirm the suspicions of her malicious rivals. There was, too, it must be confessed, some lack of humour in Mr. Chamberlain's demand. We who, before the great Reform Bill, had taxed our own citizens of Manchester and Birmingham without giving them representation, were demanding of the Transvaal Government at the point of the sword the extension of its franchise to a cosmopolitan band of adventurers. British Columbia has drawn to it a sudden influx of American miners. Would the American Government be justified in our eyes if they demanded from them with threats the franchise of the Canadian Dominion?

One thing is certain: England had no right, either by the Convention of 1884 or by any claim of paramountcy, to insist on a reform of the Transvaal franchise. She therefore took up a position which it was extremely difficult to sustain,[1] for if a demand for the reform of the franchise could be urged by England only as friendly counsel, it is clear that she could not morally or legally enforce her counsel by a threat of war or by war itself.

In spite of these obvious considerations, and perhaps because they could not sustain some of their other important criticisms, the British Government determined to make a reform of the franchise their specific demand and the test of their paramountcy. But in pursuance of the haphazard methods which distinguished Mr. Chamberlain's diplomacy, no clear statement of the British demands was laid before the Boer Government, and no basis of discussion at the Conference of Bloemfontein was arranged. It was reasonable to suppose that Sir Alfred Milner and President Kruger were to negotiate concerning the points of difference and difficulty, but Mr. Chamberlain had determined that only one matter should be discussed, and that nothing less than an absolute surrender on the part of the Boers on this point should be accepted.

As we have seen, it was impossible for an alien to obtain the franchise under a residence of fourteen years, and the High Commissioner demanded at the Conference that a law should be passed, enabling the Outlanders to become full citizens after a residence of five years. President Kruger, with that genius for bargaining which has always distinguished the Dutch, offered a term of seven years. But Sir Alfred Milner refused, in language the reverse of "conciliatory," to discuss

[1] "We did not claim, and never have claimed, the right to interfere in the internal affairs of the Transvaal. The rights of our action under the Convention are limited to the offering of friendly counsel, in the rejection of which, if it is not accepted, we must be quite willing to acquiesce."
Mr. CHAMBERLAIN, May 8, 1896.

"A war in South Africa would be one of the most serious wars which 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 the embers of a strife which I believe generations would hardly be long enough to extinguish. To go to war with President Kruger, to force upon him reforms in the internal affairs of his State, in which Secretaries of State, standing in this place, have repudiated all right of interference—that would be a course of action as immoral as it would have been unwise."
Mr. CHAMBERLAIN, August, 1896.

the matter any further or to enter into a consideration of any other points in dispute. The Conference was abruptly closed.

The chief responsibility for the failure of this Conference must fall upon the English Government, which had laid down no basis of discussion, and had sent its envoy into the Conference with instructions to make a demand which could not be justified under the Convention, and to retire from the Conference if that demand were not at once granted.

The Boers are by nature suspicious bargainers. They enjoy haggling over a matter which most Englishmen would settle in five minutes, and in the present instance it is only reasonable to allow that they had substantial gruonds for their suspicion. The whole history of South Africa, from 1802, seen through their eyes, was one long narrative of the duplicity and oppression of the British. They recalled their conquest in 1802, the injustice they had suffered at the hands of English officials, and their long and lonely trek into the desert. They repeated to themselves countless acts of violence; how Natal, which they had conquered from the natives, had been taken from them; how their country had been annexed against the wishes of the vast majority of their nation; how the solemn guarantees of representative government had been broken by the English. Above all, they remembered the Jameson Raid of 1895, the complicity of the British officials and of a Colonial Prime Minister, and the attempt which Mr. Chamberlain made to impose upon them the status of a vassal.

The Conference having thus failed, the situation was obviously more dangerous than before. Such a failure was disastrous for the cause of peace, and it made the gulf between the two parties wider than ever. But it was unhappily a source of pleasure to the agitators in Johannesburg and in Cape Colony. They had now come to the conclusion that further negotiation was futile, and that the knot could be loosened only by the sword. Sir Alfred Milner, inspired by his conviction that the Boers would shrink before a firm and consistent pressure, urged an unyielding policy and a display of force. Every misunderstanding and check in the negotiations was welcomed by the organs of the capitalists in South Africa and in England.

When the English Ministry found that they were likely to be involved in a war for which they could give no rational cause, they were forced to seek other grounds. They manufactured the fable of a Dutch conspiracy. They asserted and they encouraged the Press to argue that a fight for supremacy in South Africa had been long "inevitable," that it was President Kruger's ambition to make of South Africa a Dutch Republic, and "to drive the English into the sea." The negotiations, they said, had all along been unreal, and the real question was whether the Dutch or the English were to have the upper hand in South Africa.

It is not necessary to discuss at great length a statement which rests on no evidence. It is true that the statement has been made again and again; and men who repeat an assertion to themselves a hundred times, at length begin to believe in its authenticity. Here it is only necessary to say that a charge of such tremendous import needs to be supported by convincing evidence. Of such evidence there is no sign. Those who bring the charge, when asked for proof, make it a fresh grievance against the Dutch that they are cunning enough to conceal every trace of universal conspiracy. Of documentary proof, or of relevant testimony there is not a shred.

On the contrary, the evidence is on the other side. As we have said before, up to the year 1895 the Dutch had gradually grown more ready to accept the rule and customs of the English. Mr. Rhodes, English of the English, was supported by the Afrikander Bond. The Cape Assembly had voted a considerable sum for Imperial purposes. The narrow policy of the Transvaal rulers had alienated the sympathy of the Cape Dutch, who resented the decision of Mr. Kruger to employ officials from Holland rather than kinsmen from Cape Colony in the public service of the Transvaal. The leaders of the Dutch Afrikander party had

strongly urged upon Mr. Kruger the advisability of making concessions to the Outlanders, and it is clear that if they wished for war they were adopting the worst methods of hastening it. The President of the Free State and his advisers were also urgent in the cause of peace. It is surely no proof of a Dutch conspiracy that after the Jameson Raid the Raads of the two Republics urged upon the British Government the advisability of placing under the direct rule of Great Britain the territory of the Chartered Company.

The theory of a gigantic Boer conspiracy received a very simple test and a very ample refutation in December. After the three reverses of Stormberg, Magersfontein, and Colenso, the English troops were absolutely at the mercy of the Boers and their Dutch sympathisers. If the Dutch in the Colony had risen, the position of our armies would have been precarious in the extreme, and in a few months the Dutch could have swept the whole Colony from end to end. But with the exception of a few hundred rebels on the frontier, and in spite of the strong sympathy which blood brings, the Dutch remained passive and peaceful.

It may be that some of the Dutch had entertained dreams of a United South African Republic, in which the Dutch element would be preponderant both in population and political influence. But there is no evidence to show that such dreams had ever inspired a considerable fraction of the race with a desire to break away from English rule, and it would be as absurd to mistake the bombast of a few vapouring Dutchmen for the sober ideals of a nation as it would be to mistake the theories and menaces of Sir Ellis Ashmead-Bartlett for the settled policy of the majority of Englishmen.

The Boers themselves had nothing to gain from the war and everything to lose. They disliked war, as they disliked everything that took them from the tranquil life of their farms. It was only the overmastering belief that England had designs upon their independence which induced them to take up arms in defence of their country.

The statement that the Boers had been secretly arming for many years before the Raid is disproved by numerous witnesses. Colonel Younghusband, who was in Johannesburg in December, 1895, states that the Boers had no serious armament; and Major White, who took part in the Raid, and had made secret inquiries, has given a list of the few guns possessed by the Boers in 1895. Dr. Jameson himself made a similar statement[1] at Kimberley a few months ago. A report on the military resources of the Boer Republics was compiled by the Intelligence Department of the English War Office in June, 1899, and portions of it, the authenticity of which has not been questioned, have been published. This official report states that—

"Of the enormous quantity of rifles now in possession of the South African Republics, only some 13,500 Martini-Henry rifles were in the country before the Jameson Raid. The whole of the remainder have been purchased since that date in England, France, Germany, and Belgium" (p. 11). The report also states that in January, 1896, the strength of the Staats Artillerie was nine officers and one hundred men, with a reserve of fifty men, but that "immediately after the Raid the corps was increased in strength to about four hundred," with a larger reserve.

Further proposals followed, but the despatches on both sides were awkwardly worded, and serious misunderstandings arose. Every day increased the dangers of the situation. The demand for a speedy and final surrender was being urged on the Transvaal Government. The English Government did not desire war, but they determined to enforce their demands by war. It is clear from the statements of Lord Wolseley in the House of Lords, in March, 1901, that war was regarded as likely, and a definite plan of campaign was in June, 1899, laid

[1] "Apart from the rifles in the hands of the burghers, the whole armoury of the Transvaal was contained in the so-called Pretoria Fort, guarded by, he believed, three Staats Artillerie men, and its sole protection a broken-down corrugated iron fence."

before the English Ministry, by which the subjugation of the two Republics was to be effected by November of that year. The Cabinet was driven by the successive errors of the Colonial Secretary into a position from which retreat on its part became impossible without humiliation; and a violent end could be avoided only by the surrender of the Transvaal Ministry.

In July the Transvaal Government offered a seven years' retrospective franchise, and Mr. Chamberlain was inclined to accept the concession. But the Loyalists and Sir Alfred Milner were inflexible.

Finally the Transvaal Government offered a five years' franchise on certain conditions, the most important of which was that the British Government should make no further attempt to interfere in the domestic affairs of the Transvaal. The conditions were reasonable, but the prospect of a compromise was displeasing to Sir Alfred Milner, to the South African Loyalists, and to the advocates of violence in England. Sir Alfred Milner cabled a demand for "extreme measures," and the Press urged that the concessions should be rejected. Mr. Chamberlain, yielding to the clamor of the war party, appeared, in an ambiguous despatch, to decline the terms and the conditions. How ambiguous the despatch was may be judged from the fact that the Boer Government interpreted it as a refusal of their offer; while the Colonial Secretary regarded it as a qualified acceptance.[1] By a studied reference to the Conventions rather than to the Convention which gave England her right to interfere, he again put forward the claim of Suzerainty which had tacitly been allowed to lapse. Shortly after sending this despatch, Mr. Chamberlain delivered a violent speech at Highbury in which he compared Mr. Kruger to a sponge, out of whom concessions had to be squeezed. Such a speech could only lead the Boers to think that Mr. Chamberlain was set on war. On September 12th he telegraphed that his Government must now "reserve to themselves the right to reconsider the situation *de novo,* and to formulate their own proposals for a final settlement," which proposals they would communicate to the High Commissioner in a later despatch.

This despatch was in essence an ultimatum, and as such the Boer Government regarded it. In the meantime the English Ministers summoned Parliament for the granting of supplies, the reserves were called out, an army corps mobilised, and a large number of transports were chartered to convey troops to South Africa. The days passed, and the Boer Government could obtain no definite reply to their inquiries as to the meaning of Mr. Chamberlain's last despatch. The Boers, irritated by the concentration of a large force of English troops on the Natal border, and learning that an army corps was embodied and ready to sail, determined to take the only step which a weak nation can take against a great one threatening force. It issued an ultimatum, couched in peremptory terms, claiming that Her Majesty's troops should be withdrawn. Mr. Chamberlain refused to acknowledge the Boer ultimatum, and hostilities commenced on October 9th.

The Boer ultimatum made escape from war impossible; it was a despatch which no Government could accept. But though its terms were arrogant, it would

[1] Mr. CHAMBERLAIN: The hon. member harps on the word acceptance. He must remember he asked me the question what we intended. I myself should have thought that the Boers would have taken it as an acceptance, but I suppose it may be properly described as a qualified acceptance. We did not accept everything, but we accepted at least nine-tenths of the whole.

Sir E. CLARKE: Really this becomes more and more sad. (Loud Opposition cheers.) It is dreadful to think of a country of this kind entering upon a war, a crime against civilisation, when this sort of thing has been going on. (Opposition cheers.) Why, in the very next sentence the right hon. gentleman says: "It is on this ground that Her Majesty's Government have been compelled to regard the last proposal of the Government of the South African Republic as unacceptable in the form in which it has been presented."

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN: In the form.

Sir E. CLARKE: It is a matter of form?

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN: Yes.

(*House of Commons, Oct.,* 1899.)

be unfair to say that they were in their essence unreasonable. Mr. Chamberlain, in his despatch of September 22nd, had broken off negotiations and had told the Boer Ministers that he would now formulate his demands and his scheme for a final settlement of the issues. It was impossible for the Boers to mistake the significance of the English despatches and our warlike preparations. They could only mean that England had determined to make peremptory demands, and to back up these demands with a large army and a declaration of war. There were, in fact, two ultimatums, the first one from Mr. Chamberlain, containing a menace that warlike measures would be shortly taken; the second from the Boers, who were determined not to await the advent of an overwhelming force. The Transvaal doubtless made a diplomatic mistake in issuing its ultimatum, but the step was one which would probably have been taken by any other States in the civilised world, similarly placed.

The Boers had made concessions which were, in fact, genuine, and substantial. Mr. Chamberlain had rejected these concessions, and had threatened, in no ambiguous phrase, new demands. These demands he refused to disclose until an English Army Corps was ready to enforce them. Would any State wait patiently while hostile forces were gathering to crush its independence? It is clear, therefore, that war was forced upon the Transvaal Government, and the chief responsibility of the tragedy must fall upon the English Ministers.[1]

There were, as is always the case, grave faults on both sides. On the one hand, the Boer Government allowed its suspicions to prevent the frank and full acceptance of the English demands which they were afterwards willing to grant. On the other hand, Mr. Chamberlain, who neither by education nor temperament is fitted to carry on a delicate diplomacy, despised the position and the resources of the Transvaal. He was unable or unwilling to make his meaning clear, and he adopted an attitude, a method of argument, and an insulting form of words, which were unpalatable to a proud and stubborn people, and which no free Colony of ours could have borne for a day. He thought, and he assured the Opposition, that the Transvaal would yield to pressure; and he honestly believed that the despatch of an army corps would bring the Boers to their senses. In spite of the warnings of those who knew South Africa better than he did, he refused to believe that the Transvaal would resist, and that the Free State would help her sister. He had determined to crush the Boers and sooner or later to bring them under the British flag. Of a diplomacy, conducted in such a spirit, war was obviously an "inevitable" result. The farewell words of Sir Alfred Milner at Cape Town on May 7, 1901, are significant of the aims of the two statesmen, and prove that no concessions on the part of the Boers would have availed.[2]

It is certain that even at a late period of the negotiations there was little to prevent the success of the diplomacy, and it seemed that negotiations were broken off because President Kruger would not yield all that Mr. Chamberlain demanded. Mr. Chamberlain himself allowed in the House of Commons that of the final proposals of the Boers, nine-tenths were satisfactory to him, and

[1] Neither is the opinion of some of the schoolmen to be received, that a war cannot justly be made, but upon a precedent injury or provocation; for there is no question but a just fear of an imminent danger, though there be no blow given, is a lawful cause of war.
FRANCIS BACON, Essay on Empire.

[2] Flinching from no sacrifice and turning a deaf ear to people whose endeavour was ever tending to confine and smother the one cardinal point in a mass of side issues, the British people had gone straight upon *the way on which they had set out from the first, to make an end of the business once and for all, to make South Africa one country under one flag and with one system of law and government.*
SIR ALFRED MILNER at Cape Town, May 7, 1901.

that the other one-tenth was not worth fighting for.[1] His diplomatic methods were so inept that he was obliged to allow in the House of Commons that, though he meant to accept the Boer proposal, he sent a reply which could be interpreted as a refusal. His despatches were wanting in frankness, and several of them contained a hint or menace of further demands which would follow when the points under immediate discussion had been gained.

Mr. Bryce justly points out that the British Government went into the war without having formulated a *casus belli*. They had not demanded redress of the grievances of which the Outlanders complained, and they could not make the restricted franchise a cause for war. They had not presented any demands, but had made vague menaces. They had thereby exposed their country to the malicious comment of foreign nations, and had brought on a war without any definite grounds.

The Transvaal Ministers, therefore, remembering the attempt which had been made upon their independence, in which the Colonial Office, justly or unjustly, had been held to be an accomplice, sincerely believed that Mr. Chamberlain's diplomacy was empty and insincere, and that it was both an attempt to assert a Suzerainty which they denied, and a pretext to gain time for the preparation of an overwhelming military force.

The attitude of the South African and English Presses during the negotiations had been significant. The capitalists, through their editors and the South African League and the Outlander Council of Johannesburg, added new demands to the old ones, and openly expressed their hope that the negotiations would be vain and that force would take the place of conciliation. The final failure of diplomacy was hailed with relief in England; and, just as George III. welcomed the outbreak of hostilities in America as the close of an intolerable position, so many of the leaders of public opinion in South Africa and in England expressed their satisfaction that the negotiations had failed, and that the sword would now have the opportunity of doing what the pen and the tongue had failed to effect.[2]

[1] On October 25, 1899, the following conversation took place in the House of Commons:—

Mr. COURTNEY: My right hon. friend sent an answer intended to be an acceptance. (An HON. MEMBER: No, no!) My right hon. friend is quite equal to denying my statement if it is wrong.

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN: Oh, well, then, I will deny it. I did not think it worth while to interrupt my right hon. friend because he must know that I have said over and over again a "qualified acceptance," and he always omits the adjective.

Mr. COURTNEY: You said nine-tenths. Is a question as to one-tenth worth war? Tell us what the tenth is.

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN: I do not think it was worth war.

Mr. COURTNEY: Tell us what the one-tenth was.

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN: *Why did not President Kruger give way?*

Mr. COURTNEY: Because you did not explain the despatch. It was never explained to him. The whole point is, Are we to go to war on the tenth part? As to that, history will judge. I am too confident, unfortunately, of what the result will be.

[2] Mr. Chamberlain has more than once expressed his pride in the war, and has stated that if, as his opponents asserted, he was the author of the war, such an exploit would be "a feather in his cap."

CHAPTER IV.

THE CAMPAIGN.

IT is not necessary for our purpose to narrate in any detail the events of the Boer war. It falls naturally into three divisions. In the first the Boer invaders were everywhere successful, and, inflicting on us three defeats in one week, might have carried their victorious arms to the sea but for a lack of enterprise natural to a citizen force and for the heroic defence of the garrison of Ladysmith. The second is the period of our success to the occupation of Pretoria. The third, and the most painful of all, is the period of stubborn and tedious warfare which has lasted, without any considerable success on our side, from August, 1900, to the present time.

The first period of the war was a lamentable one for our armies. It would be ungenerous to criticise the strategy of Sir Redvers Buller, for it was thrust on him by circumstances, and was not his free choice, and the force which was entrusted to him was utterly inadequate to its task. The expectation held out to the public by a thoughtless Press and shared by a thoughtless Government, that General Buller's army corps would be able to advance through the Republics, to sweep aside any resistance that the Boers might offer, to occupy Pretoria and Bloemfontein, and after a few easy successes to dictate terms of peace, is, in the light of our later experience, seen to be ludicrous, and can only be compared with the parallel hope of Mr. Rhodes in 1895, that Dr. Jameson, with his five hundred troopers, would overthrow the Republic.

The mistakes which General Buller made were due to political misdirection and to political necessity rather than to any miscalculation on his own part. The beginning of the mischief in Natal was the Government's promise to defend the Colony with the whole force of the Empire. This promise held Sir George White to the defence of Dundee, and this in its turn made the siege of Ladysmith inevitable. If the cry of Ladysmith could have been resisted—and it could not—the promise would still have compelled General Buller in honour to go to Natal. The knots in the fatal entanglement of Ladysmith were thus tied by the politicians, not by the soldiers. It was the same in Kimberley. Mr. Cecil Rhodes was besieged in the town, quarrelling with the military officers in command. Needs must be, therefore, that a body of English troops should at once set out to its relief. The disaster of Magersfontein was the result. The Ministry had rushed into war without making adequate preparations for the defence of its own frontier in Cape Colony, and Kimberley and Ladysmith between them had deprived Sir William Gatacre of his due share of the army corps. He attempted, with inadequate forces, to drive back the Boer invaders. The tragedy of Stormberg was the result.

The second period of the war began in January, 1900, when at last the Ministers became alive to the danger of the situation. Lord Roberts and Lord Kitchener, with an enormous force, which ultimately increased our army to 250,000 men, were sent out to retrieve the errors of our politicians rather than the mistakes of our generals. Then followed a series of successes. Kimberley and Ladysmith were relieved, Cronje's force surrendered, and, by a rapid movement, Lord Roberts was able to occupy Bloemfontein without much serious resistance.

The Government had now its golden opportunity. We had driven the Boers from our territories, we had avenged the insult of their ultimatum, one

of their capitals was in our hands and the other would soon be at our mercy. Their army was in flight, and their citizens were demoralised.

Our Ministry professedly went to war either to relieve the grievances of the Outlanders or to secure for them the rights of the franchise, or to assert British supremacy in South Africa. We did not go to war in the first instance to annex the two Republics or to take from them their gold mines. But whatever was the motive of the Ministers, there was, after the fall of Bloemfontein, no reason to doubt that they had secured each and all of the possible objects of the war. It was therefore the duty of the conqueror to impose certain terms on the conquered, and it was in accordance with the dictates both of reason and humanity that these terms should be possible ones.

The two Boer Presidents saw, after the capture of Cronje and the fall of Bloemfontein and the relief of Ladysmith, that it was no longer possible for the Boers to contend on equal terms with Great Britain. They therefore, in a joint telegram to Lord Salisbury, sued for peace, and begged to know what terms the English Government proposed. It would have been right and reasonable of the English Ministry to have answered this appeal by laying down certain terms which, though they might have been severe, would have preserved to the Boers their national life, their laws and customs and representative institutions. They might have demanded that the armaments which the Boers had accumulated during the last few years should be given up, that the grievances of the Outlanders should be at once and wholly abolished, and that an indemnity should be paid; nor would any reasonable man have opposed the suggestion that the two Republics should pass as protected States under the supremacy of the British flag.

When a State is at war with another State, it is not usual for the conqueror, even when his enemy has declared war upon him, to annex the whole of his territories and to declare that in the future his enemy shall cease to exist as a nation. There is, except the case of Poland, no example in modern history of the policy which we have to our sorrow pursued. But the English Ministers, puffed up by success and urged forward by the passionate outcry of their ignorant advisers in South Africa and at home, refused to listen to the Boer appeal. Lord Salisbury told the Presidents that there could be no discussion of terms, that the two Republics must make an unconditional submission and must accept whatever fate the English Ministry accorded them. He added further that no result would be satisfactory to England which left to the Boers a shred of independence.

The inevitable result followed. The Boers were made desperate by Lord Salisbury's threats. They saw that they were fighting, not against defeat by an ordinary foe, not against disarmament, not against the demands of the mine-owners; they were fighting for their national existence. The English Ministers and English public must have been wholly blind not only to the dictates of common sense, but also to the traditions of their own glorious history, if they did not see that their enemy would fight desperately and would be right in fighting to the death for the noblest of all causes.

But when passion and prejudice obscure the vision, it is almost useless to ask men to see facts as they are. The evil genius which has inspired our Government from the beginning still tracked its footsteps, and the opportunity was lost. From the infatuated policy of the English Ministers, difficulties and disasters followed thick and fast. The enemy, who had before this shown signs of wavering, at once grew firm and unanimous in their determination. Shortly after the rejection of the Presidents' overtures, Sanna's Post made De Wet famous. Already at Bloemfontein the difficulties of the army were so great that nearly two months went by—months of mishaps and regrettable incidents—before a further advance to Pretoria was possible. Again the advance was successful. Lord Roberts rushed his army through the northern part of the Free

State, still leaving a population in his flanks and rear unsubdued and hostile.

Again the error, we may assume, was rather political than military. Sir Alfred Milner has confessed in his despatch of February 6, 1901, that the great object of Lord Roberts was to save the gold mines, which, as a matter of fact, were in little danger. It must be remembered that Lord Roberts has never before served against a white foe, and that all his triumphs have been won against the semi-barbarous peoples of India and Afghanistan. But he is a brilliant soldier and he recognised the risks of his rash strategy. He knew that among the rules of warfare none are more important than those which warn a general not to lose his line of operations, to keep his troops well together, not to march about in small bodies or to hold small garrisons at great distances from his centre. To proceed in a haphazard way without a proper centre, and to risk the loss of his communications, or to risk the constant breaking of those communications, is in Napoleon's opinion to be guilty of a crime. That master of war advised his generals always to place their troops in such a way that, whatever the enemy might do, they might be able to have their forces united in a few days. Lord Roberts knew all this; but he failed to see that Lord Salisbury's declaration had completely changed the whole character of the war; that we were no longer fighting Governments, but a people, and that what we had now to subdue was not the capitals but the spirit of freedom in the heart of the individual Boer. There was a time when the occupation of Pretoria might have ended the war, but that was before Lord Salisbury's declaration.

The consequence was that the rapid march of Lord Roberts and the occupation of Pretoria only involved our army in further difficulties. Our huge force now found itself in the heart of a hostile country dependent for its very existence on thousands of miles of railway open to the attacks of an active foe. The Boers again and again attacked our communications and swooped down upon isolated posts. Once more De Wet appeared as Nemesis. We had already annexed the Free State, and the Transvaal was presently to follow; but the annexation was on paper, and had no effective value until we could occupy the whole of these territories and until we had defeated, killed or captured the strong and determined bodies of the enemy who were defying and harassing us.

When the attacks on his flanks and communications began, Lord Roberts at Pretoria was in an anxious and difficult situation. It was an exact reproduction of the dangerous position of our army in the American War of Independence. The Commander-in-Chief had staked almost everything on the chance of ending the war at Pretoria. For some time he clung to the idea that it was over, despite the facts. He had rushed through the country in his rear; instead of leaving garrisons he had imposed an oath of neutrality on those burghers who had not gone north with the main Boer army; he had thrown over the slower methods of formal conquest; and now the country was up in his rear and on his flanks. The Governments of the two Republics were not unreasonable in regarding the oath of neutrality as unpatriotic and as taken under compulsion, and, therefore, as void; and since the English troops were not able to occupy the country effectively, it became a regular occurrence for an English force to leave a town on one day and for a Boer commando on the next day to appear and force the unfortunate burghers to join it. The weakness of our position deprived us of the power to protect those burghers on whom we had forced the oath of neutrality. The whole fabric of our military power in South Africa, hurriedly raised, as we have seen, under complete political misapprehension, began to crumble at its base. The occupation of Pretoria marked the climax of our power: from that date it began to ebb and wane.

The spectacle of our unfulfilled hopes and prophecies drove us to the absurd conclusion that the resistance of the Boers was confined to the scum of the population or to foreign mercenaries. Our pride refused to allow that the entire population of the Republics was united against our wish to make them

British citizens. We had deceived ourselves; but anxious to find a scapegoat, we declared that we had been deceived. And now began the cry for personal chastisement of the Boers. At first directed only against those Boers who had—in the majority of cases, as Lord Roberts has admitted, unwillingly—violated their oaths of neutrality, our indignation gradually became more and more collective, until it threatened to visit all Boers without distinction.

Bewildered and embarrassed, Lord Roberts began to wage war by proclamations. It was perhaps the most fatal mistake of all, and again it was political, not military, in its origin. Many in number and inconsistent in policy, they proceeded from clemency to sternness and from sternness to clemency. The earlier proclamations were in accord with the rules of civilised warfare; but the later ones breathed a spirit of anger and revenge utterly opposed to the views which the English delegates had put forth at the Hague Conference of 1899. Sir John Ardagh, at that Conference, had brought in a motion, asserting that it is the right of the "population of an invaded country to fulfil its duty of opposing the invaders by all lawful means by the most patriotic resistance." Nothing can be clearer than this statement, which represented the traditional policy of a free England, ever ready in its sympathy with the cause of small nations. But in a proclamation dated from Johannesburg on July 1, 1900, Lord Roberts warns all the inhabitants of the Orange River Colony who should be found in arms fourteen days after the date of the proclamation that they would be liable to be dealt with as rebels and to suffer in person and property accordingly. Lord Roberts and the Ministers probably argued that, the Orange Free State having been annexed to the Crown of England, every citizen still opposing the English army became, by the mere issue of a proclamation, a rebel and a traitor. It is not necessary to comment further on this proclamation, because on September 1st the Ministers and Lord Roberts acknowledged its illegality and repealed it.[1]

Other proclamations described the penalities to which the Boers rendered themselves liable by the continuance of the struggle for independence. It became the custom first of all to burn farms from which a treacherous attack was made upon our troops, then to burn all farms within a radius of ten miles from any point on the railway at which an attack was made by the enemy, then to confiscate or burn anything which was the property of any Boer fighting for his country.[2] These measures are harsh and inconsistent with the traditions of the British army, and nothing has shown more clearly the want of intelligence on the part of our Ministers and civil and military advisers than this policy of devastation. If anything has been proved in history, it is that such a policy cannot be followed up by a free nation fighting another free nation. It might be pursued by Russia against Central Asian babarians; but we are not Russians, and England has noble and generous traditions. The same blind fury which animated Lord North's Ministry and his generals in 1777 has animated our Ministry during this unhappy war. We have had no fixed policy, but, like a foolish mother, we turn from blandishment to menace, and from stripes to caresses. We forget that which in our reason we should readily allow: that nothing makes men more irreconcilable than to see their houses burnt, their private property looted or confiscated, and their women turned out homeless and defenceless. The devastation was unwise on other grounds. Our great army found itself tied to the railway, unable to move quickly through a district where many of the

[1] Lord Roberts unsuccessfully pursued a similar policy and issued a similar proclamation, against the Afghans in 1879. His action was severely criticised in a petition signed by various eminent men, among whom was Mr. J. Chamberlain.

[2] According to a Parliamentary Paper just issued, the number of farms and houses burnt in the Republics, from June, 1900, to January, 1901, was 630. The return is obviously incomplete, and the number must be at least double. Of this number 189 were burnt in October, and 226 in November, when the war was "over." A large number of the farms were burnt because the owners were on commando.

houses had been burnt, much of the food destroyed, and the cattle driven away. Our columns could not move without large convoys and their mobility was lost. As our difficulties increased, it became clear to our advisers that their severe policy was having an effect contrary to their hopes, and by subsequent proclamations in November, 1900, the Commander-in-Chief promised that for the future promiscuous farm-burning should be stopped, while the regulation of compelling residents to travel in military trains had been long before repealed.

It would be unjust and untrue to charge against the honour of the army the policy and the scenes of desolation which have been one of the most unfortunate features of this campaign. The policy had a political rather than a military inspiration. It was unutterably odious to thousands of our soldiers, and it increased their disgust with a campaign which was now being carried on by methods contrary to the high-spirited traditions of the British army. Even after the horrors of the Indian Mutiny our soldiers spared the farms and villages of the enemy, and the houses and supplies which a hasty and angry general might have destroyed, saved many of our columns from distress. We know that our officers and soldiers are men of generous instincts and chivalrous demeanour. This war has left us few illusions, but, at all events, let us retain the faith that our soldiers are just and merciful, that they do not of their own initiative make war on women and children, and that it is no part of a British soldier's duty or pleasure to lay desolate the houses and towns of the enemy whom he cannot capture. We must seek the origin of this ruthless policy in the civilian mind. The same error which appears to have debauched the minds of so many respectable citizens both in South Africa and in England, and which assured us that the Boers were cowards who would yield and bandits and murderers who must be shot like vermin, doubtless impressed upon our Government that, as vermin could not be killed until their nests were destroyed, so we should never conquer the Boers until we laid low their habitations, made their country a desert, and carried their women and children into captivity. Let us then hold the army innocent.

It was stated on some authority that before the severe proclamations of Lord Roberts we had at least one-third of the Free State burghers on our side and willing to submit. Lord Roberts's change of policy immediately turned the majority of these men into bitter opponents. Every day increased our difficulties and hardened the determination of our enemy. Every act of harshness was carried, coloured, and monstrously exaggerated to our Dutch subjects in Cape Colony. The two Republics were become deserts with blackened farms and ruined towns, and in Cape Colony the old loyalty towards the English Crown was fast dying out and was being replaced by a sullen hatred which might burst at any moment into a dangerous flame. But the path of folly ever leads downward, and, as the dangers and the difficulties grow, the unfortunate traveller finds that to step back is impossible and that to grope blindly in the darkness is his only course.

The war on private property failed, as the policy of a rapid advance on the enemy's capitals had failed. The position of our army was becoming dangerous, and, though Lord Roberts after a long wait at Pretoria threw out columns and seized the Delagoa railway, he was unable to advance any substantial distance north of the railway line. More than half the Transvaal remained untraversed by our troops, and the main Boer army, with its Commander-in-Chief and the Ministers of the late Republic, were left free to move about at their will.

At length the Government and Lord Roberts began to understand that they had completely misunderstood both the character of the Boers and the difficulties of their own position. The English public, too, grew sensitive about the policy of devastation in which our premature advance and annexation had involved us; and Lord Kitchener, who in the beginning of December, 1900, succeeded Lord Roberts, was instructed to issue a proclamation by which an amnesty was offered to all who undertook to surrender. It was promised that there should be no more

indiscriminate burning of farms—for indiscriminate it had become, thanks not so much to the deliberate policy of Lord Roberts as to the series of irreconcilable proclamations which confused a dozen policies; and it was further recognised that we had no right to exact an oath of neutrality and penalties for its violation unless we offered those who took it adequate protection. As it was impossible to give this protection to burghers in the country, a new system of refugee camps at various points on the lines of communication was started.

Into these camps were gathered women and children from the country districts, and all the burghers who surrendered voluntarily. In effect, the new plan was the concentration system of General Weyler in Cuba, with this distinction, that we undertook the responsibility of feeding the refugees. The advantage of this system was that it enabled us to distinguish between combatants and non-combatants, and to devastate the country outside the refugee camps with a clearer conscience. But the strain on the railways was greatly increased by the new responsibility.

Another serious and obvious disadvantage was that, with all the good will in the world, it was difficult to feed and care for the numerous occupants of these camps. Hosts of delicate women and children were living under insanitary conditions and on bad or insufficient food,[1] and Lord Kitchener added to the danger by lowering this poor standard of comfort and placing on reduced rations the women and children of the burghers who were still in the field against us.[2] Even under improved conditions the mortality is appalling. Since February, of the 20,000 occupants of these camps the deaths were—men, 41; women, 80; children, 261.[3] If this system of reconcentration is continued for two years, a considerable portion of the non-combatant population of the two Republics will be dead. It is hardly necessary to say that the effects of such a policy if continued will be disastrous to our good name.

But the third policy of the Government was as unsuccessful as the former two policies. The Government appears to have been inspired throughout this campaign by the madness which it is said the gods inflict on those whom they intend to ruin. It was still unable to grasp the difference between unconditional submission and submission on reasonable and honourable terms. They imagined that to

[1] The following is the official report of the Medical Officer:—

"JOHANNESBURG,
"*January 9th.*

"This is to certify that I have carefully examined: (*a*) a sample of mealie meal numbered 1; (*b*) a sample of mealie meal numbered 2; and (*c*) a sample of sugar numbered 3.

"Sample 1 is mouldy, contains mite, and is unfit for human consumption.

"Sample 2 contains mite, but I could not discover in it living mite. It is, however, dangerous as human food.

"Sample 3 is a moist sample of brown sugar. The smell is somewhat sour, but microscopically I could not find ferment or other foreign matter except water. The sugar is unfit for the use of young children.

"If the meal and the sugar from which the samples are taken are used as human food, they are liable to produce diarrhœa, especially to children. I have sealed the samples with my seal after examining them.

"D. W. JOHNSTON, F.R.C.S., D.P.H., &c."

[2] Mr. JOHN ELLIS asked the Secretary of State for War whether the women and children confined in camps were placed on full rations if they voluntarily surrendered, but on reduced rations if the husbands and fathers did not surrender.

Mr. BRODRICK—I am in communication with Lord Kitchener on this subject. The difficulty of feeding the very large number of persons coming into these camps is very great; and I understand that a distinction has been drawn between those who surrendered with their husbands and fathers and those who come in to be fed while their relations are still in the field. ("Oh.") The information, however, at my disposal is not sufficient to enable me to give an exact answer at this moment. [Mr. Brodrick has since informed the House that this odious method of conquest has been repealed—obviously in deference to the protests of honourable men.]

[3] Mr. Brodrick in the House of Commons, May, 1901.

annex two countries and peoples was to secure the surrender of their armies, and they vacillated between a policy of devastation and a policy of sugar-plums. They made the further mistake of attempting to use the refugees to sow dissension amongst the burghers in the field; and the bitterness of the struggle was exasperated by the execution, real or alleged, of some of these so-called "peace envoys" by the Boer leaders.

Though it could no longer be concealed that the military position in South Africa was steadily growing worse the Government determined to end the war on paper and to conquer the Boers by a General Election and by rhetoric on the hustings. Lord Roberts was rash enough to proclaim that the war was over, and the Government, urging the electors that a Ministerial victory would smother the dying embers of warfare, obtained a great majority. It is not easy to understand by what arguments Lord Roberts pursuaded himself that the active campaign was at an end. To unprejudiced eyes it was clear that the enemy was still unconquered, and that our army was in difficulties was proved shortly after Lord Roberts's departure by the evacuation of many of the posts our troops had been holding. In his despatch of February 6, 1901, Sir Alfred Milner points out that the six months after July, 1900, had been months of military "retrogression," and Lord Roberts's optimism in December—at least four months after that "retrogression" had commenced—was clearly founded on no sound basis. His declaration is only to be explained first by his characteristic tendency to look on the brighter side of events; secondly, by his wish to comfort the Government and the public; and thirdly, by a not unnatural desire to prove to the world that he had completed the work which he had not been allowed to complete "nineteen years ago." But such a declaration was eminently unfair to his successor, who would be held by the public to have failed in the easy task which, according to Lord Roberts, had been left him. Lord Kitchener indeed deserves the sympathy of all generous men. His difficulties, caused in a great degree by the rash strategy of his predecessor, have been enormous, and if he fails the fault will not be his.

The military methods of the Government were therefore as unsuccessful as their political efforts. They believed what they wished to believe, and assuming that the war was practically over, they neglected to feed their wearied army with a steady flow of drafts and recruits. A considerable number of soldiers were withdrawn from South Africa, and in December the position of our forces, which had been growing steadily worse since the occupation of Komati Poort, began to be most serious.

After the fall of Pretoria, it was hoped that the enemy would submit; the Boer forces seemed to be scattered and to have lost their capacity for sustained or concentrated movement. But it is doubtful whether the campaign has ever presented the true form of guerilla warfare. That class of warfare is confined to the action of small bodies under independent leaders, possessing no cohesion and displaying no organised methods for the attaining of a common end. Moreover, guerilla warfare is almost invariably accompanied by great cruelty on the part of the guerillas and by an ostentatious neglect of the honourable conventions of war. Those who have followed intelligently the course of the campaign since the fall of Pretoria will allow that the Boer plan of campaign, far from being the fortuitous product of independent bands, has been inspired not only by remarkable boldness and originality but by strategical skill and methodical aims.

The Boers, who had at the commencement of the war been wanting in discipline and initiative, were becoming veterans, seasoned, bold, and able to take the offensive without hesitation. Although their food supplies must have been very scanty and their ammunition could not have been superabundant, they seemed to have enough food and enough ammunition to continue a campaign which was exhausting and dangerous to our army. Their generals began to display, in addition to the extraordinary mobility which had always characterized them, a tactical and a strategical skill which extorted the unwilling admiration of their

enemy. In fine, the proposition in January, 1901, was in its essence, if not in its outward aspect, more dangerous than the position in January, 1900. At the latter date we had not exhausted our regular forces, we had still 200,000 men on whom we could draw, we had still in reserve the skill and the prestige of Lord Roberts and the administrative ability of Lord Kitchener.

The greater part of our army consisted of infantry, and out of 200,000 men whom we had in South Africa 100,000 must have been tied down to the railway and the important strategical points, while perhaps 20,000 or 25,000 were sick of fever and of the fatigue which a long campaign inevitably brings. We probably had no more than 20,000 mounted men to throw upon the Boers at any given point, and, in a word, our great army, which outnumbered the Boers by ten to one, was thrown on the defensive. In January, 1901, our regular reserves were exhausted, Lord Roberts had returned, and Lord Kitchener seemed embarrassed by the coil of untoward circumstances. We had only the patriotism of our citizens and of our colonies to depend upon; and if the supply of volunteers were to fail, we should be left impotent in the presence of the greatest military danger that England has ever faced.

The military situation was in the middle of December made worse by the sudden irruption of several Boer commandoes into Cape Colony. It is not at present clear what object the Boers had in this invasion; but we may without much risk assume that they were determined, by enlarging the area of the war, to draw a great portion of our army from Pretoria to the south. The Boers had countless sympathisers in the Colony, and they probably knew quite clearly what their reception was likely to be. They did not expect to be reinforced by a large number of Colonial Dutch, though some recruits were certain to join their forces. Their chief objects were to collect supplies and horses and to raise a new campaign in Cape Colony, a thousand miles from the main body of our troops in the Transvaal, and to force the English general to choose between abandoning the Colony and abandoning the Transvaal.

They argued that Lord Kitchener, whose troops were barely sufficient to hold their present positions with success, would certainly not be able to continue the campaign in the Transvaal and to offer any resistance to them in Cape Colony. By this extraordinary and brilliant feat the Boers at once practically doubled the area of the war, and an army which was impotent to hold the two Republics was obviously incapable of entering into serious offensive measures against the Boers both in Cape Colony and in the northern Transvaal. From Cape Colony we have not yet been able to drive the invaders, and our inability to capture or defeat them is a measure of our weakness.

The tactics of the Boers became more daring. Every day some point of the railway was cut, small posts were overwhelmed, and the casualty lists became alarming in their length. Enteric fever and the diseases which come of exhaustion and insufficient food began to tell upon our army. The men were growing "stale" and dissatisfied. But the Government made no sign. Whether they still hoped that Lord Kitchener, by a supreme effort, would be able to shake off his indefatigable foes, or whether they believed that the sudden activity of the Boers was but the last flicker of the lamp before extinction, we do not know.

The one fatal and radical error of the Government is that they have been without a definite policy from the beginning, unless we dignify by that term their threat to force the Boers to unconditional submission. It is the business of Ministers to have a serious plan of settlement, but no vestige of such plan has been vouchsafed to us by Lord Salisbury and his colleagues. To put the matter briefly, ever since the occupation of Pretoria the Ministry has been drifting. The one thing which the Ministers ought to have done, if they still remained firm in their demand for unconditional submission, they did not do. It was their obvious and absolute duty to send out to Lord Kitchener such large reinforcements of mounted men as would take the place of those soldiers who were becom-

ing useless from fatigue, and would enable the Commander-in-Chief to assume the offensive. It is impossible for a large army to remain for an indefinite period on the defensive, exposed to the galling attacks of an active foe whom it cannot pursue, and devastated by the inroads of disease.

At length, seriously alarmed by the activity of the Boers and the impotence of our army, the Government in the early days of February called for more volunteers and announced to the public that they were about to send out to Lord Kitchener 30,000 mounted troops. At the end of the same month, too, the demand for unconditional surrender was relaxed. Despairing of bringing the war to an early close, and, as we may believe, actuated by a genuine desire to bring peace to South Africa, Lord Kitchener proposed to General Botha, through his wife, that a meeting should take place to discuss terms of surrender. The meeting took place on February 28th, and Lord Kitchener laid before General Botha the various conditions which, in his opinion, the English Ministry would impose upon the Boers. These terms were, from Lord Kitchener's standpoint, generous, and, though General Botha pleaded for complete or modified independence, he seemed not unwilling to recommend Lord Kitchener's suggestions to his Government. Unfortunately, these suggestions, when referred to the English Ministry, were altered and hardened to such an extent that they held out to the Boers no hope of anything but despotic rule for an indefinite number of years. The terms, thus modified, were proposed to General Botha, who summarily rejected them, and the fair hopes of all who were working for peace were rudely dashed to the ground.

To enumerate and explain the causes of the failure of our army in South Africa would be a difficult and painful task. The causes are many and various. They are moral and physical, political and military. The first two factors we will discuss later. Of the latter two it may without hesitation be asserted that the blunders of our Government have cost us far more than the errors of our soldiers or the difficulties of the invaded lands.

Of the military causes of our failure it is too early to speak in definite language. Our generals and our soldiers have done their best, and it may be that no other European army would have achieved a greater success. At the same time, it would be insincere to conceal the fact that the strategy of Lord Roberts was founded on a false estimate of his enemy's strength and was disastrous in its ultimate effects. His rapid march to Bloemfontein was attractive to the superficial observer, but it was wrong in principle, and could only have been justified by its results. He lost nearly the whole of his convoy, and he exposed his men to the risk of starvation. It was impossible in such a rapid movement to carry with him the proper medical equipment, and the burden of fatigue which was laid upon the army was a direct cause of that terrible outbreak of disease which swept away the men in hundreds. The "regrettable incidents" which followed in quick succession were the necessary outcome of a movement which, brilliant as it seemed, was the negation of military prudence. The advance on Pretoria, undertaken in the same rash spirit, produced similar results. We entered the town, but we did not capture the forces of the enemy. Again, our flanks and rear were left open to the Boers, and it was impossible properly to feed a force which advanced more rapidly than its supplies. As Lord Roberts has himself confessed, for a day it seemed that the army would have to choose between starvation and retreat.

The very high estimate which the public has formed of the achievements of Lord Doberts in South Africa has undoubtedly, and not unnaturally, been founded on the immense change which his advent at the head of an enormous army wrought in the military position in the early days of 1900. The nation had passed through an ordeal of suspense and sorrow, and it was profoundly grateful to the general who had so quickly transformed the aspect of affairs. Courteous and brave, he is the most popular soldier of the last fifty years, but the historian will be forced to explain this popularity on the grounds we have suggested, and by the

fascination of his personality, rather than by the lasting success of his strategy. The full history of the campaign will not be written for many years, and the natural tendency of the military chronicler to minimise ugly facts, to gloss over mistakes, and to explain defeats, may perhaps conceal the full measure of our failure. The greatest commanders of history have not seldom possessed the highest political instinct, but Lord Roberts was unable to appreciate the political factors of the situation; while the military risks which he deliberately accepted were so disproportionate to their possible advantages and so disastrous in their results, that it is impossible for the cool observer to deny that the career of Lord Roberts in South Africa has been unequal to his renown.

But let it not be forgotton that our failure in South Africa has been a political rather than a military failure. The politicians have set the soldiers to do a work of enormous difficulty with insufficient material. The ill-informed criticisms which were showered on our army during the period of our disasters, the attacks on our artillery—the very branch of the army whose services have been most heroical and distinguished—on our officers and our soldiers, do not touch the root of the matter. If the soldier has failed, it is because the politician has blundered.

We have seen how the insistence on unconditional submission has prolonged this war; it is not less evident that its early disasters were due to political incapacity. The Government entered upon this war in wilful blindness. For many months it must have been clear to them that in insisting upon a reform of the franchise in the Transvaal they were offering to the Boers an ultimatum, and that it would be necessary for them, if their proposals were declined, to enforce them by armed measures. That they prepared for a warlike issue we have recently from the lips of Lord Wolseley, who has told us[1] that in June, 1899, he frequently and earnestly urged upon the Government the necessity of seizing Delagoa Bay, and of preparing a large force to protect Natal from invasion.

In June, 1899, four months before the outbreak of the war, an interesting little volume was issued by the Intelligence Department of the War office to a considerable number of officers. This book is entitled "Military Notes on the Dutch Republics of South Africa." It contains 119 pages, and is divided into twelve chapters.

One of the most remarkable features of this little book is its accuracy. Its conclusions are often wrong; but as a collection of facts—and after all the business of an Intelligence Department is to provide trustworthy materials for judgments, and not relieve all the other departments of State from the necessity of thinking—the book is beyond praise. We have been assured by the Government that they were completely surprised by the warlike attitude of the Boers, by their strength, and by the perfection of their armaments. Yet this book, which is the official publication of the Intelligence Department of the War Office, estimates that the Boer forces would, in the case of war, number about 56,000 men. This number is, if we regard only the forces of the two Republics, somewhat exaggerated; but if in it we include a considerable portion of the Outlanders fighting for the Boers, it has been proved moderately accurate.

Lord Salisbury has told us that the Government was astonished at the existence of modern guns among the Boers, and that he presumed they had been smuggled into the Transvaal in boilers and locomotives and piano cases. This little book, however, gives full details of the Boer artillery, and of its origin and manufacture. It is interesting to read the statement that only some 13,000 rifles were in the country before the Jameson Raid and that the whole of the remainder have been purchased since that date in England, France, Germany, and Belgium.

When war seemed imminent, the Prime Ministers of our Colonies made to the Colonial Office offers of patriotic assistance. The Government acknowledged these offers in suitable terms, and stated that *unmounted men* would be preferred.

[1] House of Lords, March, 1901.

Three months after the war had begun, Mr. Balfour stated in terms of pathetic astonishment the astounding fact that the Boers had horses. It is clear that the Ministry had taken no trouble to learn the lessons drawn from the last war by the Intelligence Department, who were in no ignorance of the advantages possessed by the Boers as an army of mounted infantry. Mr. Balfour had evidently not read the following passage:—

> "As regards mobility, it may be recollected that the force which was defeated at Laing's Nek and Ingogo was operating on foot, with practically no mounted men, against men whose hunting experience had taught them to get the utmost advantage out of the use of their horses in approaching, surprising, and surrounding large herds of antelopes. Moreover, South Africa is, of all countries, the most dangerous in the world for infantry to operate in without a screen of mounted troops in their front and on their flanks. The tactics employed by the Boers were, in fact, such as they had learned by hunting experience on the veldt. Alike in attack and defence, they acted on the same principle. Containing the enemy's front with a thin but well-posted body of skirmishers, they utilised every fold of ground to gallop unseen round his flanks, and then, leaving their horses, which are trained to stand without holders, under cover, gradually concentrated a ring of overwhelming fire on their objective."

Mr. Balfour, at the end of November, 1899, stated that if he had been asked two months ago whether it was likely that they would be at war with the Orange Free State, he would have answered, "You might as well expect us to be at war with Switzerland." The little book of the Intelligence Department issued in the previous June would have instructed his amiable simplicity. Here it is distinctly stated—

> "There can be no question that if war ensues between the Transvaal and the Suzerain Power as a result of the differences made apparent at the Bloemfontein Conference (1899), the Free State, who has already declared by the mouth of her Raad that she entirely approves of President Kruger's proposals, will undoubtedly throw in her lot with the sister Republic."

What an Iliad of woes sprang from the neglect of this plain warning!

Mr. Balfour, in January, 1900, described the entanglement of Ladysmith as being beyond the reasonable calculations of the Government. The Military Notes would have given him definite warning on this point, for in them it is distinctly stated that the Transvaal Boers intended to concentrate with the Free State force west of the Drakensberg and to advance on Ladysmith through Van Reenen's Pass.

The Government have excused the miserable imperfection of their medical equipment on the ground that no reasonable person could have expected a grave outbreak of enteric fever. The Military Notes contain a distinct warning that enteric fever, which had been in past campaigns prevalent among our troops, was a danger against which every precaution should be taken.

I have made these quotations from the Military Notes because they go far to prove the statement that the failure of our campaign has been due rather to the ignorance and blindness and carelessness of our Government than to the blunders of our army. There is in the Cabinet a small body of men called the Defence Committee. It is the duty of these Ministers to meet from time to time, to consider those measures which are necessary to safeguard the military and naval interests of our Empire and to lay before the Cabinet the various proposals which seem to them necessary. It is therefore reasonable to expect that this Committee, before engaging in a war with another Power, should acquaint itself with the obvious facts of the military situation and with the resources of the Governments opposed to us. If Mr. Balfour and his colleagues did not make themselves acquainted with the warnings and the statements contained in the official Notes of the Intelligence Department, or if, having read them,

they failed to appreciate and to act upon them, they have been guilty not only of a blunder but also of a crime, and on them must fall the greater portion of the responsibility for the disasters and the prolongation of this unhappy war.

But we have had to combat foes more terrible than the errors of our politicians or than the skill and courage of the Boers. To the invader of a country the forces of Nature have generally been more deadly than the forces of man. The Transvaal and the Free State form together an enormous territory—rugged, desolate, sparsely peopled, with few good roads and few large towns. A hostile army cannot live in such a country. It is therefore dependent for its very existence on its lines of communication, and such lines must be guarded with the utmost care. The strength of these lines is the strength of their weakest part, and a temporary interruption may involve a month's delay in the advance of the army or the semi-starvation of thousands of troops; and no communication is more delicate than 2,000 miles of a single railway line which is the sole means of feeding an enormous force.

The climate, benign to the native of the country, is unkind to the stranger, and foreign troops can ill bear the sudden changes from heat to cold, from deluges of rain to parching drought. The enormous labours of a protracted campaign in such a country lower the physical strength of the soldiers and bring in their train fever and dysentery and languid depression. Nor are the horses less liable to disease than the men, and the horse sickness of South Africa is so deadly that 75 per cent. of the animals attacked perish of the malady. We have been fighting Distance and Disease, and these two foes have often conquered the conquering invader.

A country so vast can therefore be defended by a relatively small force, and can only be effectively occupied by an enemy if it possesses an immense army. The issue of a campaign of this character is not decided by the aggregate numbers of the invading force, but by the rapidity with which they can bring at a given moment a considerable number of men to bear on a given point. To distribute a large force evenly over an immense surface is to lose effective power and the ability to crush your foe.

The magnitude of the task of our troops in South Africa may be realised from the following figures of the areas included in the theatre of war:—

	Square Miles.
Cape Colony	277,151
Transvaal	113,640
Orange River Colony	48,326
Natal	18,913
Total	458,030

Any one who will take a large scale map and will measure the distances in miles between the various small towns and villages which we have occupied and held will appreciate the immense difficulties which our army has experienced in protecting and feeding the posts distant from the main lines of communication. We have destroyed the food which otherwise might have sustained our troops; we have therefore to despatch at frequent intervals convoys of food, which, slowly and laboriously moving, are ever liable to the attacks of the mobile Boers. The detachments which hold the outlying posts are constantly on short rations and always in a tense and nervous strain. Wherever there is a British post, there a mile or so off hovers a shadowing commando. After some months the position becomes intolerable, and, to save a breakdown of the garrison, the town is evacuated and the troops are moved to a position of greater security. At the beginning of 1901 a large number of the towns formerly held by our troops were evacuated and the immense districts round them passed again into the hands of our enemy. This process of evacuation is styled "concentration," and, though the policy which dictates it is a sound and

a prudent one, it is also a definite proof that we are endeavouring to occupy a half-conquered country with a diminishing and hopelessly inadequate force.

No event is the outcome of a single antecedent circumstance. We may blame the incapacity of our Government and the errors of our generals, our want of mounted troops, the vast distances, sickness and climate. But causes are moral as well as physical; and we must not forget the moral causes—our own pride and the character of the Boer. With a flippancy and shallowness that cannot be too strongly condemned, the Government assumed that the enemy was not really in earnest, that he did not mean what he said, and could not do what he would. A nation cannot dispense with the quality of pride; but the pride which disdains facts and prefers to run it head against any obstacle rather than to use its eyes, always has led and always will lead to disaster. It was pride of this kind that caused us to misjudge the character of the Boer, to underestimate his resources, and to decry his military skill.

We may justly assume that British infantry have suffered no considerable deterioration since the days of Wellington, and we must seek in the qualities of our foe one of the causes of our failure. The extraordinary mobility of the Boers, their rapidity of movement, and their skill in the management and preservation of their horses, have proved of enormous advantage to them. They are born hunters and soldiers. It is a simple fact that only twice in our history have British infantry been unequal to the task assigned them. In 1775 our army was defeated again and again by a force of farmers who had had no military training and little experience of warfare. A hundred and twenty-five years later the same infantry again met an army of warlike farmers, inferior to numbers to our American colonists and outnumbered by us in the proportion of ten to one, and our army again proved unequal to its task.

To forecast the future of the campaign would be foolish and presumptuous. It may, however, not be out of place to offer a general estimate of its probable course: later we will examine the expenditure in money which it must necessitate. In the first place, we may assume that the only thing that can bring the war to a speedy end is the general surrender of the Boers, either unconditionally under compulsion, or through the offer to them by the British Ministry of such terms as they will accept. It is not rash to dismiss each of these alternatives as unlikely. General Botha's rejection of Mr. Chamberlain's proposals was definite and summary, and Mr. Chamberlain is not likely at present to stultify himself by making a more generous offer to the Boers. He might indeed—and we hope that he will—keep the door open for negotiations on the lines already laid down; and no doubt if we are able to keep up the pressure on the Boers the time may come sooner or later when they would accept the terms they have rejected. But there is a powerful feeling that the rejection by the Boers of our terms should be made an excuse for withdrawing all such offers for the future. If that spirit prevails we have to face the indefinite prolongation of this war.

The factors of failure of success are uncertain. We do not know how far the national spirit of the Boers will carry them and to what extent their stock of ammunition, food, and horses has been exhausted. On the other hand, we do not know, and we are not likely to hear, except through indirect sources, what further hardships our own army can endure without breaking under the strain. The duration of the war, therefore, depends on conditions which it is impossible to define. One thing seems clear. We shall make no real progress towards peace until we can effectively occupy the country. Annexation on paper is of no practical value. It places us in a ridiculous and humiliating position. We occupy a town and hold it for four or five days. Circumstances then force us to evacuate the town and to move to some other point. A Boer commando follows close on our heels and takes our place until it in its turn is succeeded by another British detachment, which, after a stay of a few weeks, gives way to a Dutch force. Thus the war goes on revolving on its own axis.

At times the momentum seems less, but no sooner have we vowed that the war is at last going to stop than the revolutions begin again and the old familiar names—Lindley, Wepener, Rustenburg, Zeerust—fly round faster than ever. There is no ordered march towards peace, no steady reduction of difficulties, no gradual contraction of the area of war.

It must not be forgotten that a lengthy campaign in a foreign country is not always terminated by a decisive victory of one side. One of our gravest errors has been to compare in our own minds our struggle against the Boers with a war which Germany might wage against France, or Italy against Austria. We have hoped that the flight of the enemy's main bodies or the occupation of their capitals would imply their submission or subjugation as a nation. But the Boers are not a European nation. Their order of civilisation is not that of a European country where the chief population is gathered in towns and where to capture the great cities is to annihilate the resistance of the Governments. The Boers are farmers, and to capture Pretoria or Bloemfontein is not to sever a main artery and destroy the life of the State. In a highly developed State organism the life of the parts depends on the centre. Not so in the Boer Republics. Each part as it is severed seems capable of separate life, and our task is comparable to the labour of Hercules in his bouts with the Hydra. Nor has the resource of Hercules availed us much. We have indeed destroyed the greatest number of their farms and attempted to clear their lands of cattle and standing crops, just as Iolas in the fable applied the burning iron to the wounds of the Hydra as each head was cut off. But it is impossible to kill all the sources of life, and it is probable that there still remains in the two territories sufficient to feed the Boers for several years.

If a man asks what reasonable hope we can form of ending the war *without negotiations* within a definite period, we are bound to answer that our final victory must be measured by the annihilation of the Boers. While a thousand Boers remain with bandoliers full and biltong enough to keep body and soul together, so long will they resist our occupation and so long will our victory be incomplete. If we are to estimate the resisting power of our foes we must, to a certain extent, calculate by the methods of arithmetic. Most of the prisoners whom our flying columns have lately captured have been old men or boys or non-combatant Boers; but let us assume that we catch or kill 300 fighting Boers in a month, and to this number let us add a further 150 incapacitated by wounds or disease. If we multiply 450 by 12 we arrive at a total of 5,400; and if we assume that the number of Boers still in arms against us is 15,000 men, we find that at the end of a year we shall have accounted for about a third the number of our enemy. Nor must we forget that the operations of small bodies of Boers are almost as dangerous and disconcerting to the peace of the country as the movements of larger bodies.

In estimating the duration of Boer resistance, we must be careful not to adopt the standards which we should apply to a European race. The Boer is not an Englishman or a Frenchman; he can live where an Englishman would starve. Wellington said that an English soldier moved on his stomach; but the Boer can carry in his saddlebag sufficient food for a fortnight. He can ride all day or all night without tiring his horse, and can keep it going for a fortnight. He is accustomed to a life of hardship in the open air. Nor must we place too much confidence on the probable failure of his food or ammunition.

The Boers have not, indeed, operated in considerable bodies, but their generals have commanded and are commanding in several places forces which number from 2,000 to 4,000 men, and as the whole force of the two Republics did not, in the first instance, number more than 45,000 men, and as their forces are now spread over a large extent of country, it is not incorrect to say that a force of 2,000 Boers is, in relation to the numbers at their disposal, as regular and substantial a body of men as an army corps would be in relation to the

aggregate forces of France or Germany. That this war, if it is continued, will degenerate into a guerilla war is true. But it does not follow that because it will so degenerate it will become less difficult. It is a historical fact that no war is so difficult to suppress as the irregular warfare which the population of a vast country, fighting for its independence, is able to carry on against the invader.

A guerilla war can be extended for an indefinite period by a brave and hardy race without any visible means of subsistence. Food and ammunition find their way through a hundred unknown approaches. Sympathisers at home and abroad never cease to send the necessaries of life and warfare, and hundreds of willing and adventurous hands will furnish the foes of England the means which they require. The country is enormous, the population is sparse, and the difficulties of policing it will be almost insuperable. The Boers will have three great factors in their favour. They will have time, and distance, and the character of their people. Time will exhaust our army through disease and weariness; distance may increase our difficulties to the breaking point; and the character of their people will preserve in their hearts the undying hope of freedom. Against them are the fewness of their numbers and their isolation from the rest of the world.

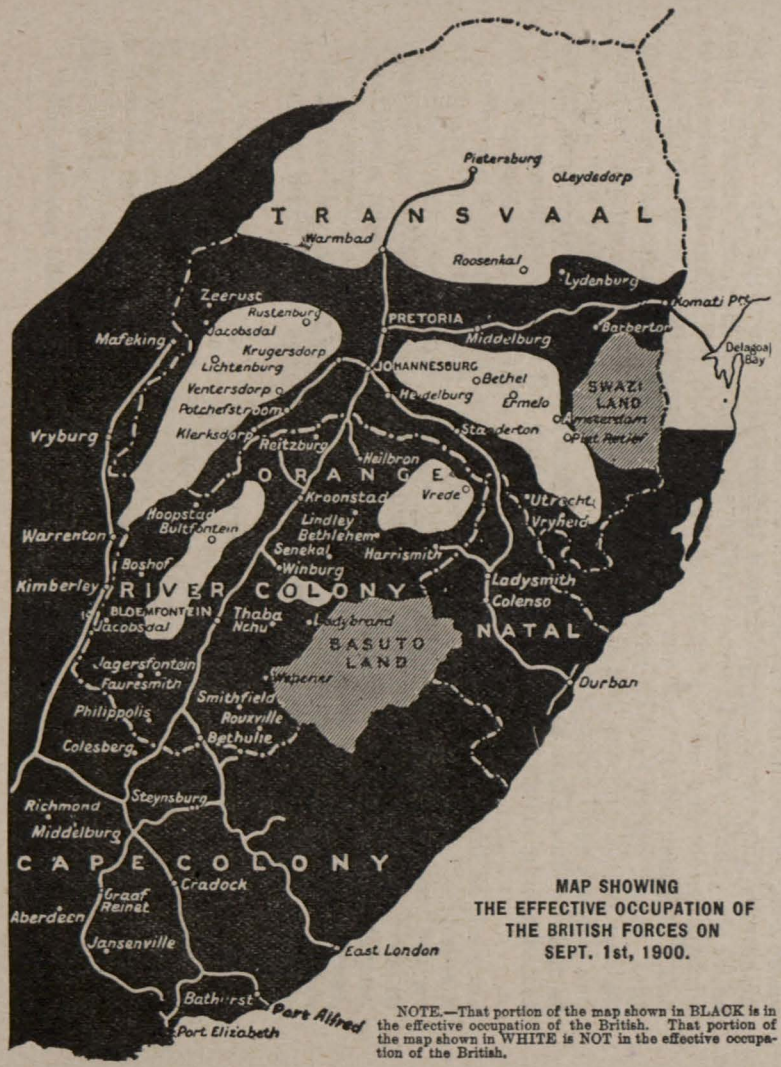
The recent examples of such warfare are ominous ,and the fact that the Minister of War thought it necessary to mention these examples in December is evidence that the Ministry have at last begun to take a serious view of the prospects of a speedy pacification of the two provinces. The war which Spain waged for many years in Cuba and the Philippines had no result save that of exhaustion for Spain. Napoleon in Spain found it impossible to suppress a war which the guerillas waged without cessation against his finest troops; and the third Napoleon saw his army consume away under the incessant attacks of the Mexicans and the slow inroad of disease. America is experiencing the humiliating difficulties which we, if we are unwise, are likely to experience in South Africa. It is true that the Russians were able to subdue and to hold Poland; and that Austria, after many efforts, has pacified Bosnia; and that England holds Ireland in comparative peace. But the conditions which obtain in these instances are absent in the case of South Africa. Poland is on the frontier of Russia, Bosnia is on the frontier of Austria, and Ireland is but a few hours distant from England. The three subject territories can therefore be invaded at a few hours' notice by the conqueror, and the army of occupation can be fed and reinforced with as little difficulty as London can send provisions to Edinburgh. The two annexed territories are not on our confines. The land which borders them on the south is now disloyal and hostile, and the two Republics and Cape Colony are 6,000 miles from our shores.

What is now the military situation in South Africa? In spite of the optimistic telegrams of correspondents and the hopeful outlook of Ministers, it cannot be denied that the situation is dangerous. The simplest test of our success is our power of effective occupation. There is little practical value in the seizure of a town or position by an army if that army is obliged to evacuate it in a short time; nor was it necessary to have Sir Alfred Milner's confirmation of our worst fears to know that we hold now in the two Republics far less territory than we held in August, 1900.

The simple fact is that, as our two maps will show,[1] with a few exceptions, the only posts held by us in the Transvaal and the Free State are our positions on the various railway lines, and a belt, a few miles wide, on each side. The northern portion of the Free State, in which are situated such important towns as Heilbron, Winburg, Vrede, Lindley, Lichtenburg, and Hoopstad, is obviously in the possession of the Boers; and

[1] These maps can, in the nature of the case, be only approximately accurate.

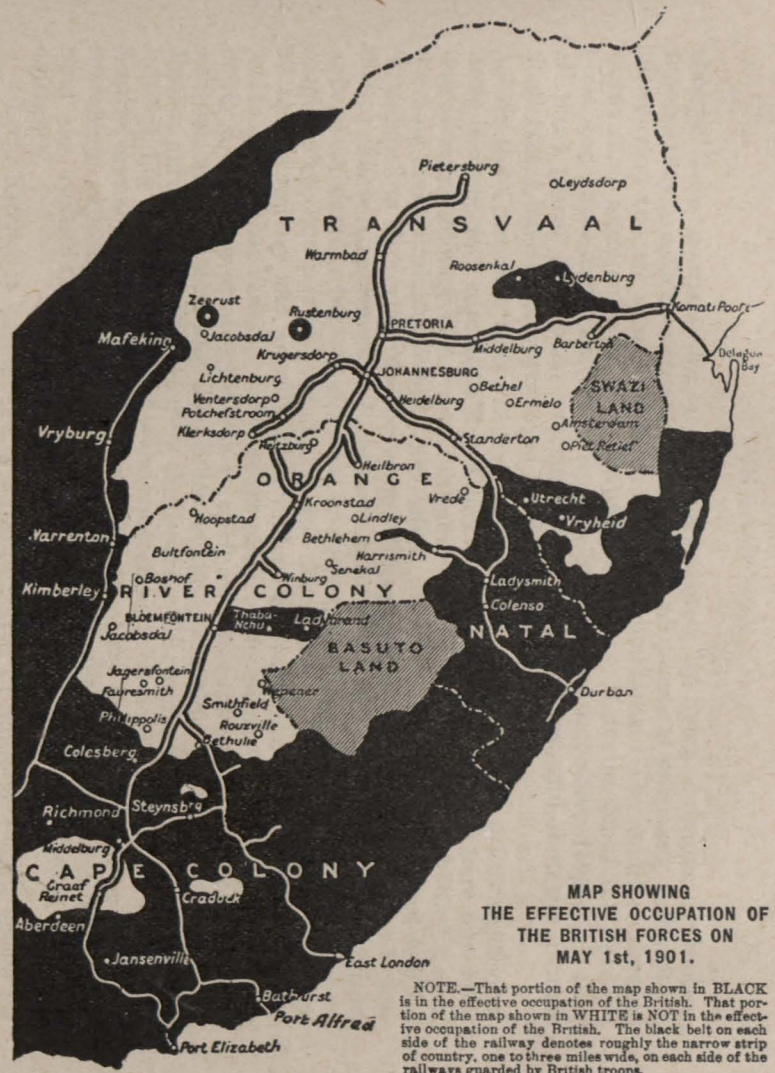
MAP 1



MAP SHOWING THE EFFECTIVE OCCUPATION OF THE BRITISH FORCES ON SEPT. 1st, 1900.

NOTE.—That portion of the map shown in BLACK is in the effective occupation of the British. That portion of the map shown in WHITE is NOT in the effective occupation of the British.

MAP 2



MAP SHOWING THE EFFECTIVE OCCUPATION OF THE BRITISH FORCES ON MAY 1st, 1901.

NOTE.—That portion of the map shown in BLACK is in the effective occupation of the British. That portion of the map shown in WHITE is NOT in the effective occupation of the British. The black belt on each side of the railway denotes roughly the narrow strip of country, one to three miles wide, on each side of the railways guarded by British troops.

though these districts are at intervals visited by flying columns of British troops, they are three weeks out of four, for all practical purposes, under Boer jurisdiction and are administered by Boer commandants. The southern district of the same State contains such towns as Wepener, Helvetia, Smithfield, Philippolis, and Fauresmith; and we have been informed in successive despatches that all these places have been evacuated by British troops, and that the British magistrates have been superseded by Boer landdrosts.

In the Transvaal, where there is obviously a greater force of British troops, there is probably a somewhat more effective occupation, but even here our position is extraordinary and somewhat ludicrous. We have been told that under the new civil administration of Sir Alfred Milner, resident magistrates will be established in Pretoria, Potchefstroom, Johannesburg, Krugersdorp, and Boksburg. These five towns are important, and to the casual reader it might appear satisfactory that we are now in a position to make them centres for our magistrates; but it is not difficult to see the motive of their choice. They are all on the railway and are therefore under the protection of the British troops which guard that railway. The other chief towns of the Transvaal, important either for local or strategical causes, such as Ventersdorp, Bethel, Rustenburg, Zeerust, and Lichtenburg, are either in the possession of the Boers, or their British garrisons are besieged by the Boers. Our present forces, even in their full fighting strength, are not numerous enough to hold a country so vast, so hostile, and so sparsely peopled; exhausted as they are by disease, by constant marching, exposure, and want of food, they are unable to do much more than hold the railways, which are to them the indispensable conditions of their existence.

Lord Kitchener has, indeed, a certain number of mounted troops whom he can, after certain periods of rest and refreshment, send forth against the too mobile forces of the Boers. What success these operations have attained, any one who has carefully followed the events of the last three months may easily appreciate. We know now that General French's great converging movement in the Eastern Transvaal was, from the military point of view, a failue. He failed to surround the main body of the Boers, and in spite of his enormous captures of stock, the enemy still manages to subsist in the districts he denuded. The same thing has taken place in the south-east corner of the Orange State. Our failed to capture De Wet and his commandoes is not exceptional, but typical. We have won isolated triumphs against De La Rey and other Boer leaders; and we are constantly capturing or receiving the surrender of small bodies. But of victory on a large scale, of the gradual envelopment of the chief fighting forces of our enemy, there is no sign.

We are winning, but can we afford to win so slowly? What will be the state of our own army at the end of another year of unceasing warfare?[1] That is a question which few men are able, and some would not dare, to answer; but we must face it. We are losing now by death, wounds, and sickness from 2,000 to 3,000 men a month.[2] Nor will the approach of winter be greatly in our favour. The growing exhaustion of the army will render it more susceptible to disease, which, working on weakened constitutions, the cold intensifies. We do not know how many of our 250,000 soldiers are efficient, but we do know that 20,000

[1] It is bare justice to say that at one time quite alone among a chorus of optimistic prophets one military critic has from the first foretold the dangers of this campaign. Colonel H. B. Hanna, in various letters and articles, was wise enough and courageous enough, even at the time of our triumphant advances, to say that our elation was premature, and that distance, disease, and depression were foes more difficult to conquer than the Boers. He pointed out that the invaded territory was one which it would be impossible effectively to occupy without an enormous army, and that in a land so vast and hostile it would be impossible for an indefinite period to feed such an army.

[2] The following table gives the total number of casualties reached month by month from

are in hospital; we may assume that 100,000 are guarding the lines, and that hundreds are being incapacitated every week by despair and weariness for the performance of those labours which are only possible to men of unimpaired physique and undaunted spirit. We know that Lord Kitchener is eager that this war should cease on terms honourable to the Boers. He knows what his army can do; he knows what it cannot do.

If this war is to end in a complete victory for our forces we must recruit those forces with substantial reinforcements. It is useless to send out men in hundreds, for the wastage of our army proceeds at such a rapid rate that even if we despatch 3,000 men on a given day, they will not be sufficient to fill the gaps caused by sickness in the army while they are on the high seas. War is not altogether a sum in arithmetic. The most deadly foe of an army is one whom we cannot see and whom no words can adequately describe. It is called by many names—exhaustion, weariness, depression, heartsickness, staleness; but by whatever name it is known, it is invincible. If it is true that this enemy has found an entrance into the hearts of the British army in South Africa, we may be sure that no general of ours can conquer it. It can only be cured or

the beginning of the war to April, 1901. In this table the prisoners recovered are deducted from the totals:—

	Killed in action.	Died of wounds.	Missing and prisoners.	Died of disease.	Sent home invalided.	Total.
Oct., 1899, to Feb., 1900	1,652	264	3,244	723	2,306	8,237†
March	2,130	461	3,476	1,207	4,004	11,687
April	2,221	533	3,958	1,909	6,149	14,824
May	2,369	588	4,526	3,173	11,343	22,045
June	2,634	657	1,687*	4,100	17,142	26,298
July	2,731	732	2,818	4,867	23,655	34,803
August	2,880	811	2,833	5,363	28,497	40,561
September	3,037	911	819*	5,903	31,626	42,296
October	3,204	982	829	6,270	34,499	45,784
November	3,329	1,044	1,250	6,719	37,009	49,728
December	3,540	1,132	903*	7,181	38,624	51,687
1901.						
January	3,680	1,184	937	7,793	40,798	54,724
February	3,824	1,284	800	8,385	42,357	56,958
March	3,936	1,301	775*	8,893	45,426	60,625
April	4,022	1,345	781‡	9,181	47,739	63,498

* Reduction in number of prisoners due to release.

† The discrepancy between these totals and the sum of the items given is due to the deaths from accidents, which have not been set out in detail.

‡ The total of prisoners taken during the war, not deducting those recovered, is 8,703.

NOTE—The war in South Africa has added over $1,000,000,000 to the taxation of Great Britain, and is costing at the present time over $1,000,000 per day to support troops in the field and the Boer prisoners at St. Helena, Ceylon and the Bermuda Islands. The failure of the British army to open the Kimberley and Johannesburg mines has deprived British stockholders of dividends on securities listed at $850,000,000, reduced the output of diamonds and gold $284,000,000. These tremendous sums subtracted from British resources have resulted in the impairment of the values of many kinds of securities dealt in by London stockbrokers, and are the superinducing cause of numerous bankruptcies in British financial circles. The diamond and gold mines are idle; they are not producing a dollar. Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, Chancellor of the Exchequer, in presenting the budget in the House of Commons, April 17, 1901, said: "The war can no longer be considered a small affair, as it has cost the government £146,567,000 ($732,835,000), double the cost of the Crimean War, and the end is not yet.

Since the beginning of the war Great Britain's loss in killed, wounded, died of disease and invalided home exceeds 100,000 troops, not including 25,000 prisoners that have been captured by the Boers.

British Consols in 1900 were rated above par (104), and although bolstered up by manipulation stand to-day (November, 1901) at 103; while French Rents are above par and United States bonds are at 120.

vanquished by the despatch of new bodies of men to take the place of those worn out by its attack, by the exhilaration which comes of winning definite victories, by better food, by rest, and by the ceasing of the aimless pursuit of a phantom foe.

The review of the whole situation, of the lessons of the past and of the prospects of the future, forces us to conclude that unless the Boers surrender in a body, or unless we are able by a succession of striking victories to capture their main commandoes, we shall be obliged to avoid the exhaustion of our own forces by offering to the Boers such terms as may induce them to lay down their arms. In theory we can continue the war indefinitely until every Boer is either dead or in prison. But in practice such a process may demand sacrifices so enormous that the tardy conqueror may well ask himself whether the result will be worth the cost.

It is impossible that the present situation can last indefinitely. Such a situation does not automatically improve: on the other hand it automatically becomes worse. Time solves many problems; but is time really on our side in this war? When every week of war means the loss from one cause or another of five hundred men and of more than a million and a half of money, bids fair to ruin three British Colonies, decreases the efficiency and popularity of the army, aggravates the difficulty of working our voluntary military system, and maims our policy in all parts of the world—will ultimate victory be other than Cadmean?

CHAPTER V.

THE ENEMY.

NO nation can be just to its foes. The passions of war inflame our minds, and prejudice obscures the truth. Thus we have conjured up for ourselves a fantastic and outrageous image which we call a Boer. This savage being was hideous in form, unkempt and unwashed,[1] violent, hypocritical, a persecutor and an assassin[2] of the English. He abused the white flag, he used explosive bullets, and he was altogether outside the pale of civilised nations, a swindler, a coward, a brigand.

A paper of the highest position described the Boers as "brigands," "dacoits," "marauders," "ruffians," "filibusterers," "banditti," "mobs of desperadoes," "midnight marauders," "squads of caterans."

Another paper asserted that the Boer was a semi-savage; another compared him to a pickpocket or a burglar; yet another spoke of the Boers as "hounds," and of their conduct as "devilish."

Inflamed and maddened by the telegrams of excitable correspondents, irritated by the prolongation of a war which had long passed its allotted span of six months, alarmed by the numerous disasters which we could only assign to malign influences, the public began to clamour for severity.[3] The unexpected difficulties which followed the occupation of Pretoria and the extraordinary activity of the Boers excited some of our advisers to further violence. The public was told that too much leniency had been shown, that war is not made with rose-water, and that a ruthless policy is in the long run the most merciful.[4] Lord Roberts and Lord Kitchener were urged to proclaim a policy of "No quarter" and to "shoot at sight" as a rebel every Boer who fell into their hands.[5]

[1] A great London newspaper printed a description of the surrender of Cronje, in which his followers were described as "cowardly," "shuffling," "unpatriotic," "cunning," "boorish," "ungrateful," "shifty-eyed," "clod-hopping," "cruel," "clumsy," "greedy," "cheating," "mean," "underhand," "foxy," "savage," "dull-witted," "misshapen," "treacherous," and "brutal," and they were compared with pig-dealers, money-lenders, oxen, and orang-outangs.

[2] A circumstantial description was circulated in the daily papers of the slaughter of refugee women and children during the first few days of the war, followed by an account of the murder by the Boers at Harrismith of an Englishman named M'Lachlan who was shot for refusing to fight against England. M'Lachlan was in excellent health six months after this. It was stated in a weekly journal that the Boer women made a practice of killing the wounded. It was stated in another paper that Mr. Kruger had wedged a young girl between two pieces of wood and had sawed both the wood and the girl through with his own hands.

[3] "Not only should he be slain, but slain with the same ruthlessness that they slay a plague-infected rat. Exeter Hall may shriek, but blood there will be, and plenty of it, and the more the better. The Boer resistance will further this plan and enable us to find that Imperial Great Britain is fiercely anxious for the excuse to blot out the Boers as a nation, to turn their land into a vast shambles, and remove their name from the muster-roll of South Africa."

[4] A well-known paper censured the mildness of Lord Roberts's policy and advised that the whole country should be cleared, and that women should be "transported or despatched." Many months ago, a correspondent in a well-known paper suggested, with editorial approval, that the war should be "smothered with women."

[5] A great paper in October denied that the Boers in the field were entitled to the rights of combatants. They were brigands; and they were compared to the agrarian murderers in Ireland. It was stated that a point had now been reached when the services of the Provost

It is needless to say that few of the grosser charges which have been brought against the Boers have been confirmed or justified. There have, no doubt, been instances of brutality and treachery, of the use of expansive bullets, and the abuse of the white flag.[1] But we must remember that the whole Boer population—high and low, virtuous and vicious—has been in the field, and every nation holds some villains. On the whole, the Boers have observed the honourable traditions of warfare, they have not shot our prisoners, and nearly every piece of evidence which comes to us from a respectable quarter proves that if there is one virtue in the Boer character, it is their tender care of the wounded.[2]

It is significant that in very few cases have English soldiers been guilty of calumny towards a brave foe fighting against enormous odds.[3] Gallant and chivalrous Englishmen have not been backward in defending their stubborn adversaries. General Porter, who has recently returned from the front, bears this witness: "The Boers are a brave nation who fight gallantly and well. They have treated British prisoners with every consideration, and the wounded with the same care as they would their own. On a few occasions the white flag was abused, but in what large community would they not find a few miscreants?"

Mr. Conan Doyle, who was with Lord Roberts during the early part of the war, speaks thus of the Boers:—

"Whatever else may be laid to the charge of the Boer, it can never be truthfully said that he is a coward or a man unworthy of the Briton's steel. The words were written early in the campaign, and the whole Empire will indorse them to-day. Could we have such men as willing fellow-citizens, they are worth

Marshal were necessary, and when the prompt and ruthless punishment of every insurgent burgher caught *in delicto* was required.

A popular paper, commenting on the rumour that Lord Kitchener had issued orders that no quarter was to be given, remarked, "We should like to believe it. If the British authorities could make up their minds, once and for all, to treat De Wet and his banditti as banditti should be treated, much bloodshed, Boer and English, would be avoided, and the war would be brought to an end much sooner."

[1] Very few instances of this can be definitely proved; and it is well known that where, as in a modern battle, the line of fighting is long and irregular, it is almost impossible for combatants at one end of the line to see the sign of surrender at the other. It may reasonably and fairly be allowed that in all wars such charges and recriminations are frequent, that the greater number of such acts of apparent treachery are the results of a natural misunderstanding; and that most of them exist only in the imagination of those who did not see them.

[2] The following case is characteristic of the heedless levity with which outrages are manufactured in South Africa:—

Captain H. G. Casson, South Wales Borderers, writes from Krugersdorp, under date March 14th:—

"The following Reuter telegram appeared in the *Times* weekly edition of February 15th, under heading 'The Military Situation':—

"'Krugersdorp, February 2nd.—It is stated that Dr. Walker, who was among the killed, had received three bullet wounds, but was finally despatched by a Boer, who battered in his skull with a stone.'

"As I was in command of the post captured at Modderfontein, I trust that, in common fairness to the enemy, and with a view to minimising as far as possible the pain that must already have been caused, you will allow me to offer an unqualified denial to the above statement. Dr. Walker was hit once only, and by a stray bullet, on the early morning of January 31st while it was still dark; he died the same afternoon from the natural effects of the wound.

"Every possible kindness was shown to the wounded by the Boers, who posted a sentry to see that no one came near or otherwise interfered with them. The Boer commandant present at the time expressed to Dr. Walker his sorrow that he should have been wounded, and later in the day the Boer General himself personally expressed to me his deep regret for the sad occurrence, while many of the burghers, when conversing with my men, also spoke to the same effect."

[3] "We admire the Boers awfully, and a large number of us are pro-Boers." (Extract from a private letter.)

more than all the gold mines of their country." Mr. Doyle has further said: "The Boers have been the chief victims of a great deal of cheap slander in the Press. The men who have seen most of the Boers in the field are the most generous in estimating their character. That the white flag was hoisted by the Boers as a cold-blooded device for luring our men into the open is an absolute calumny. To discredit their valour is to discredit our victory."

The wild and violent attacks on Christian De Wet have been unspeakably repugnant to reasonable and chivalrous Englishmen, whose indignation is aptly reflected in the following letter by Mr. Erskine Childers, who fought in the ranks of the City Imperial Volunteers:—

> "It is time that a word was spoken in opposition to the idea that General Christian De Wet is a man of brutal and dishonourable character. Those who, like myself, have served in South Africa, fought against him, and frequently met men who have been prisoners under him, look, I believe, with shame and indignation on the attempts made to advertise and magnify such incidents as the alleged flogging and shooting of peace envoys, so as to blacken the character of a man who throughout the war held a reputation with our troops in the field of being not only a gallant soldier, but a humane and honourable gentleman. We may deplore the desperate tenacity of his resistance. Our duty and effort is to overcome it by 'smashing' him in the field. We gain nothing and only lose in self-respect by slandering him.
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> "But the stories may be true, and in their worst complexion. My point is that the character he has won is such that nothing but the clearest proof, after full inquiry, of his complicity in or responsibility for barbarous and dishonourable acts should be for a moment listened to by fair-minded persons.
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> "His whole career gives the lie to such aspersions. It was in May of last year, ten months ago, that he first gained prominence. Since then he has fought scores of engagements with us, some successful, some unsuccessful, never with a suspicion of dishonourable conduct. He has had at one time or another some thousands of our men in his hands as prisoners of war. Many of them I have myself met. At second or third hand I have heard of the experiences of many others.
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> "I never heard a word against De Wet. When men suffered hardships they always agreed that they could not have been helped. But on the other hand I have heard many stories showing exceptional personal kindness in him over and above the reasonable degree of humanity which is expected in the treatment of prisoners of war.
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> "I believe this view of him is universal among our troops in South Africa. It makes one's blood boil to hear such a man called a brigand and a brute by civilian writers at home, who take as a text the reports of these solitary incidents, incomplete and one-sided as they are, and ignore—if, indeed, they know of it—the mass of testimony in his favour."

Mr. Childers adds that the same may be said, indeed, of the whole impression of the Boers received by the public in England, perhaps because it seems impossible to admire them without being thought to sympathise with them.

This testimony is amply supported by numerous letters from officers and private soldiers which have been published, in which the highest possible character has been given to De Wet on the score of his heroism and his chivalrous behaviour to our sick and wounded.

In the *Standard* of August 7, 1900 (p. 7), is given part of a letter from Lieut.-Col. Stonham, "in command of the Imperial Yeomanry Hospital at the front,"

to Lady Georgiana Curzon. He had been taken prisoner at Roodeval, and thus stated his experience:—

"The Boers allowed us to take comforts, &c., from the station before they blew it up, but unfortunately a truck we had loaded was also blown up. General De Wet personally stated to me, when I went to his laager, how much he regretted the accident; and to compensate for it gave me fifty sheep, which he had sent his men to round up and drive into the camp. The Boers allowed us to keep all the tents of the 4th Derbys for our hospital use. They came the next day to see the wounded, and expressed to many of them, and to us, the regret they felt. General De Wet gave me a safe-conduct for any convoy we might wish to send. . . . He also said he would give us timely warning of any impending action. . . . They gave us a written order, which I could show to any Boer approaching our camp, to the effect that none were to enter for fear of disturbing the sick. . . . I could mention many other instances of consideration we have received at their hands. . . ."

To the British army no more cruel insult can be offered than the advice that our prisoners of war should be shot[1] because they refuse to abandon their struggle for freedom. The soldier knows the worth and valour of the enemy whom the civilian calumniates, and it is an unhappy compliment to our army to denounce as imbeciles and poltroons and marauding bands a foe which has held at bay for over eighteen months the greatest army England ever sent from her shores.

Most of the blunders which have characterised our South African policy during the last thirty years have resulted from want of sympathy and of accurate information. We have relied on blind guides and on prejudiced witnesses. The faults, and they are many, of the Dutch have been monstrously exaggerated; and their virtues, and they have many, have been obscured. It is time that we try to understand the men who are fighting against us. We have determined to subdue them and to rule them, and, if we are to rule them with success, we must learn something of their nature. Understanding comes of knowledge, and there will be no peace for South Africa until the two races come to know one another. In the first place, therefore, they are men of like passions with ourselves. The Boer is very much like an Englishman. He prefers being led to being driven; he answers to the whip by stubbornness, but to tact and sympathy with loyalty and devotion. He is the most stubborn of enemies, but the most faithful of friends; impressionable as a child, a hostile touch makes him strong and hard as adamant. Keen in business, he has an added dash of cunning which makes him a difficult partner. Born of a little nation whose fate it has been always to struggle for its existence against mighty foes, he is suspicious, perverse, and intractable.

The English in South Africa haunt the towns; the Dutch people the country districts. The townsman, with quicker wits, despises the farmer; the farmer suspects the townsman.[2] The average Boer is very much like the average

[1] Common sense may convert those whom chivalry does not influence. To put the matter on the lowest ground, if we were to shoot all Boer prisoners, we should lose more than we should gain. If De Wet and the other Boer generals had shot all our men who surrendered to them, we should have lost by this means alone from the beginning of November, 1900, to March, 1901, nearly two thousand English soldiers.

[2] The life that their fathers and grandfathers led does very well for them; they are content to live and die on their farms, content to live in rough comfort and to die with the assurance (not always forthcoming in these latter days) that those they leave behind will walk in their footsteps. Ambition is a thing they know nothing of; the advantages of wealth, and all that money can give to its possessor. do not seem to appeal one jot to the bulk of them. . . . If times are hard and comforts scarce, the Boer takes his bad fortune

Englishman of country birth and agricultural surroundings; and a group of the better-class Boer farmers might be with difficulty distinguished from a group of English farmers. You have in the men themselves the same qualities, the same simplicity and frugality, the same stubbornness, the same narrow views and suspicions, the same strong affections and strong prejudices, the same loyalty and the same tenacity.[1]

The Boer women display a stubbornness and a courage equal to their husbands. Herded together in refuge camps, fed on scanty rations, and often parted from their children, they retain an invincible faith in the ultimate freedom of their race. "Go and fight," said a Boer woman to her husband; "I would rather see you dead, and all my children dead, than that you burghers should cease the struggle." These women are the mothers of the next generation. Is it wise that England should tempt them to nurse their children in bitter hatred of our race?

It is a fashionable belief that all Dutchmen are lazy and retrograde, that they sleep in a waggon all day, and that their civilisation is mediæval. The extraordinary activity and hardihood of the Boers in war is sufficient to cast doubt on the charge of laziness, and it is a fact that nearly all the agricultural progress of South Africa is due to the Dutch; all the wheat and tobacco, and the vines, are grown by these worthless sluggards. The Orange Free State was a characteristic example of Dutch work, and it was a model for any Government in the world. From a desert it was made into a prosperous agricultural State; bridges and roads were made; a complete system of national education was provided; while telegraphs and railways and an excellent judicature were a proof of a high order of civilisation.

That the Boers have ill-treated the natives is to a considerable extent true, but it is doubtful whether the native has fared worse at their hands than at the hands of their English masters.[2] To any South African a black man belongs to a lower order of humanity, or, to be quite frank, to no order of humanity; and those who know South Africa assert that the natives live longer with a Dutch master than with an Englishman, for though the former may treat them more harshly, his instinct or his experience gives him a greater success as a master.[3]

The radical fault of the Dutch in our eyes is that they dislike the English. But this is a fault which cannot be cured by a policy of abuse or dragooning; it is to be cured only by the lapse of time, by sympathy, and by the frank admission of high qualities in our opponents. The Dutch are less progressive than the English, and Dutch civilisation is undoubtedly behind the civilisation of England. But if we are wise we shall carry our thoughts back to England of 1830, and remember that a great nation whose national existence was then to

philosophically; next year may be a good one. His one desire in life seems to be not to be disturbed, to continue on the even tenor of his way without external interference. The busy strife, the eager competition, the unending nervous strain of modern civilisation, he regards with horror; his very soul rises up in revolt against it."—*Macmillan's Magazine*, May, 1901.

[1] Major Spencer Browne, a Queensland contingent officer, writes in the *Brisbane Courier:* "I never want to meet kinder, more hospitable and more comfortable people. True, some of them are poor and ignorant, but the general run of them live comfortable, rear their families well and with fair education. *They are the reverse of what we have been taught to consider them.* It will be a happy day for Australia when our pastoral country is settled by as fine a class of people."

[2] "They appeared to be under the impression that the Boers in the Transvaal were fierce and unjust aggressors, and that they dispossessed the natives of their territory, and brutally ill-treated them afterwards. He wished hon. members would read the papers before they came to this rash and inconsiderate conclusion. The absolute reverse of this was the fact." Mr. CHAMBERLAIN, 1881.

[3] It is a significant fact that among the enactments issued in March, 1901, by Sir A. Milner for the administration of the new Colonies, is one which ordains the punishment of Kaffirs by twelve to twenty-five lashes.

be counted by centuries was in constitutional and social reform far inferior to the Boer States of 1899.

There is one element in the Boer character of which we seem to have taken little account, though it has puzzled and irritated us. It was the spiritual factor which won Cromwell his triumphs, and which helped to win for the Americans their independence. It is the spiritual factor which has nerved the Boers against a great empire. That which material force cannot do, spiritual strength, the ordered strength which comes of deep religious and patriotic fervour, can effect. The Boers are mystics, as were the Roundheads and the early colonists. Shrewd and active in the conduct of their business, they pass much of their life in communion with the Unseen. Now a man who passes his whole life in such communion will make an erratic soldier; but he who to spiritual exaltation adds shrewd instinct and business capacity is a dangerous foe. The practical mystic is invincible by ordinary odds.

We are told that the Boers are hypocrites, and their religion is a mere cloak of deceit. That statement may contain an element of truth, but as a generalisation it is false. We too often regard religious people as simpletons in business; and when we are worsted in a struggle by shrewd piety we resentfully suspect a fraud. But the implication is unfair, for why should a religious man be an imbecile?

Many Boers may be hypocritical, many are superstitious; but the Boer race is religious with a simple fervour and an unsophisticated creed. Their life under the lonely stars and silent hills gives their thoughts a solemn colour which is absent from the minds of those who dwell in populous cities. Our soldiers who know them well, and who have been their prisoners in this war, bear witness that their religion, austere and hard as it is, is part of their nature and of their life. The hymns they have sung over our buried dead are no empty lip-service, but the sincere utterances of brave men who feel the sense of tears in human things, and can swiftly pass from the stern horrors of the battlefield to communion with their Maker. To call such men hypocrites is to insult humanity.

Their history, written in tears and blood, will be an eternal inspiration to generous minds. In an age when the ideal has little influence and little value, they have struggled for the sake of freedom against overwhelming odds for nearly two years. They have seen their wives carried into captivity, their children dying, their homes burnt, their property confiscated; but they have not flinched. When peace and the ordered ease of English rule were offered them if only they would forswear their country, they refused the temptation and were strong to fight on. Are we not chivalrous enough to acknowledge that these men are heroes and worthy of our steel and our regard? Let us, in Burke's noble phrase, *refuse to draw up an indictment against a whole nation.*

We, whose pulses have thrilled at the heroic story of our own land, we who have wept over Poland and Hungary, can we not spare a sigh for the long agony of this unhappy race? Rough and unlettered they may be, but they have given us an example of high and splendid faith; and when the day of our own Armageddon comes, we shall utter no better prayer than to face our destiny with a courage as dauntless and serene.

CHAPTER VI.

THE ECONOMIC FUTURE OF SOUTH AFRICA.

IT is no travesty of the utterances of the capitalist party to say that to them the Transvaal takes the form of a huge mining and land company. They issue a prospectus in which they offer to the British public "the most splendid territory in the world," a land full of gold and diamonds, iron and coal, a land flowing with milk and honey,a land yielding rich crops of wheat, where flocks and herds multiply, where generous nature fills the lap of the prosperous settler with richness and plenty. The promoters of this company point to the eminence of the Board of Directors and of their advisers, where sit many financiers whose genius is undisputed.

If a sceptical inquirer objects that the expenditure has been excessive, the promoters may allow that it is somewhat high. It is true that the maintenance and protection and development of the new possessions will cost twice as much as the possession for many years will yield. It is true that the struggle to obtain it will cost £200,000,000 and, say, 20,000 lives. and the desolation of a country as large as France, and the permanent hatred of more than half of our fellow-subjects in Cape Colony, and more disasters than an English army has ever suffered. But England is rich and can afford to pour out her money like water; the disasters are "incidents"; and as to loss of life and loyalty, these are "irrelevant"[1] and mere trifles compared with Prestige. The unhappy public is convinced, the capitalists float their company, and England pays her £200,000,000 and 20,000 lives and her bitter humiliation.

The basis of statesmanship is common sense, and common sense requires that we should examine carefully the glittering prospects which are held out to us. On a calm consideration they lose some of their glamour. The fortunes of South Africa are determined by its physical character and nature, and it is not likely that where this factor is a permanent one, progress can be more rapid than in the past. Agriculture, in the strict sense of the word, is impossible over the greater part of the country. Much of the land is practically desert, the rainfall is irregular, and the climate dry. Without an elaborate system of irrigation, it would be quite impossible to grow more than enough corn to satisfy the wants of the South African population.

The difficulties of agriculture have driven farmers to devote their attention to the rearing of cattle and sheep. Most of the farms are very large, and some are enormous in size, covering as many as sixteen thousand acres, while many of the Dutch farmers have a very large stock of animals; but the pasture is thin and droughts are frequent. The profits are so small and the life is so isolated that it is certain that few Englishmen will consent to lead it. Nor could they cultivate large farms without a considerable capital. The South African farmer has to combat many difficulties. He has either no water or too much; parasitic pests destroy his crops, and locusts his fruit. Horse-sickness, caused by feeding on dew-drenched grass, is a disease of extraordinary virulence, and in an epidemic a loss of 50 per cent. is by no means uncommon.[2]

The great wealth of South Africa lies in its mineral resources. The Wit-

[1] Mr. Chamberlain in the House of Commons.
[2] *See* Appendix A.

watersrand, which was discovered in 1885, is probably the richest gold field in the world, and it has the great advantage of affording a perfectly regular supply. But the life of a gold mine is short, and the introduction of modern machinery tends to lessen it to an extreme degree. If we allow that there still remains in the beds of the Rand gold to the value of £700,000,000 sterling, we shall adopt a generous estimate. It is certain that the population of the Rand will grow, and that with a more plentiful supply of labour and the introduction of improved machinery an output of £25,000,000 sterling per annum is assured. It is therefore equally certain that the gold mines of the Rand will be exhausted in thirty to forty years. There will probably remain a number of smaller and poorer mines which will be worked at a lower profit; but for all practical purposes, and unless a new and as yet unknown gold bed is discovered, the Transvaal will be exhausted of its gold by the middle of this century. With this exhaustion will disappear the population of Johannesburg; and it is probable that before 1950 it will present the melancholy spectacle of a town living on the memory of its vanished glory.

It is difficult and almost impossible to estimate the future of the iron and coal mines; but unless new economic conditions appear, and the aggregate population of South Africa increases to an enormous extent, it is probable that these mines will not be developed to a degree which may make them serious competitors of England or America or Germany. Skilled labour is scarce and dear, and black labour is unskilled and fitful and bad. With labour which is either dear or bad it would be impossible for South Africa to appear as a competitor in this field; and unless a great depression falls on our trade at home it is not likely that English workmen will emigrate in great numbers to South Africa. The cost of living is very high, and South Africa is without doubt one of the dearest countries in the world. White men cannot work with blacks; and where black labour is plentiful and cheap white men will never go. Our Colonies in Australasia and Canada offer to the British emigrant better and more promising fields for his labour.

South Africa, therefore, at present offers little attraction to a white population which has not been brought up in the country. It is, and will be, a country of a few very rich men and of many poor men. The Europeans who make their fortune will probably return to Europe to spend it, and there seems little likelihood of an immigration and a permanent settlement of white people on a large scale.

The country is at present practically a wilderness, with a certain number of towns of varying size and importance. These towns are for the most part the centres of the English population, while the Dutch monopolise the agricultural districts and appear to be the only class of the population both able and willing to till the soil and to live the lonely lives of cattle rearers. The inhabitants of the towns are migratory, while the agricultural population is permanent in its nature.

To sum up, the immediate future of South Africa belongs, so far as we can estimate at present, to the trading and mining communities; but when the gold mines are exhausted (and the traders of the towns will be the first to feel the withdrawal of foreign capital), the centre of gravity will again reside in the population of the country districts. In fifty or sixty years we may expect to see the Dutch population considerably exceeding the number of the English settlers, and as it is a population which will steadily grow and is homogeneous in character, it will exercise a preponderant influence in politics. Unless we conciliate that population, we are laying up for our successors a heritage of trouble.

CHAPTER VII.

SIR A. MILNER.

NOTHING in the last two years has been witnessed more melancholy than the failure of Sir Alfred Milner. His appointment to his great office was greated with universal praise; it was thought that one held in such affectionate regard by so many eminent men could not but justify that regard, that a past so brilliant was an omen of easy and happy success. He had shown high qualities in Egypt and at the Board of Inland Revenue. He had earned the reputation of a skilful administrator; and it was said that under the charm of his manner reposed the strength of character, the insight, and the discretion which South Africa demands of her rulers.

How utterly these happy auguries have been fasified the world now knows. It sees that the Viceroy, who was sent out to secure peace and contentment to South Africa and to hold the balance between the English and the Dutch, has made every Dutchman disloyal and has been the chief agent in the inception of the most bitter and disastrous war which England has waged for one hundred and twenty years.

We have always relied too much on the testimony of our officials in South Africa, and it would be well for us to take to heart Lord Palmerston's warning against "the man who has been there," the man who knows nothing of the history, habits, or prejudices of those whom he rules.

There have been many unwise and few wise rulers in South Africa. Nearly all have been high-minded, nearly all have been imprudent; but no one save Alfred Milner has become to the Dutch an object of personal hostility. Even Sir Bartle Frere, in 1881, did not lose the private regard and respect of the Dutch in Cape Colony.[1]

Sent out to govern as the constitutional representative of a constitutional monarchy two races between whom the unhappy events of 1895 had raised a barrier of suspicion and anger, he speedily became the partisan of the extreme Loyalist party.

High-minded, patriotic, and absolutely sincere, Sir Alfred Milner has been unable to resist the sinister influences of South Africa, and the unhappy result has come about that by nearly every Dutch subject of His Majesty he is regarded with bitter hatred. Can we regard without alarm his retention in a land where the Dutch form the predominant factor in the population?

The secret of Sir Alfred Milner's failure lies obviously in the want of sym-

[1] Twenty years ago Mr. Chamberlain demanded the recall of Sir Bartle Frere in language curiously fitting to the present situation: "No one can doubt the energy of the High Commissioner—he has energy, and to spare. Indeed, it would have been better for our South African dominions if he had been a little less energetic. I will not for a moment presume to doubt the ability of the High Commissioner. In other positions he has shown it, and in other positions may still show it, in the service of the Crown. I will admit also that he is a man of high integrity of purpose and great conscientiousness; but these qualities only make him the more dangerous, because ability misdirected is more fatal than ignorance itself. The conscientiousness of the High Commissioner can only lead to one conclusion, that he is not likely to change opinions he has deliberately formed, and which he has so frankly expressed. It has been suggested that continued confidence must be placed in him in order that he may bring the present difficulties to a satisfactory conclusion. But I cannot see the logic of that argument. I think that the man who has unnecessarily raised these difficulties is the least likely person now to allay them."

pathy and imagination which are necessary to the great ruler. Born and, during his early years, educated in Germany, he must have imbibed the influences of German ideas and methods. Admirable as those methods often are, they are bureaucratic and in their essence autocratic. Repugnant to a multitude of Germans, they are utterly unsuitable to the management of a free and stubborn people. Sir Alfred Milner's tenure of office in Egypt and at Somerset House was not likely to liberalise his views. We hold Egypt, frankly, by force, and though our rule has been an unmixed blessing to the fellaheen, it is not reasonable to deduce from that fact the conclusion that the same methods will be suitable to the government of a race so perverse and suspicious as the Dutch.

Another factor in the formation of Sir Alfred Milner's character was his experience on the staff of a popular paper. His despatches, admirably written and most interesting as they are, offer a clear example of the advantages and dangers of such an education. They are full of excellent phrases, they are moving and eloquent; but in their appeal to an immediate audience, and to popular prejudices, in their partisanship, in their impatience, and in their shortness of view, they are the work of an able journalist rather than the documents of a sober statesman whose strength is quietness and confidence, and who is content to see in the future the perfect fruition of his patient wisdom.

Sir Alfred Milner, therefore, accomplished and amiable as he was, approached his task under the grave disadvantages of his official training, of his strong prepossessions in favour of strict rule and order, and of a sincere belief that a firm and unyielding policy was alone fitted to meet the urgency of the situation. To these causes we must attribute the grievous errors and strange indiscretions that have marked the career of this brilliant but unhappy Viceroy.

In 1898 he had evidently made up his mind that a large number of the Dutch in Cape Colony were disloyal and in treasonable sympathy with the Boers of the Transvaal and the Free State. It was natural, therefore, that he should meet with impatience their expressions of loyalty to the throne.[1] He accused their papers of sedition,[2] and told their deputations that they were the tools of unscrupulous politicians,[3] and that he would no longer submit to the political ascendancy of the Afrikander party.

In his relations with the Transvaal Government he seemed bent on a policy of force. We have seen how, instructed as he was by Mr. Chamberlain to discuss with Mr. Kruger the problems of the situation in a conciliatory manner, he declined to touch on any other question but that of the franchise, and abruptly closed the door on further negotiations. He had persuaded himself that nothing would bring the Boers to their senses but threatening language and the prospect

[1] "Of course, I am glad to be assured that any section of Her Majesty's subjects are loyal, but I should be much more glad to be allowed to take that for granted. Why should I not? What reason could there be for disloyalty? You have thriven wonderfully under that Government. . . . Well, gentlemen, of course you are loyal. It would be monstrous if you were not. I am familiar at home with the figure of the politician, often the best of men, though singularly injudicious, who, whenever any dispute arises with another country, starts with the assumption that his own country must be in the wrong. He is not disloyal, but, really, he cannot be very much surprised if he appears so to those of his fellow-citizens whose inclination is to start with the exactly opposite assumption" (March 5, 1898). The Loyalist Press alluded to this speech as "a splendid sarcasm."

[2] "A certain section of the Press, not in the Transvaal only, preaches openly and constantly the doctrine of a Republic embracing all South Africa, and supports it by menacing references to the armaments of the Transvaal, its alliance with the Orange Free State, and the active sympathy which, in case of war, it would receive from a section of Her Majesty's subjects. I regret to say that this doctrine, supported, as it is, by a ceaseless stream of malignant lies about the intentions of the British Government, is producing a great effect on a large number of our Dutch fellow-colonists" (May 5, 1899).

Sir Alfred Milner could produce no proof of this statement except the letter of an anonymous correspondent of an obscure paper, the *Stellalander*.

[3] See Benjamin Franklin on English Governors, p. 14.

of armed intervention. His despatches to Mr. Chamberlain, and more particularly the famous cablegram of May, 1899, in which he called aloud for a display of force and a "striking proof" of firmness, leave no doubt that this idea had become fixed and rooted in his mind. We are not therefore surprised to know that he refused to listen to the entreaties of the leaders of the Dutch party in Cape Colony, or to forward to Mr. Chamberlain the earnest representations of his own Ministers, though they had been frequently and fully laid before him. There is no word or hint of conciliation in his despatches, no attempt to stay a conflict which he knew full well might bring ruin on South Africa. In fact, he loudly called for war.

At the end of August, 1899, when it was clear that Mr. Chamberlain was inclined to accept the proposals of the Transvaal Government, the High Commissioner, dreading a weakening of the Ministerial policy, despatched the following telegram: *"British South Africa is prepared for extreme measures,* and is ready to suffer much in order to see the vindication of British authority. A prolongation of negotiations and indecisive result is dreaded, and I fear there will be a strong reaction of feeling against the policy of Her Majesty's Government if matters drag." It is possible to argue that Sir Alfred Milner's policy was wise; it is possible to argue that it was unwise. One fact, at any rate, is clear: he was the strong advocate of war.

Sir Alfred Milner had almost from the first decided that the salvation of South Africa lay with the Loyalist party. It was a belief honestly held, but it has been fatal in its results. Its first effect was to persuade the Dutch that the Governor-General was a partisan, and that there was no hope of fair treatment from him or from the Government whose representative he was. Its second effect was to throw the Viceroy into the hands of the Loyalist party. Having once made his choice, he could not without difficulty recede from his position. We have seen that most of the English newspapers published in South Africa were the property of the financial group who had organised the Jameson Raid. They had been bought to further the political and financial aims of their proprietors, and it is clear that their utterances were to be received with suspicion. Yet Sir Alfred Milner quoted their opinions as worthy of respectful attention.

A further result was certain to follow. The English party in South Africa is, in the main, a trading and financial party, and many of its leaders are in close alliance with the capitalists of the Rand. The fruit of this alliance is to be seen in the extraordinary appointments which Lord Roberts, presumably on the advice of Sir Alfred Milner, has lately made to the offices in the two annexed Republics. Mr. Markham explained to a somewhat scandalised House of Commons that nearly all the important appointments, civil, legal and financial, had been granted to men who were either in the direct employ of the financial magnates of Johannesburg or who had been in such employ. Mr. Markham's statements have been met with some criticism, but the Chancellor of the Exchequer did not controvert them, and he could only excuse the appointments on the ground that they were temporary ones.

Another appointment which Sir Alfred Milner's friends could not but regard as indiscreet was the selection of Mr. Adrian Hofmeyr, who had been dismissed from his pastorate for immoral conduct, for an important salaried post at Pretoria. Mr. Hofmeyr's duties were to act as intermediary between the English and the Dutch, and Englishmen who can place themselves for a moment in the position of respectable Dutch men and women can imagine with what feelings they would receive the advances of an immoral ex-priest.[1]

It would be tedious and ungenerous to continue the catalogue of Sir Alfred Milner's errors, but it has been necessary to give some few examples of that want of discretion which seems to mark him as unfitted to hold the difficult and delicate

[1] Sir Alfred Milner has acknowledged in a telegram or despatch to Mr. Chamberlain that he knew that Mr. Hofmeyr had been guilty of scandalous conduct in his parish.

position which he held at Cape Town, and the even more delicate position which he is about to hold in Pretoria.

It is sometimes difficult to distinguish between the wise and the clever man. There are in truth many points of difference, and one is this: The wise man, by instinct or experience, foresees the future, the clever man lives only in the present; the former knows that human nature is not logical, while the latter is bent on winning a dialectical victory. Men are not actuated by simple motives; if they were, it would be easy to govern them. To the acute academic and logical mind of Sir Alfred Milner the Dutch character is incomprehensible. That complex mass and curious tangle of bad and good, of strong affection and jealous suspicion, of inherited traditions and racial prejudices which we call human nature, is a difficult instrument for the unskilful performer, but the expert will play on it with ease. A knowledge of human nature is the first attribute of a great ruler. He will know when to loose and when to tighten the rein, when to be severe and when to yield. To govern those who have never been free is easy: to govern men of another race in whose blood runs the fierce flame of inherited freedom has ever been, except to the ruler of rare genius, a hopeless task.

The character which Burke drew of George Grenville will apply word for word to the qualities of Sir Alfred Milner. Burke paid due homage to the masculine understanding, the stout heart and unwearied application of Mr. Grenville, to his generous ambition and his admirable and laborious life. But the fixed methods and forms of office had not tended to liberalise Grenville's mind.

> "It may be truly said that men too much conversant with office are rarely minds of remarkable enlargement. Their habits of office are apt to give them a turn to think the substance of business not to be much more important than the forms in which it is conducted. These forms are adapted to ordinary occasions; and therefore persons who are nurtured in office do admirably well as long as things go on in their common order; but when the high roads are broken up, when a new and troubled scene is opened, and the file affords no precedent, then it is that a greater knowledge of mankind, and a far more extensive comprehension of things, is requisite, than ever office gave or than office can ever give."

The career of such men as Grenville is not seldom a tragedy. Dowered with every gift that seems necessary to win success in life—a keen intellect and a winning manner, high culture and patriotic ardour—they yet lack the one quality which gives the temple its corner-stone. They are without that union of sympathy and imagination and discretion and unerring instinct which marks the great ruler and the great statesman. Precise and orderly in their intellectual methods, and always able to frame a brilliant defence of a ruinous policy, they have every knowledge but the knowledge of the human heart. In a time of peace and order they prove themselves dignified and able leaders of men, but when passions run high and the conflicting claims of race and interest cry loudly for solution, they are bewildered and dismayed. They lose their sense of proportion. Criticism becomes an impertinence, opposition a treachery. The whisper of disorder angers and terrifies them; cunning advisers hint that their dignity and the safety of the Empire are being compromised; they tell them that a "strong policy" will stay the coming anarchy. Every step they take makes return more difficult and more dangerous, and at last they find themselves confronted by dangers with which they have not the strength to fight. Then, weary and baffled, they throw themselves into the arms of the class which flatters them. They have become partisans, and all the good qualities of their character—their love of decency and order, their culture and simplicity, their devotion to their country—become instruments of their ruin. In bitter remorse they see around them the desolation of which they have been the unwilling agents, and the men whom by their unwisdom they have driven into sedition and war rise up and curse them.

It is now clear that at last Sir Alfred Milner recognises the tragical failure of his policy. Seldom in English history has a statesman been forced to describe in terms more discouraging[1] the despair of the present and the ominous prospects of the future. We know that if Sir Alfred Milner could start again with the knowledge which painful experience has brought him, he would probably take a different road, and he would certainly not take with him the companions who have led him into his grievous indiscretions. But the errors of the past may be the errors of the future, and difficulties almost as great await him in the new possessions which his policy has added to the Empire and of which he has been appointed the Governor. He, the chief agent of their misery and their conquest, has to rule men who will never forget and never forgive—men whom it will be impossible to convince of his justice or of his mercy or of his truth. Is it wise that we should place him there? Is it wise that he, of his own will, should be there?

The proportion of responsibility we should assign to the Colonial Secretary and the Viceroy at present we can only guess and we may never fully know, but Sir Alfred Milner must at all events bear a heavy burden. The position which he has filled has indeed been one of extraordinary delicacy, and it is one which only a man of genius could have filled with success. But it is a sound and useful rule that where a community, large or small—a nation, regiment, or school—sinks to disorder and anarchy, the guilt shall fall on the ruler rather than on the ruled. If a surgeon, after a wrong diagnosis, amputates a sound limb, we are not disposed to pardon his error because his intentions were good or his difficulties great. We look to each man to carry out successfully the special duty that is ordained of him, and it is the duty of a statesman to succeed. Circumstances may extenuate his error, but they cannot excuse his failure or justify his retention.

We are too near the events to judge serenely. History will weigh the facts and sift the evidence and assign the responsibility, and it may be that she will decide that across the dark stage of South Africa there has passed no figure more interesting, more pathetic, and more ineffectual for good.

[1] Sir Alfred Milner's despatch of February 6, 1901.

CHAPTER VIII.

UNREST, OR GOVERNMENT WITHOUT CONSENT.

THERE are now only two courses open to us. We must either crush the Boers and compel their submission, or we must offer them as reasonable terms as they will accept. The first is the policy which the English Ministry has outlined with complete definiteness through Mr. Chamberlain. The second policy is obviously favoured by Lord Kitchener.

By the first policy the separate national existence of the two Republics is annihilated, and by annexation they completely lose their independence and are incorporated in the scheme of the British Empire. Mr. Chamberlain proposes that, when the Boers have been utterly defeated, they shall be governed by military rule for a period of time the length of which shall depend upon their good behaviour. If the Boers show themselves obedient and well-behaved subjects, military rule will be quickly followed by a period of Crown Colony Government.

This method of government, though not military in its character, is absolutely autocratic, and will be imposed upon the two annexed provinces for a term of years which, as before, will depend upon the good behaviour of the conquered peoples. Finally, when the Boers have shown by their acts and their promises that they are loyal subjects of the British Empire, representative institutions will be granted to them, and they will be allowed to take their place as separate provinces of a confederated South African Dominion, owning allegiance to the British Crown.

To those who know the character of South Africans, whether they be Dutch or whether they be English, the mere statement of this policy carries its own condemnation. The folly of such a scheme is not only ludicrous but tragical.

It is difficult to decide which of the first two methods will beget the greatest difficulties. England has had little experience in ruling by military force a disloyal white population. The case of Ireland is not analogous, for Ireland has a safety-valve through her representatives in the British Parliament, nor must it be forgotten that the position of Ireland makes it possible for us to flood the country at a day's notice with a mass of soldiery. In the first place, the Boers will be the most difficult of subjects. We heard eighteen months ago that the result of this war would be a reconciliation between the two races, that the Boers would learn to respect us, and that they would accept from us the right hand of fellowship. That was an estimate which might have been made by sanguine people at the beginning of the war, but it is not an estimate which can be now made by the most optimistic.

The war has had many of the features of a civil war, and on the part of the Boers it has been a war waged by the whole body of their citizens against a professional army. The difference between a citizen and a professional army is radical, and where the whole population of a country joins together to defend its territory and its independence, a bitter national feeling is excited which, whether victory or defeat await the citizens, will not be allayed for generations. The last eighteen months, if they have taught us anything, have taught us that there is in the Dutch nature an invincible passion for freedom, a sullen repugnance to the rule of an alien, however generous and enlightened. It is vain to denounce such stubbornness. It exists, and with it we must reckon. The Boer

character will never wholly assimilate with the English, and the best hope that we can entertain is that the two races may come to accept what is best in each other, and to overlook that part which is unpleasant to them.

It is too much to hope that the memories of this unhappy war will ever fade from the minds of the Dutch. If we can picture to ourselves England swept from end to end by hostile forces, her towns ravaged, her villages destroyed, her farms burnt, her women and children hurried from their homes into camps; if we can imagine one tithe of the physical pain, the mental agony, and the undying bitterness which such a war in our own country would engender in our minds, we shall be able to understand in some faint degree the depth and strength of the passionate hatred which the Boers of the two Republics will for many a year feel against their English invaders.

During the period of military rule, we shall have to keep in subjection not only the Boers but the capitalists and the population of the goldfields. It is quite certain that we shall not be able to reduce the burden of taxation which Mr. Kruger imposed on the mines, and it is probable that this burden will be under our rule considerably increased. We shall have to raise heavy taxes throughout the provinces, and as none of the Dutch will pay these taxes except under compulsion, and as many of the English and the foreign inhabitants of Johannesburg may after a time display a similar unwillingness, we may have to collect these taxes at the point of the bayonet—we who went to war that the bright rays of freedom might illumine these sullen lands. The English and foreign mining population will, if we can trust the lessons of history, bear with ill grace the vexatious exercise of military authority, and it is by no means incredible that we shall create among the European and American inhabitants a hatred of our rule as bitter as the hatred we have inspired in the Dutch. We will, however, assume that peace is maintained, and that we permit the population to enter upon the second period—the period of Crown Colony Government.

The conditions of this form of government are not obvious to men who have not before been under the sway of an alien Power; and though it will be accepted by the foreign element as an improvement on the military period, it is certain that the rule of Downing Street will be almost as vexatious as the administration of soldiers. Those who have examined the difficult problems of our colonial system are aware that no danger which has threatened the safety of our colonial empire is so acute as the danger we have suffered through the incompetence and narrow obstinacy of our official classes. To a colonial, whether he be an Australian or a New Zealander, a Canadian or an African or West Indian, the name of Downing Street is typical of the worst faults of bureaucratic government, and the slightest suspicion that this hateful instrument is likely to interfere in the government of his country will turn at once the most loyal colonist into the most bitter malcontent.

The English Ministers will, during this period as during the last, find in the mine-owners as difficult and probably as dangerous a foe as in the Dutch. The mine-owners and managers, most of whom are foreigners, will care nothing about the administration or the safety of the country in so far as it does not concern their own definite interest. They will be daily pressing upon the English Ministry the necessity of regulating native labour, and fixing by law a price for such labour, and of importing even against their will natives from the surrounding countries. English Ministers will hesitate to sanction and enforce a system which has little to distinguish it from slavery; but in their perplexity, fearing on the one side the disloyalty of the Dutch, and on the other the hostility of the mine-owners, the English Government may find itself obliged to cultivate the friendship of the capitalists in order to secure the quiet of the country.

Finally, the period of representative institutions will arrive. It is impossible for England to govern a white population for any length of time by other

than constitutional methods. Russia might succeed, or Germany; but England's traditions and her sympathy with freedom are too powerful to allow her for ever to dragoon white men into submission. Ultimately, public opinion in Great Britain will assert itself, and constitutional privileges will be granted to the Dutch in the two annexed Republics.

We shall then be met by an obvious but painful dilemma. If it is true that in fifty or sixty years the Dutch population in these two Republics will outnumber or be equal to the English population, if the passion for independence which animates the Dutch to-day retains its vigour, it is probable that the Boers will endeavour by constitutional means to secure their independence. We shall either be compelled to assent to any demands their representatives may choose to make, or to refuse to yield to those demands. In the latter case, we shall be forced back to the odious remedies of military coercion, and shall find ourselves again obliged to hold down two great territories with an armed force.

But the cardinal objection to the subjugation of the two Republics, and to the absolute loss of their independence will be its disastrous effect upon the loyalty of the Dutch in Cape Colony. The danger which, above all others, an English Ministry should avoid is that of consolidating the whole Dutch population of South Africa by enforcing upon them a racial grievance.

The sympathy of the Cape Dutch with the Boers of the Transvaal and the Orange Free State is not political but racial. The same blood flows in their veins, they are related by ties of marriage and kinship, and the sympathy which they feel for two peoples of the same blood is the sympathy which Englishmen would feel under the same conditions for men of their blood threatened with annihilation by a great Power. The Dutch colonists had not shown before the Jameson Raid any violent sympathy with the Transvaal; on the other hand, they had displayed considerable hostility towards the political defects of the Boer Government. They recognised too well the advantages of their position as an English Colony to wish to join their political fortunes with those of the Transvaal.

There is then among the Colonial Dutch a passionate feeling of racial sympathy with the men of their own blood in the two Republics, and all their leaders assure us, in language of solemn warning, that the Cape Dutch will never rest until the Dutch in the Transvaal and the Orange Free State enjoy, if only to a limited extent, the independence which is the breath of their life. So long as the Dutch of the Transvaal and the Free State are held down as a subject and conquered race, their position will unite the whole Dutch population of South Africa, and will create a most dangerous disaffection throughout its length and breadth. We shall then govern, not only a hostile people in the annexed Republics, but a more numerous and equally hostile people in Cape Colony. Through their representatives the Cape Dutch will be able to press steadily for a reversal of our policy, and to take advantage of our weakness and its opportunities. We cannot permanently ignore the demands of a Cape Parliament, in which the Dutch may be supreme, and we shall either have to grant these demands or suspend free institutions. The certain outcome of such a policy would be rebellion and civil war. On the other hand, if we allow the Boers to retain their own laws and customs and representative institutions, we shall divert this sympathy, and our colonists, embittered no longer by the subjugation of their kinsmen across the Orange and the Vaal, will return again to their own political interests.

The military effects of a policy of unconditional submission will be disastrous. To hold, without the consent of its inhabitants, a country so desolate, so barren, so vast, so sparsely populated, and so hostile, will be impossible by any other than a great military force. England will be obliged to build forts at frequent intervals through the whole country; she will have to maintain in the two Republics an army of 40,000 men in addition to a police force of 10,000

men; and the presence of these troops, and the inevitable friction which will ensue between the Dutch and English officials,[1] will keep alight a fire which any sudden violence on our part or any European complication would fan into inextinguishable flame. Two results at least will follow. A first and immediate result will be an increase in our standing army, together with an enormous increase in our expenditure and in the burden of taxation. It will be impossible for us to maintain an armed force of 50,000 men in South Africa and to maintain, on the old establishment, troops sufficient to guard India and our vast interests at home and abroad. There will be a demand on the part of our war party for conscription or for some form of compulsory service. That the English nation will permit such service, except under the stress of foreign invasion, is incredible; and when the time comes to choose between conscription and a conciliatory attitude in South Africa, there is little reason to doubt that it will be able to make its choice without hesitation. If, on the other hand, we yield to the clamour of the military party, we shall slowly but surely drop behind in that race for national and commercial pre-eminence in which even now it is difficult to preserve our place. The money which we have spent in South Africa to no purpose would have sufficed to equip in every first-rate and second-rate town in Great Britain a technical institution which might have been invaluable to us in our commercial struggle. South Africa will drain our strength; we shall lose power and opportunity: we shall bleed to weakness if not to exhaustion.

In addition to the military and political difficulties, there will arise a financial problem of great magnitude. One of the many illusions from which we are slowly awakening is the expectation that we shall be able to recover a considerable portion of the cost of the war from the two Republics. This illusion was partly based on the hope that a war of three months would find the Boers at our mercy; but there are still many men sanguine enough to hope that even after eighteen months of warfare we may still be able to relieve the English taxpayer from a portion of his burden. This hope must now be definitely abandoned.[2] The two Republics cannot for many years, and perhaps will never, bear any considerable share of the cost of the war. This statement is a strong one and will be a shock to optimists. But we cannot by optimism evade plain facts, and a recital of such facts will be sufficient to demolish the pathetic hopes of the English taxpayer.

In the first place, though it is at present impossible to estimate accurately the cost of the war, we know that in round figures the present expenses of the campaign vary between £1,750,000 and £2,000,000 a week. If we assume that the war is only to be ended by the complete submission of the Boers, and if we also assume that such a submission cannot be obtained in less than two years from the commencement of the war, we shall obtain an aggregate cost of £150,000,000. This estimate is a very low one, and it is probable that when the whole expenses of the war are computed they will amount to £175,000,000, while if the war lasts for more than two years, the total cost may be £200,000,000 or £250,000,000 ($1,250,000,000).

The two Republics have been devastated, and very many of the farms in the Orange Free State and in the Transvaal have been burnt and destroyed. Many of the smaller towns in the two States have also been sacked, and the few irrigation works which existed in the country have probably been ruined.

[1] What happened after the first annexation is a portent of what must happen after a second. And now the risks are immeasurably greater.

[2] Sir David Barbour, who was sent by the Government to the Transvaal to report on the financial situation and on the prospects of a contribution from the annexed territories, has reported that the Free State will furnish nothing towards the cost of the war and that the Transvaal, having been brought to the verge of ruin, will not be able to contribute anything for many years. (Sir M. Hicks-Beach, April 18, 1901.)

It will be necessary for us, if we are to govern the country properly, to restore to it its agricultural and its industrial prosperity. It will be impossible to feed the inhabitants of the large towns without the aid of an agricultural population. We shall have therefore to rebuild and restock the farms which we have burnt, to redeem them from the Jew mortgagors who will foreclose on the ruined Boers, and to supply capital to the Boer farmers whom we replace on their farms. If we confiscate these farms and are able to find Englishmen to succeed the Boer owners, we shall be obliged to supply such men with even greater capital. It will also be necessary to take in hand large irrigation works, and to develop the country by a network of railways and by other necessary but expensive methods of development. This work of restoration will involve us in a very large expenditure. To rebuild the farms, to supply capital to the old or the new farmers, to develop the country by irrigation and railways and to compensate those of our own colonists who have suffered in this war, will cost us at the least £25,000,000.

We thus arrive at a capital sum of at least £200,000,000, or it may be £250,000,000, which will fall entirely on the English taxpayer unless we are able to lay part of the burden on the resources of the Transvaal and the Free State. It is necessary, therefore, to examine the resources of the two Republics.

In 1898 the total revenue which the Transvaal was able to raise was, in round figures, £4,000,000, while the expenditure amounted to the same sum. Of this sum no less than half a million was spent in armaments, and we may therefore assume that the civil administration of the country and its various services cost £3,500,000.

The following is the financial statement of the Transvaal for 1898:—

RECEIPTS.

Fines, &c.	£90,713
Hut and native tax	110,182
Import duties	1,066,994
Interest	254,991
Licences	174,383
Postal Department (including telegraphs)	206,331
Prospecting licences	322,748
Revenue, Netherlands Railway	668,951
Sale of explosives	158,973
Stamp dues	285,383
State royalty on dynamite	67,711
Stand licences	60,004
Transfer dues	125,439
Other revenue	390,757
	£3,983,560

EXPENDITURE.

Education	£202,831
Fixed salaries	1,080,382
Hospitals	88,952
Import duties	316,426
Interest	151,146
Diggers' and Prospectors' licences (owners' portion)	178,203
Police and prisons	80,963
Purchase of properties	140,310
Public works	535,502
Special expenditure	211,911
Sundry services	148,874
Swaziland expenditure	148,961
Telegraph Department	92,022
War Department	357,225
Other expenditure	237,765
	£3,971,473
Surplus	12,087

The revenue of the Orange Free State in 1895-96 was £375,000, and the expenditure was £430,000. The succeeding years showed an increase of the figures both of revenue and expenditure, but in no year as there any material surplus of income over expense.

It is difficult and almost impossible to determine whether some of the items of the Transvaal expenditure are extravagant, and whether some of the receipts may not be increased under British administration. In particular, the revenue derived from the Netherlands Railway Company will probably show an increase if we exercise the powers of expropriation which the late Transvaal Government possessed. It is probable that the Transvaal spent on its war department more than £357,000, and we may assume that the extra expenditure has been concealed in some of the other items. But it is difficult to see how the expenses of a Government ruling a huge territory can be materially reduced in any direction except in that of military supplies, and it is quite certain that many of the expenses will be considerably increased. The administration of the Transvaal was inefficient, and even bad, but it was cheap. It did not employ a host of officials, and the salaries paid were not in the aggregate high.

Putting on one side extravagant expenditure and the amount expended on armaments, we may assume that the cost of government of the two States did not in any year exceed £4,000,000; and it is well known that British administration, though efficient, is extremely costly. Whether the new provinces be under military rule or Crown Colony government or representative government, it is certain that the number of officials will be considerably greater than the number of Boer officials, and that the aggregate amount of their salaries and of the general cost of administration will exceed by at least one-half the expense of the former civil administration of the Transvaal and the Free State. We may safely assume, therefore, that the civil administration of the Transvaal and the Free State conducted according to English methods will cost not less than £6,000,000.

When the submission of the Boers is enforced there is to be a force of mounted police of 10,000 men. The pay of this police is very high, and amounts on an average to £200 a year for each man. The expenses of such a force, including extra allowances, rations, horses,[1] and equipment for the rank and file, and allowing for the high cost of all necessaries of life, will amount at least to another £2 a week per man. This police force, therefore, will cost in pay and keep £3,000,000 per annum.

It will also be necessary to maintain a large military force in the conquered territories, and it is probable that this force will number for several years at least 40,000 men. Such a force will, making due allowance for the cost of living and for the general waste of a large body of men, cost £100,000 a week, or £5,000,000 a year. Thus the military occupation and the policing of the two territories will cost £8,000,000 a year, and the whole cost of the civil and military administration of the two territories cannot be less than £14,000,000 per annum.

A moment's consideration will prove to us that it will be quite impossible to raise from the Transvaal and the Free State more than a quarter of this

[1] Horse-sickness is one of the greatest plagues of South Africa, and it has been estimated by a writer in the *African Review* of January 5, 1901, that the average mortality among the horses in our army of occupation will be at least 75 per cent. Even if we assume that this estimate is exaggerated, and reduce it to 50 per cent., the result is startling. Assuming that the police force requires 30,000 horses, of these 15,000 will die every year, and, valuing these at £20 each, the annual cost to the Government in horses alone will be £300,000. Moreover, owing to the risks of grass food, the Government will have to feed at least half its horses on forage, and, allowing £2 per month per horse for this item, we arrive at an additional expense of £360,000. The total expense of the 30,000 horses alone will be £660,000 per annum.

amount. The taxable value of the Free State was always small, and after the war it will obviously be bankrupt. The agricultural resources of the Transvaal will be almost annihilated, and the English Ministry will find that their only source of revenue left is the mining industry, with the direct or indirect taxation of commodities.

The Government will be met at the outset by a difficulty of pressing urgency. For what reason did the Government embark in this war? Our Ministers have stated that the object of their policy was to redress the wrongs of British residents and to enforce British supremacy. If this is so, the war has obviously been undertaken for Imperial interests, and the Ministers cannot consistently demand a contribution from the mine-owners, most of whom are non-British subjects. Nor shall we be able to demand an indemnity from the two Republics, for we have annexed them. They are our Colonies, and England cannot demand an indemnity from her Colonies.

Mr. J. B. Robinson and other mine-owners have, during the last few months, vehemently protested against the placing of any heavier burdens on the mines, and the influence and the power of the mine-owners and the necessity of their co-operation with the English Government will force us to yield to their wishes and to spare the mines any burden much heavier than they bore under the Transvaal Government.

In 1898 the aggregate amount of dividends paid by the gold mines was under £5,000,000, and the taxes on profits paid by them to the Transvaal Government amounted to about £250,000. Making every allowance for an increased output of gold and lighter burdens, it will be impossible for the English Government to raise from the gold mines more than £500,000 a year.

In addition to the sources of revenue which we have given above, there remain a few "concessions" or mining rights which, having been the property of the Transvaal Republic, will pass into the hands of its successors. The value of these rights has been exaggerated, and they probably will not realize more than £2,000,000, which, at 4 per cent., will yield an income of £80,000 a year.

We will now tabulate the various figures and form an estimate of the receipts and expenditure of the two States under British administration. Such an estimate must, in the nature of things, be rough, but it will probably be found that the aggregate amounts are not far distant from the truth.

RECEIPTS.

Taxation of gold-mines	£500,000
Imports	1,000,000
Netherlands Railway	750,000
Dues and licences	750,000
Income from sales of new concessions	80,000
Post Office	220,000
Other receipts	350,000
	£3,650,000

EXPENDITURE.

Civil administration of the two provinces	£6,000,000
Military occupation	5,000,000
Police force of 10,000 men	3,000,000
	£14,000,000
	3,650,000
Deficit	£10,350,000

It is possible and probable that this disastrous balance-sheet will be improved in the course of years, but no material improvement is possible while a military occupation of the two territories is necessary.

The capital expense of the war must be met by some sort of loan, whether wholly by an addition to the national debt of England, or partly by a loan to the new Colonies under British guarantee. But the result will be the same. The interest on the money will and can only be paid by the English taxpayer. If the war is continued for a further considerable period, its capital expense will amount at least to £200,000,000, which will be increased to £225,000,000 if we assume that a special loan of £25,000,000 will be necessary for the restoration of agriculture and the rebuilding of the burnt farms. The interest on this amount, allowing for a sinking fund, at 3½ per cent. will be £ 7,875,000, and if we add this amount to the deficit on the revenue accounts of the two States, *i.e.*, £10,350,000, we arrive at a total of £18,225,000. Such is the annual burden which our new Colonies will lay upon us for some years if we determine to secure the submission of the inhabitants by military methods and to control their disaffection by the sword.

Of this huge annual expenditure no reduction can be made until the two provinces become settled and peaceful, and, looking at the future in the light of the past and the present, it would be imprudent to hope for partial withdrawal of our military forces and a reduction of our police force within four or five years from the end of the war.

CHAPTER IX.

PEACE, OR GOVERNMENT WITH CONSENT.

WHEN we turn from the lamentable prospects of continued warfare and military or Crown Colony rule to a reasonable and generous policy, we are met by the instant protests of pride. *But to propose terms again would be to confess an error, and to suffer a humiliation.* There, at last, we have touched the secret wound. It is our pride and not our wisdom which revolts. We fear to lose Prestige. Is not England growing a little tired of this word and of some other sonorous phrases which have been fashionable of late? Education has brought with it a certain vulgarity not only of thought and temper but of expression. High and noble words and big sounding phrases are attractive. They serve to dignify a commonplace thought, and every third-rate writer or speaker must mouth of Patriotism and Imperialism and Prestige. They become stale by ignoble use, until sober men are sick of the sound of words which are as incongruous to their utterers as a Tudor palace to a *parvenu*.

The old cry is raised again that to oppose the Ministry is to encourage the enemy. Every argument of the opponents of this war has been met by the same protest: "The nation is at war; the Ministry therefore is sacrosanct;" "Every vote given to the Liberals is a vote given to the Boers;" "A whisper of criticism in England will be heard by the Boer generals." The same poor and futile appeals were made by North and Wedderburn, and were met by Burke in language as apt to-day as it was a century and a quarter ago.

> "Sir, this vermin of court reporters, when they are forced into day upon one point are sure to burrow in another; but they shall have no refuge; I will make them bolt out of all their holes . . . they take other ground, almost as absurd, but very common in modern practice and very wicked, which is to attribute the ill effect of ill-judged conduct to the arguments which had been used to dissuade us from it. They say that the opposition made in Parliament . . . encouraged the Americans to their resistance."
>
> "If this unheard-of doctrine of the encouragement of rebellion were true, if it were true that an assurance of the friendship of numbers in this country towards the colonies could become an encouragement to them to break off all connection with it, what is the inference? Does anybody seriously maintain that, charged with my share of the public councils, I am not obliged to resist projects which I think mischievous, lest men who suffer should be encouraged to resist? . . . It is, then, a rule that no man in this nation shall open his mouth in favour of the colonies, shall defend their rights, or complain of their sufferings, or, when war breaks out, no man shall express his desire of peace? . . . By such acquiescence great kings and mighty nations have been undone; and if any are at this day in a perilous situation from rejecting truth and listening to flattery, it would rather become them to reform the errors under which they suffer than to reproach those who forewarned them of their danger."

We may, in the eyes of extreme and truculent partisans, suffer humiliation; but can we suffer greater humiliations than we have been enduring for eighteen months? The greatest Empire in the world has seen the greatest army it has

ever sent from its shores held at bay by two little nations whose whole population is beneath that of a second-rate English town. We have a population of forty millions to draw upon, immense wealth and every source of civilisation; the Boers have no reinforcements to look to, and they have no visible means of procuring supplies and ammunition. Their army is an army of farmers, and when they have been beaten they have been beaten by overwhelming numbers. If it is only a loss of prestige that we fear, let us be manly enough to recognise that we are likely to lose as much by a continuance as by a cessation of the war; and, at any rate, it is better to lose a little prestige than a sea of blood.

To open negotiations and to offer honourable terms may disclose weakness; but which is the greater weakness—to acknowledge a mistake, or in our foolish pride to blunder into the dark and difficult future, regardless of the cost, and ignorant of the goal? The strong man can afford to confess his mistake and to turn back, because he knows that he is strong, that he possesses the capacity of amendment, and that he can redeem his loss. The weak man, like the ill-bred among aristocrats, is conscious of his weakness, and fears detection. He hopes to cover his retreat by loud words, and, dreading the jeers of his friends, goes obstinately along to perdition.

If foreign nations look upon our change of purpose with scorn, let us take this comfort. In no way can we serve the interests of our rivals better than by continuing this war. Every pound we spend in South Africa, every man we lose, is their gain, and while we are bleeding they are watching and waiting. Every month of war weakens our strength, and sees us more impotent to defend the manifold interests of the Empire. Is this Prestige?

Statesmanship is common sense touched by imagination and informed by history; and the very essence of English political wisdom is compromise. It is common sense in action as opposed to the official mind in action. Real statesmanship is the union of the ideal and the practical, and it recognises that what may be good for one people is unbearable by another; that human nature is largely composed of prejudices, and that to gain one advantage we often have to resign another; that a strict insistence on abstract rights not seldom results in the loss of rights more valuable. To carry an argument to its logical conclusion may be in theory admirable; in ordinary life, and above all in political life, it is the extreme of folly. We must take other men and nations as we find them. God made them as He made us, and they are probably no worse and no better than we.

The wise man understands the limitations of his strength, and he knows that to aim too high is often to fall. There is in all negotiations the happy moment when the victor of the hour may secure his reasonable aims: that moment passed, he may find his advantage gone and his first conditions impossible. The Sibyl has offered, and will yet offer, her books to others than to Tarquin.

To make a fetish of unconditional submission, to prolong a great and costly war because our enemy might make submission on certain terms and because he will not make submission on the terms which we, in a moment of rashness, have laid down, is obstinacy as criminal as was that of George III., and the result may be as fatal.

The problem of a practical settlement is obviously difficult from any point of view save that which recognises no difficulties that cannot be solved by sheer force. Indeed, it is not unlikely that the very difficulties of the case are among the main reasons why the British Government chose at first the course of demanding unconditional surrender from the Boers, instead of offering them reasonable terms. To admit this, of course, would be to confess that the war was forced on without foresight, and has been pursued for no good cause. The easiest course, at first sight, has seemed to be that of effecting a conquest, and leaving the settlement slowly to shape itself. Like haphazard methods in general, however, this course has merely increased the difficulty. The demand for mere surrender, and the means taken to enforce it, have made the burghers only more

determined, more desperate, more irreconcilable. Without crying, then, over the spilt milk, let us consider what plan of settlement may be suggested which has any chance of making peace and keeping it.

It is clear that Lord Kitchener, and in a lesser degree Sir Alfred Milner, is convinced that for our own sake and for the sake of South Africa this war should cease. Lord Kitchener himself was willing to make notable concessions. He asked General Botha to meet him at Middleburg, and he there submitted to the Boer leader certain terms which in his opinion the English Government might be willing to accept. The most important of these were:

1. That military government should cease on the ceasing of hostilities, and that *an elected assembly* should advise the Crown Colony administration.

2. That the legal debts of the Republics incurred during the war should be taken over by the English Government.

3. That a gift of money should be made to repair burnt farms.

4. That the English Government should move the Governments of Cape Colony and Natal to grant an amnesty to all rebels.

Lord Kitchener's tentative proposals were laid before Mr. Chamberlain, and they were by him modified and made more stringent on these and other points. Whether these modifications were unacceptable to the Boer leaders or whether Lord Kitchener's original proposals seemed to them impossible, we do not know. All we do know is that on March 16, 1901, General Botha, in a short letter, summarily declined to recommend the terms of the British Ministry to the earnest consideration of his Government. It is clear, therefore, that no terms at present are likely to be acceptable to the Boers which do not give them a modified form of independence.

The simplest, and in the long run, the safest course would be a return to the *status quo ante* with such guarantees and modifications as would safeguard the interests of British subjects and our supremacy in South Africa. Any scheme which falls short of practical independence must ultimately bear within it the seeds of its own dissolution: the Boers will never rest until they have regained the right to manage their own affairs. But in the present temper of the British public it is beyond the range of practical statesmanship to achieve such a result.

The ground of agreement, therefore, must be sought in the announcement by Mr. Chamberlain in the House of Commons to the effect that in time the Boer provinces must have self-governing institutions. This, doubtless, clashes with language used about the same time by Lord Salisbury; but there are many reasons for holding that Mr. Chamberlain's view can carry the day, and it is not consistent with the terms which Lord Kitchener, obviously with Sir Alfred Milner's approval, proposed to Botha. In its way, however, stands the serious difficulty that the *time* of settlement must on his principles be determined by military considerations. Not till the commander in the field reports tranquillity and security is the British Government likely to withdraw its forces and to consent to a period of Crown Colony government, which in its turn is to be followed by such Colonial self-government as prevails in Canada and Australia. And this, as already suggested, is probably a main reason why, up to last February, Lord Kitchener had not been authorized to *offer* terms to the enemy. Such an offer would have to specify dates; and to do this, from Mr. Chamberlain's point of view, would involve stipulations for a somewhat prolonged military occupation and autocratic government before the advent of representative institutions. That the Boers would accept such terms is somewhat unlikely. Their acceptance would mean their submission to a martial law administered by the very men whom lately they had been fighting; and no one who has studied the operation of martial law can well believe that under these of all circumstances it would be administered in an endurable fashion.

Here emerges the fatality of the resort to arms, with its normal sequel of angry persistence up to the point of partial exhaustion. Terms which *might* be

offered and accepted at an early stage are at that stage refused: when they *are* offered, the stage of willing acceptance is passed. In the American War of Independence, the Ministry of Lord North sent commissioners in 1777 with powers to make a settlement. Had this been done in 1775 there might have been no Declaration of Independence; but in 1777 the concessions offered came too late, and the war went on. The simple fact is that the temper which makes war blinds men to the means which can either avert or stop it.

If, then, there is to be any diplomatic arrest of the war in South Africa, it must be by way of a plan which transcends the difficulties that now hem in Mr. Chamberlain, yet stands a fair chance of being accepted by the Ministerial party. We must seek a solution which can be accepted by the Boers as being not worse for them than a continuance of the war, while at the same time it does not restore the conditions of unstable equilibrium that led to the war.

To this end the following suggestions are offered with due diffidence, though they are made after a careful and anxious calculation of all the ostensible possibilities. They are doubtless open to many objections, but they will at all events serve as a basis of discussion.

(1) Let the Boers be required to disband on the conditions that—

(2) A general amnesty shall be proclaimed both for the inhabitants of the two provinces and for the Cape rebels.

(3) The former Republics shall be made constituent provinces in a South African Federation on the lines of that of Australia; each of the Boer States, however, retaining its local legislature, subject, on equal terms with the other States, to the common control of the Federation.

(4) Neither Republic shall be at liberty to enter into foreign diplomatic relations of any kind, or to set up any military organisation save such as may be authorised by the common Parliament of the Federation, with a view to possible danger from native races.

(5) Further, not only shall the franchise conditions in the Boer provinces be pre-determined (either in the common Parliament, under the usual supervision by the Crown, or by separate agreement), but the fiscal control of the Johannesburg mines shall be similarly determined, to the end that—

(6) The taxation to be drawn from the mines shall be directed (*a*) primarily to the repair of all the destruction and impoverishment wrought by the war, without distinction of race; and (*b*) secondarily, after such restoration, to the general development and administration of the federated provinces of South Africa.

(7) These conditions being agreed to, the Boer provinces shall not be administered by martial law in the interval between the surrender and the constitution of the Federation; but the British Government shall be entitled to maintain at specified places forces sufficient to preserve order and security, while the former Parliaments of the two Boer States shall be at liberty to recommence the normal administration of the country, save and except as regards the former military organisation.

(8) In order to hasten and guarantee the repair of the destruction and impoverishment wrought by the war on both sides, the British Government shall raise on loan and guarantee a fund (to be specified) at a date not later than six months after the cessation of hostilities, such fund to be disbursed and administered by three or four Chief Justices (of South Africa), one British Financial Expert, two Boers of high station, and two high British officials, one High Commissioner (= four Boers and five or six British), as they shall see fit.

(9) On the constitution of the South African Federation, the fund so disbursed shall be recognised as part of the common debt of such Federation, and the interest upon it shall be met out of the common revenue. The existing debts of the other provinces shall be treated in the same fashion.

(10) Such constitution of the South African Federation shall take place as

soon as is compatible with proper arrangements, and shall on no account be delayed more than three years from the date of cessation of hostilities.

(11) The seat of the common Parliament of the Federation shall be in a central place, to be agreed upon by the Parliaments of the four provinces.

(12) The system of education, the treatment of natives, and the use of the English and the Dutch language shall be, as far as possible, uniform in all the constituent States.

To this line of settlement the most obvious objection is that it commits Cape Colony and Natal to a Federation on which they have not been asked to pronounce. This, however, may be met by an offer of an immediate armistice to last for a given period, during which the Parliaments of the two Colonies, and those of the two Boer States, may vote on the general question of a Federation, leaving open only such details as cannot be readily settled. As the refusal to accept Federation all round would mean the indefinite prolongation of a war which in different degrees is disastrous to all the provinces concerned, as well as to the British Empire, there is fair reason to trust that all would acquiesce. If not, everything would be recommitted to the fortune of war.

The government of the Rand district must always be a difficult problem, whether under Boer or British rule. If in the forthcoming settlement some special arrangement were possible for the administration of this part of the Transvaal, many dangers of the future would be avoided.

The dangers of a liberal policy are, in the opinion of its opponents, the continued existence of two hostile States which might become a nucleus of intrigue against British supremacy and in favour of foreign intervention, while we should again be exposed in the course of a few years to an increase of the armaments of the Boers. That these dangers do to a certain degree exist, and that they are likely to exist for some time is true, but the policy of annexation will rather increase than diminish them.

It will be impossible to prevent the Boers in the two Republics from arming themselves with rifles; and in fact no sane Ministry would, in view of the dangers which white men must face daily in South Africa, attempt to prohibit the use of small arms. The larger armaments we could forbid, and we could probably make our prohibition effective. But if we govern the two Republics either by military rule or as a Crown Colony, we shall in time unite the whole population against ourselves, whereas if we allow them to retain a modified independence we shall escape an enormous annual outlay, many dangers, and countless perplexities. The Boers will be the most difficult subjects that the Empire has ever governed. A continuance of their independence, limited by guarantees and safeguards, will convert them from rebels into neighbours, sullen perhaps, but unlikely to inflict practical injuries upon us. Annexed and held down by force, the Boers will be ever scheming for foreign assistance. Independent, they will be as hostile to foreign interference as they have been to British interference.

It is clear that one of the chief difficulties which have faced the Government and which will face it in the future is the question of amnesty for the Cape rebels. In theory and in logic their offence has undoubtedly merited the severest punishment. They have been guilty of high treason, and they are therefore liable to the severest penalty which can be enforced under ordinary law or special law or martial law. But in matters of practical wisdom there is not so much room for theory and logic as the unobservant may suppose. History teaches us that the theorist and the logician are commonly the worst statesmen, and that common sense is the basis of wise policy. If it is true that the Dutch and the English have to live permanently side by side not only in the two Republics but in Cape Colony and Natal, it should obviously be the aim of the wise statesman to remove all possible causes of friction and discontent. If the Government is weak, it will yield again to the fierce outcry of those Loyalists in South Africa whose violence has led our Ministry into its present deplorable position, and will refuse

an amnesty to those Dutch in Cape Colony who have taken up arms on behalf of their kinsmen. If the Government is wise it will remember that these rebels are men of the same blood as the citizens of the two Republics, that they have been induced to support their kinsmen by a sympathy which, however wrong-headed, was at least the result of generous motives. There can be no peace in South Africa until the two races are brought to live side by side in moderate friendship. If we keep the wound open by insisting on disfranchisement or imprisonment, we are deliberately placing obstacles in the path of a peaceful future. We can only govern by consent of the governed; and every citizen whom we do not pardon, whom we leave embittered by the loss of his own political privileges or of the rights of those who are near and dear to him, is a definite and irremovable obstacle to a peaceful settlement in South Africa. The policy of revenge has been tried, and it has always failed: the policy of amnesty has been tried, and it has nearly always succeeded.

CHAPTER X.

THE CONCLUSION OF THE MATTER.

WE have now reached the close of our consideration of this great problem. We have seen that as the war of 1775 arose through the assertion of a right of sovereignty over the American Colonies, so the war with the South African Republics in 1899 arose from the assertion of the right of England as suzerain power to interfere in the internal concerns of the Transvaal. We have seen how this cruel and deplorable war was the outcome of grievous mistakes on both sides, of incapacity and perverse distrust on the part of the Boers, of gross ignorance and of an insincere and awkward diplomacy on the part of our advisers and officials.

We have reviewed the melancholy catalogue of absurdities of statement and prediction which have marked the history of the last two years. We have heard the public told that the Boers were a semi-barbaric, unwashed, wholly dishonest and corrupt race of men who had taken advantage of our ill-timed generosity to build up on our frontiers a powerful military system and to threaten our Empire with a malignant conspiracy. We have seen the public believing that the Outlanders were outraged by these men, that English settlers were humiliated, persecuted, robbed and murdered, that they were "helots" in a land which they had enriched by their exertions, that they were wandering through the streets of Johannesburg with downcast eyes and speaking with bated breath in the presence of the tyrant Boers. We were told that at least two great Englishmen had arisen to say that no longer should such a disgrace rest on the name of the great Empire.

It is a humiliating task to review the stages of our pathetic optimism. We were told that Mr. Chamberlain's strong words and Sir Alfred Milner's firm attitude would bring the Boers to reason; that the despatch of a few thousand troops would prevent a war; that 30,000 men would crush the enemy in three months; that £9,000,000 would more than cover our expenses, and that the two Republics would repay us that sum; that 500 killed and wounded would be more than the total of our losses; that after the first defeat the Dutch would accept the inevitable and look to us with love and admiration; that the capture of Bloemfontein was the conquest of the Free State; that the occupation of Pretoria was the end of the war; that British troops were securely occupying our new possessions; that severity would teach the new Boers a lesson, and that the devastation of their farms would quickly tame their stubborn spirit. Finally, in September, 1900, we were told by the Government that the campaign was practically finished, and in November, 1900, we were told by Lord Roberts that the war was over.

Is it necessary to demonstrate the absurdity of these predictions? We have sent 300,000 troops to South Africa, we have spent over £100,000,000, and we now know that no contribution can come from the ruined and devastated provinces; we have lost 15,000 men by death, and 40,000 have left South Africa as invalids. Are we nearer the end, or are we not losing more men every month than we lost in the period of our early disasters?[1] Have we not evacuated half

[1] The monthly average of our casualties during the first five months of the war was 1,647; the casualty list for April, 1901, contained 2,873 cases.

the towns we once occupied, and do not Boer commandoes roam at will over Cape Colony?

The ironies of the war are no less ludicrous. We went to war to extend the franchise to the whole body of citizens in the Transvaal; we are now told that the first outcome of the war will be a military government of the two provinces, and that representative institutions may be postponed for generations. Lord Salisbury solemnly asserted that we sought no territory and no goldfields; the result of our first victory was an equally definite statement that we intended to annex the two Republics. The declared ambition of our Ministers was to bring peace and reconciliation to the two races; the result of the war has been to generate a most ferocious hatred between the English and the Dutch, and to deprive our fellow-subjects in Cape Colony of their civil liberties. We were told that in the Transvaal not the least outrage on justice was the control of the judges by the executive; we now hear that under the new rule the judges will be directly under the control of Sir Alfred Milner. It was imputed as a fault to the Transvaal Government that Dutch was the only language permissible in the law courts; we are now informed that in a Dutch country the English language only is to be used. We were told that the elevation of the native was a primary object of our ambition: we now hear that Sir Alfred Milner will forward that elevation by a system of lashes.

We have seen the touching confidence of the English people rudely shaken; we have seen every estimate of our Ministers falsified, every statement disproved, every calculation refuted, every hope shattered, every prophecy unfulfilled. Is not the cup of error full to the brim?

We have followed the course of the war from the disasters of its first months to the early and brilliant successes of Lord Roberts. We have seen how, after the fall of Bloemfontein, the golden opportunity of peace was lost; how, during the last twelve tedious months, the unwearying labours of our brave army have borne little fruit. We have seen that a policy of devastation has resulted in a more embittered hostility and a more tenacious determination on the part of our enemy. We have seen the area of the war, enormous at first, increased by the invasion of Cape Colony. We have seen that Colony held down by martial law, distracted by racial hate, and torn by civil war. We have seen our troops struck down by fever, stale and weary; we have seen the whole of South Africa divided into two hostile camps, traversed by hurrying columns, carrying ruin and desolation to a country which is to add to our prosperity. We have examined the alternatives that lie before us, how the unconditional submission[1] which our Ministers still demand will result in permanent disaffection and danger and in a grievous strain of our military and financial resources. We have searched for a way of escape from a melancholy future. We have examined the other alternative which promises reconciliation and peace and freedom from the dangers which, if we are unwise, we shall lay upon ourselves and our heirs.

The public has suffered and has learnt much since October, 1899. It is slowly recovering from the heady fumes of Ministerial wine, and it is now better able to distinguish between the voice of error and the voice of truth. The English people, agonised, bewildered, alarmed, and angered, is groping towards the

[1] The solemn appeal which Burke made in 1777 in his letter to the Sheriffs of Bristol might be made almost literally to-day: "I think I know America. If I do not, my ignorance is incurable, for I have spared no pains to understand it; and I do most solemnly assure those of my constituents who put any sort of confidence in my industry and integrity that everything that has been done there has arisen from a total misconception of the object; that our means of originally holding America, that our means of reconciling with it after a quarrel, of recovering it after separation, of keeping it after victory, did depend, and must depend, in their several stages and periods, upon a total renunciation of that unconditional submission which has taken such possession of the minds of violent men."

truth. For not the least danger of prophecy is its nonfulfilment. A falsified forecast demoralises its utterer, and leads him to seek from every quarter save the right one the explanation of his error. As one false statement leads to the manufacture of a second to shield the first, so the error of the bold and unsuccessful prophet leads him into a wilder prophecy and a more dangerous path. The public sees that it has been deceived by its Ministers, deceived by its officials, deceived by its newspapers, and it asks itself whether the gigantic errors of the past may not be ominous of future mistakes as great and possibly more dangerous.

From the beginning of 1896 it is not too much to say that the history of our diplomacy is the history of a personal struggle between Mr. Chamberlain and President Kruger. Such a struggle was certain. Both men belonged to the same type, stubborn, imperious, and suspicious. A fixed idea inspired both. Mr. Chamberlain honestly believed that the Boers would yield to pressure and threats, while the President regarded Mr. Chamberlain's violent methods as additional confirmation of his suspicions and fears. A vicious circle had been started. Every minatory speech by Mr. Chamberlain made a return to reasonable diplomacy on his part less possible, while every proposal of the Transvaal Government was regarded by him as a new attempt to confuse the issues and prolong a period of vexatious inaction.

Mr. Chamberlain had determined that there could be only one issue to the deadlock, and that it must take the form of a complete diplomatic submission on the part of the Boer Government. He had assured himself, through the information and counsel which he derived from Sir Alfred Milner, that the unwillingness of the Boers to meet our wishes, and their open armaments, were undermining our authority in South Africa. Would it be an exaggeration to say that England has been involved in a disastrous war because an English Minister attempted by threats to force an ignorant Dutchman into submission to his will?

The radical error of our Ministers throughout the negotiations of 1899, and the long war which has ensued, is due to their lack of imagination. They held that the Boers would yield to diplomatic pressure, firmly and consistently applied. They believed that the despatch of troops and the embodying of an army corps would complete the surrender which diplomacy had not been able to effect. They believed that the men whom defeat in the field had not terrified would weaken at the sight of their burning farms and their imprisoned wives. They did not know that a stubborn race could face all dangers and every form of death for their freedom.

From this lamentable error have flowed all those subsequent troubles and disasters which have plunged South Africa into desolation and England into grief: in its train have followed the cruel and odious necessity of making war on women and children, the bitter griefs of thousands of English homes. The denial to the Boer Government of the ordinary rights of nations, the insistence upon unconditional submission and the threat of the total loss of their independence, were certain to engender in the hearts of the Boer nation a determination to struggle for their independence until the death. Our Ministers have given us many examples of their ignorance of the most elementary facts of history and experience. If there is one thing that brave men will fight for it is for the independence of their country. For this they will struggle, and rightly struggle, against overwhelming odds. If Lord Salisbury and Mr. Chamberlain had been wise in the spring of 1900, we should now have been enjoying peace for more than a year, and it would have been an honourable peace, which brought us all we ever asked or claimed of the two Republics, which would have placed the States under the British flag, and which might have brought about the federation of South Africa.

From that fair picture turn to this. From end to end South Africa is in

the grip of war. Throughout the two annexed Republics many of the richest of the farms and villages are charred and blackened ruins. Cape Colony itself is the scene of civil war, the women and children of our foes are gathered into refugee camps, and there are learning nothing but bitter hatred of our rule. Our army, long since weary of a tedious campaign, sick with disappointment, and decimated by fever, is still pursuing a phantom foe. Meantime, the war, which at the end of March, 1900, had probably cost under £30,000,000, has cost us since that date at least £75,000,000 more, and is costing us over a million and a half a week. The drain of brave lives is more terrible. On March 17, 1900, the total number of men taken prisoners, killed in action or by disease, and sent home as invalids was 13,974. On April 30, 1901, the total list of casualties was 63,498. Therefore the refusal of our Government to grant the Boers reasonable terms of peace has cost us the lives, or health, or services of over 50,000 men. Each week as it passes now sees the death from wounds or disease of one hundred and fifty men and the disablement through the same causes of nearly eight hundred more, while the number of those whose hearts and strength are failing them of sheer exhaustion and weariness our generals in South Africa alone can tell. What a commentary on the optimism of our rulers, on the fiction of a finished war! The tragedy of it, the despair and the folly, are solely due to the inability of our Government to grasp the truth that a brave people will fight for its independence to the last cartridge.

Providence has indeed decreed that because man's happiness depends greatly on his illusions he shall not escape the dangers which are incident to them. We are facing the dangers now. The policy of our Government is a failure, self-evident and self-confessed. Is it wise to delude ourselves any longer with comfortable words from a Fool's Paradise? One by one our illusions are falling from us, one by one our fond and foolish hopes are melting into grim realities. We are now, at all events, face to face with facts. The gloomy review of the situation which Sir Alfred Milner, on February 5, 1901, despatched to Mr. Chamberlain makes it clear that not only are we making no progress in the two States, but that since August, 1900, there has been a steady and ominous retrogression. The situation, in Sir Alfred Milner's words, is "puzzling."

Nor is our own financial danger less ominous. The purely military expenses of the war amount at the present time to £1,750,000 a week, and in addition there is the enormous cost of maintaining the 18,000 prisoners of war, the 30,000 Boer women and children and non-combatants who are gathered into refugee camps, the large number of refugees at Cape Town and Durban, and possibly a considerable number of the native population of South Africa. What the weekly expenditure on such maintenance may be we can only dimly guess, but we shall certainly not pass the truth if we put it from £150,000 to £200,000 a week. The expenses of the war, therefore, are now nearly £2,000,000 a week, and such expenses tend to increase rather than to diminish.[1]

[1] The following table will convey to the reader a rough idea of the loss in money which a prolongation of the war will entail upon the British people, assuming that the total expenditure up to April 1st has been £120,000,000, and also assuming that the cost will increase rather than decrease.

Cost to April 1, 1901	£120,000,000
" July 1, 1901	144,000,000
" October 1, 1901	170,000,000
" January 1, 1902	196,000,000
" April 1, 1902	222,000,000
" July 1, 1902	249,000,000
" October 1, 1902	276,000,000

The loss of life, by battle and disease, is at least 120 a week, *i. e.*, 6,000 a year.

The cost of the Crimean war, which we have always regarded as a great and costly struggle, was only £70,000,000. The twenty years' war against Napoleon added £600,000,000 to the National Debt, and the war of 1775-83 added £70,000,000.

The most disastrous feature of the whole outlook is that our loss in money and lives will not cease with the ceasing of the war. If we were engaged in hostilities with a European nation from whose country we should retire on the conclusion of peace, we should at all events be able to calculate our expenses and to feel that our future was to that extent secure and definite. But we are about to add to the Empire two unwilling colonies; and the maintenance there of a large military force, combined with the costly re-settlement of a devastated land, will involve us in an indefinite cost for an indefinite number of years. It is now acknowledged that the Free State will furnish us with nothing, and that for many years the Transvaal will be practically insolvent. The peace, when it comes, will cost us over £18,000,000 a year. Was ever victory so disastrous or peace so costly?

The financial future is indeed disquieting. It is clear, as Sir Michael Hicks-Beach pointed out on the introduction of the Budget of 1901, that the extra taxation which we have been bearing during the last year, and which is now about to be enlarged, is only sufficient to meet our increased expenditure. If the war were over to-morrow, we could not remit these heavy burdens. We are paying war taxes, but we are not paying for the war with them. On the contrary, if trade declines to any considerable extent during the next two years we shall have, unless we reduce our ordinary expenditure, to increase the burden of taxation. We have increased in two years our National Debt by £120,000,000, *i. e.*, by one-fifth of its former bulk. Wealthy as England is, she cannot bear for long a strain so grievous. Our national solvency and credit depends on a decreasing National Debt, and if the war continues we must increase that debt at the rate of £100,000,000 per annum. All we can do, if the present policy is to hold the field, is to pay on, knowing not only that nothing will come back to us from these provinces which we have annexed, but that they will add an annual sum of not less than £18,000,000 to the burdens under which we are already labouring. And this is the financial result of a war which was one of "practical business."[1]

When we shrink from a future so melancholy, when we seek for light on our path, we are met by the cry that to be prudent is to be weak, that to use our common sense is to surrender our rights, that we must still continue to shear the wolf we have by the ears.[2] Our Ministers still urge us to yield our scruples to their foresight. The road is dark and difficult, and we ask ourselves what

[1] Mr. Cecil Rhodes's words.

[2] Again let Burke speak to us: "But I must say a few words on the subject of these rights, which have cost us so much, and which are likely to cost us our all. Good God! Mr. Speaker, are we yet to be told of the rights for which we went to war? Oh, excellent rights! Oh, valuable rights! Valuable you should be, for we have paid at parting with you. Oh, valuable rights! that have cost Britain thirteen provinces, four islands, a hundred thousand men, and more than seventy millions of money! Oh, wonderful rights! that have lost to Great Britain her boasted, grand, and substantial superiority which made the world bend before her! . . . What were these rights? Can any man describe them? Can any man give them a body and a soul, a tangible substance, answerable to all these mighty costs? We did all this because we had a right to do it; that was exactly the fact, 'And all this we dared to do because we dared.' We had a right to tax America, says the noble lord, and as we had a right we must do it. We must risk everything, forfeit everything, think of no consequences, take no consideration into view but our right; consult no ability, nor measure our right with our power, but must have our right. Oh, miserable and infatuated Ministers! miserable and undone country! not to show that right signifies nothing without might; that the claim without the power of enforcing it was nugatory and idle in the copyhold of rival States or of immense bodies of people. Oh, says a silly man full of his prerogative of dominion over a few beasts of the field, there is excellent wool on the back of a wolf, and therefore he must be sheared. What! shear a wolf? Yes. But will he comply? Have you considered the trouble? How will you get the wool? Oh, I have considered nothing, and I will consider nothing but my right; a wolf is an animal that has wool; all animals that have wool are to be shorn, and therefore I will shear the wolf. This was just the kind of reasoning urged by the Minister, and this the counsel he has given."

manner of men are our guides. It is too late for them to appeal for our silence. There are times when silence is patriotic; but there is a limit to all things, and there are times when silence is an abnegation of intelligence. The time has come when the public must take its fate into its own hands. Our Ministers have been tried and have been found wanting.

Nor do they see the end. We are drifting now in the blind hope of some happy chance. Let us at once face facts, and frame a policy which shall meet those facts. Let us cast off and abjure that incurable levity, that foolish optimism, that weak fatalism which blind men to their own incompetence and to approaching disaster. The "inevitable" is the last refuge of the imbecile.

The contest has been raging too long round names rather than essential principles or the demands of prudence. The good name of a Minister or a Viceroy is of no account in comparison with the lasting welfare of our country. These men pass, they become as the shadows of nothing, but England endures. We must act with a single eye to her interests, knowing that mercy and judgment and honour are in the end identical with good policy. We have made a gigantic mistake; let us confess our error like giants, and not, like pigmies, seek to hide it. To return to reason and common sense is no weakness; rather is it a counsel of black despair which bids us continue to tread the same weary and costly path which we are treading now.

In such a controversy as we have recently passed through the majority is not always in the right. The nature of man is prone to violent courses, to selfishness of aim and to haughtiness of temper. It was a minority which opposed the policy of North in 1775: it was a minority which attacked the insane adventure of the Crimea: it was a minority which in 1863 supported the cause of the North against the South. In each case, the few and faithful men, voices crying in the wilderness, were assailed by every form of virulent abuse; but who will now say that they were in error?

To make an honorable peace with the Boers will indeed disclose a failure. But it is useless to disguise from ourselves or the world that we have failed. It is not given to the wisest man or the greatest State always to be wise, always to succeed. Men and nations often utter rash and proud words of which later they repent. Are they to be held for ever bound to the performance of a promise made in ignorance and haste? Let us be manly enough to confess our mistake and we may be assured that if we are wise in time, it will not count against us for long in the assize of the nations.

Let us cultivate a historic detachment, and endeavour to review this war with something of the cool reasonableness with which our sons and grandsons will regard it, with which we can now criticise the folly of the Crimea and the blindness of 1775. The tale of folly is ancient as the hills, recurrent as the seasons. That which the apostles of unconditional submission preach to us now, the apostles of the same policy preached to our forefathers a hundred and twenty-five years ago. From mercy and reason and good sense they declared would flow the loss of our Colonies, of our self-respect, of our prestige, of our place among the nations. The same voice is speaking now from different lips, and if we follow its counsel we shall suffer as our fathers suffered; and even as they lost America, so, though we may win the immediate prize on which our hearts are set, will the future bring its retribution and the loss of the land we are striving to conquer.

There are dangers and difficulties in a policy of conciliation, but they are less numerous and less menacing than the dangers of continued violence. If the Imperial Government and the two races are earnest in their desire for peace a way will be found out of the difficulties, and safeguards will be devised against the dangers. To close a terrible and devastating war with a peace which gives us all we ever claimed from our enemy, which places the two States under the

British flag, and which brings about at once a union of South Africa, is surely no weak or dishonouring surrender.

We must attempt to realise the scenes of horror and desolation and hatred with which South Africa is now accursed. The two Dutch Republics are blackened deserts, Natal and Cape Colony are divided into hostile camps. A state of civil discord, almost of civil war, exists. Sons of the same father are fighting on opposite sides; the mother sympathises with the Dutch, the daughter with the English; the springs of social intercourse are poisoned. For the Dutch South Africa is almost a hell. And yet the Dutch in Cape Colony are our fellow-subjects. They have exactly the same rights and privileges as an ordinary English citizen, and they have been up to the present moment as loyal to the Sovereign of England as his most loyal subject in Great Britain. If their loyalty has been undermined, is it matter for wonder? The Dutch in Cape Colony are, with the exception of the inhabitants of Cape Town, under martial law, which is in fact the negation of all law. They are liable to severe punishment if they stir out of their houses after the time of curfew, if they make a jesting remark to an English soldier. Their horses are taken from them, their cattle, their forage, and even their boots. Their papers are suppressed, their editors are imprisoned, their Parliament is indefinitely prorogued, and all their representative rights are in abeyance. Can we wonder if their loyalty to the English throne has in this chilling atmosphere grown cold?

The Loyalists indeed are the greatest obstacle to peace. The rivalry between the Loyalists and the Dutch has been both political and racial; but it has been chiefly political, and a political party ever resents the domination of its rival. But such domination implies no political or physical slavery, and to summon the aid of war to adjust the balance of politics is surely a monstrous demand. We are told that to concede terms of peace to the Boers is to sacrifice the Loyalists in Cape Colony and to sap the foundations of their attachment to the mother country. Is not this a shameful plea; for what does it mean but that the loyalty of the Loyalists is a plant of such tender and fickle growth that it must be watered with the blood and strengthened by the removal of every rival? The Loyalists have doubtless suffered much, and their fidelity claims our proper gratitude. But has not England made sufficient sacrifices for the Loyalists, and is it not carrying their claims too far to demand that the Empire shall suffer indefinitely this terrible drain of blood and treasure? Is there to be literally no limit to our sacrifices? Do the Loyalists insist that we shall see another 15,000 of our sons completing with their death the subjugation of their political rivals, another £150,000,000 lost for ever and to no purpose in the devouring maw of South Africa? Surely we have suffered enough: is this disastrous war to proceed until the Loyalists have their political foes by the throat? Is not the hour come when England should think of herself?

Imagination shrinks before the future if we are bent on following our present path. Another weary year of war, costly with thousands of English lives and millions of English money; another year of alternate hopes and fears, elation and despair; another year of weakness in Europe and Asia, of impaired credit, and of burdensome taxation. And what of the end? Failure it must be, for, whether we conquer or resign the struggle, we have failed. What can it be but failure if we have to keep down an embittered population by a standing army, to rule over two desolated provinces whose exhausted revenues the British taxpayer must make good?

If the sufferings of South Africa and our own grave national dangers have little weight with us, shall we pay no heed to the silent appeal of our soldiers?[1]

[1] Mr. Chamberlain, indeed, regards all suffering caused by this war as "irrelevant." A somewhat different view of statesmanship was expressed by Pericles when he boasted that

It can no longer be hidden from the dullest that our army is worn by constant labour and fasting, sick with disappointment, and wasted by disease. The high hopes with which our soldiers entered on their task have long since melted away, and in their place has come the deadly indifference which is born of inglorious and indecisive conflict. The strain is not for ever endurable by human beings, and though we know that our soldiers will struggle on while there remains the shadow of a hope, should we ignore the danger that the fine drawn cord, of which the bystanders cannot see the slowly weakening strands, may snap at last? As we think of the brave men and gallant boys who have fallen to no purpose in this unhappy strife, the bitter and reproachful prayer of the Roman Emperor rings in our ears—*"Vare, redde legiones."*

Another consideration should urge us to bring this struggle to an end. We are in no ordinary case. If we were continuing the war to obtain from the Boers some gift or indemnity which they are not yet willing to grant, if it was our policy or our intention to leave the country in the hands of its inhabitants when the war was over, there might be some reason in our attitude. But we do not intend to leave this country; it has been annexed by us, and the two Republics now form part of our Empire. They are our colonies, the inhabitants are our subjects: we are then devastating our own property and slaying our own colonists. We have to live with these men for ever, we have to make them appreciate the blessings of English rule and work together with us for the prosperity of South Africa. Surely we are marching along a strange path to this end.

About the great builders of Empire there has always been a certain noble expediency, a certain simple reasonableness which is infinitely distressing to the theorist and the bureaucrat. In problems of state as well as of business the simplest solution is often the wisest. It has generally been found that the easiest way to make men peaceful is to make them happy, and that the easiest way to make them happy is to remove all unnatural and artificial restrictions and to allow them free exercise of their individuality. To restrict such exercise is to produce a spurious uniformity and to make men slaves or rebels. The pedant legislates for abstractions, the statesman for living human beings; and though the methods of the latter may seem illogical and contrary to *a priori* principles, they generally have the advantage of being successful.

It is useless to reproach the Boers with their unwillingness to accept our domination. They are Dutch and we are English: should we under equal conditions display a willingness the absence of which we resent in them? English rule is good for us, but need it be good for others? It is right that we should be proud of our own institutions, but is it necessary that we should seek to impose them on other races? The Boers may be foolish in that they refuse the privileges of our Imperial system; but is liberty nothing, is independence nothing? A poor thing it may be, but it is their own. If men would only use their imagination to picture what they themselves would do or feel in like cir-

up to that time no Athenian had put on mourning through any act of his. Here may be quoted Burke's indignant rebuke to the wanton maker of war:—

"A conscientious man would be cautious how he dealt in blood. He would feel some apprehension at being called to a tremendous account for engaging in so deep a play without any sort of knowledge of the game. It is no excuse for presumptuous ignorance that it is directed by insolent passion. The poorest being that crawls on earth, contending to save itself from injustice and oppression, is an object respectable in the eyes of God and man. But I cannot conceive any existence under heaven (which in the depth of its wisdom tolerates all sorts of things) that is more truly odious and disgusting than an impotent, helpless creature, without civil wisdom or military skill . . . bloated with pride and arrogance, calling for battles which he is not to fight. . . . If you and I find our talents not of the great and ruling kind, our conduct at least is conformable to our faculties. No man's life pays the forfeit of our rashness. No desolate widow weeps tears of blood over our ignorance." *(Letters to the Sheriffs of Bristol,* 1777.)

cumstance our diplomacy would be more reasonable and our demands less stringent. If England were held by a German army, face to face with the threat of lost freedom, would Englishmen flinch from a struggle to the death? Would they consent to negotiate with their German victors terms which would leave them German citizens, even though such citizenship might bring with it the improved methods of German bureaucracy? Would Englishmen, for all the privileges of German civilisation, consent to be ruled by German officials, to be held in check by German sergeants, to pay taxes for the maintenance of a German army? Would the editors of our newspapers become peace envoys from the Germans to describe to us the blessings of German rule and the hopelessness of our struggle? Would Mr. Chamberlain and the other apostles of unconditional submission take the oath of allegiance to a German monarch? To ask these questions is to answer them.

We have had enough of violence: let us now turn to the more gracious qualities by which we are great: mercy and generosity[1] and reason and the vigorous common sense that has kept England alive these many centuries. For violence will not help us: force is no remedy. Force may be a proper means to bring a savage race to reason, but it is not a weapon to be used lightly against a race so spirited and stubborn as the Boers. It is a weapon which it is easy to take up but hard to lay down. It as frequently wounds him who employs it as its victim. Its effects are fleeting, and when it is withdrawn, it leaves the object resentful and unconquered. It ruins the treasure which it seeks to possess, and if it fails, its failure is disgraceful and absolute.

Force without wisdom we have tested, and its failure is known to all. The apostles of violence robbed us of our American Colonies. Twenty years ago in Afghanistan our threats and our violence were followed by a failure absolute and undisguised. In 1857 the policy of the Provost Marshal delayed the advent of peace until a wise man inaugurated a clement policy, and a mutiny which might have lasted for years was calmed in a few months. In Canada a similar rivalry of race, a similar divergence of language and tradition, bid fair to distract that province for ever. The same mad policy of force was tried in vain, and not until a wise statesman took up the reins of government did the tumult subside.

We are plunging blindly towards an unseen goal. We do not know when we shall reach it, nor how we shall reach it, nor if we shall reach it. Is this the majestic progress of a mighty empire? The capture by an army of a town or territory is not of necessity a conquest. There may be a victory more fatal to the victor than to the vanquished; there may be a success that turns to Dead Sea apples in our mouths. The glory of a great empire is not to win isolated triumphs, but to proportion her aims to her strength, to see with clear eyes the road along which she means to travel, and to make sure that every victory

[1] Burke is out of fashion, but even now it is difficult to read this noble appeal without emotion:

"All this, I know, well enough, will sound wild and chimerical to the profane herd of those vulgar and mechanical politicians, who have no place among us; a sort of people who think that nothing exists but what is gross and material; and who therefore, far from being qualified to be directors of the great movement of empire, are not fit to turn a wheel in the machine. But to men truly initiated and rightly taught, these ruling and master principles, which, in the opinion of such men as I have mentioned, have no substantial existence, are in truth every thing and all in all. Magnanimity in politics is not seldom the truest wisdom; and a great empire and little minds go ill together. If we are conscious of our situation, and glow with zeal to fill our place as becomes our station and ourselves, we ought to auspicate all our public proceedings on America with the old warning of the church, *Sursum corda!* We ought to elevate our minds to the greatness of that trust to which the order of Providence has called us. By adverting to the dignity of this high calling, our ancestors have turned a savage wilderness into a glorious empire; and have made the most extensive, and the only honourable conquests; not by destroying, but by promoting, the wealth, the number, the happiness, of the human race." *On Conciliation with America.*

is a step in the orderly graduation of her progress. That is wise and conscious effort directed to ends which may be good or may be bad, but which at all events will be attained.

What can ultimate victory leave us but two ruined lands and sullen peoples? We may pour army after army into South Africa; we may make a desert and call it peace; but the peace will not be there. The clumsy and violent methods which we are using will poison and inflame the wholy body. Men have said that the epitaph of South Africa should be *Too late;* but a more just inscription would be *Too soon.* It is ignorance and impatience which have inflicted on this unhappy country those cruel wounds which only tact and time will cure, and many generations will pass before the bitter memories of these two years are blotted out from the minds of the Dutch. English men and English women have suffered great and abiding sorrow, but they have not seen their citizen soldiers sent captive to a distant land, their country laid desolate, their women carried into captivity, their independence taken from them.[1] These things will never be utterly forgotten, but it may be that their fierce outlines will be softened by the lapse of years and the wisdom of men. South Africa requires no "surgical operation," she asks only patience and sympathy and the healing hands of time.

As we went to war to vindicate a misty claim to Suzerainty, so we seem likely to remain at war because we have not the clear sight and the moral courage which can see a means of escape from a lamentable complication. It has been the ambition of every statesman to form South Africa into a federation under the English flag, and it is the declared ambition of our own Ministers to endow our new possessions with the largest powers of self-government. If therefore it is now in our power to end at once this most unhappy and inglorious war with a settlement which would give us all that the most sanguine ever dared to hope, what is it but temper and the spirit of revenge which delay the advent of peace? There is in every heart, expressed or unexpressed, a deep longing for peace. England requires it, the enemy would welcome it: are we so set on unconditional submission that peace shall only come to us by that fatal path?

For what are we fighting now? Is it to vindicate British supremacy in South Africa? But was that supremacy ever in real danger? No sane Boer questioned our power or our rights, and on any assumption they are surely vindicated now. Is it to gain the franchise for our citizens, and to undo the grievances of the mine-owners? We can gain the one and undo the other by an honourable peace. It must be, then, that, as embittered partisans have told us, we are fighting to force the Boers to their knees, to compel an unconditional submission, to thrash the remaining life out of this stubborn people who have defied us so long. Is this a worthy aim for the conquerors of Napoleon? Nor shall we reach our end. We are essaying now an impossible task. We may slay the bodies of our foe, but they have something else which is beyond our reach. You cannot dam the mountain stream or force back freedom to her source. Illimitable as the rolling veldt, indestructible as the high hills that

[1] The words of Paine are as true to-day of South Africa as they were true one hundred and twenty years ago of America—"We are a people who think not as you think; and what is equally true, you cannot feel as we feel. The situations of the two countries are exceedingly different. Ours has been the seat of war; yours has seen nothing of it. The most wanton destruction has been committed in our sight; the most insolent barbarity has been acted on our feelings. We can look around and see the remains of burnt and destroyed houses, once the fair fruit of hard industry. We walk over the dead whom we loved, in every part of America, and remember by whom they fell. There is scarcely a village but brings to life some melancholy thought, and reminds us of what we have suffered, and of those we have lost by the inhumanity of Britain. A thousand images arise to us, which, from situation, you cannot see, and we are accompanied by as many ideas which you cannot know."

Thomas Paine to Lord Shelburne.

nurture it, the national spirit of this people will elude our fetters. Its allies will be bitter agony and memory and time and hope, *and man's unconquerable mind.*

The war indeed has long lost its glamour. To a large section of the English people it has always been odious and in the eyes of every foreign nation we suffer daily humiliation. The support of our Colonies, the patience of our citizens, the valour of our army, the individual heroism of our soldiers cannot cleanse it from the trail of finance which has been over it from the beginning. Can we draw comfort or glory from such a war? Deep down in our hearts is there not a shrinking shame when our Ministers confess that they have half starved the wives and children of our enemy; that they have burnt their farms because they cannot conquer them? Is our brave army to be made the tools of civil meanness? Is there here the dignity and the chivalry of war? is there not rather unutterable disgrace?

We hear to-day the old taunt of treachery, the old bitter cry that to oppose the policy of one's nation is to be guilty of treason. There is indeed no prejudice more healthy than the instinct which prompts us to defend or condone national errors. But there are times when a man may dare to criticise a national policy; and is it certain that those who counsel chivalry and forbearance and peace are traitors to England? May not in their veins run as passionate a love of England as that which inspires the preachers of violence and force? Is there not an England of Shakespeare and Milton, of Chatham and Fox and Burke, of Nelson and Wellington and Havelock, and of a thousand others who could live and die for England with no insult for a brave foe on their lips? There may be an England which is not the England of Wedderburn and North, of the German stockjobber and the Jew contractor; an England which is not the England of the music-hall and of the shouting streets; not the England who lifts her timid cheek to the strong and turns to crush the little nations. The England of our history and our hopes is chivalrous and merciful, silent and self-reliant, not given to vain boasting and abuse, lover of free nations, defender of the weak.

> "The Moving Finger writes; and, having writ,
> Moves on: nor all your Piety nor Wit
> Shall lure it back to cancel half a Line,
> Nor all your Tears wash out a Word of it."

We stand on the threshold of a new century and of a new reign. It is our duty and our highest interest to husband our resources, to free ourselves from the gloomy fatalism which has involved us in this war and seems likely to prevent our extrication from its embarrassments. The future is dark and big with storms. The nations are watching us, and the exhaustion of a great war may be an occasion for our foes.

Two paths lie open. One seems obvious and broad, and we are treading it now. It is hard to turn back, but the road turns to ultimate disaster. The other path is steep and strewn with thorns and stones that wound and mortify our pride. But difficult though it be it leads straight to peace and honour. *Better is he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city.*

APPENDIX A.

Agriculture in South Africa.

The following is a summary of a paper read before the Royal Colonial Institute by Mr. R. Wallace, Professor of Agriculture in the University of Edinburgh. Mr. Wallace had just returned from a visit of investigation.

It remains to be decided whether or not South Africa is an agricultural and stock-raising country capable of great development and of supporting many more inhabitants of European origin. My personal belief is that South Africa will never be developed through its agriculture, but that development will first come through the mines, not alone of gold and diamonds but of silver, copper, coal, and many other valuable minerals, which in South Africa seem to be represented in a manner for variety and extent unsurpassed in any other area of similar extent. The demands for fruit and vegetable products at the mines will, no doubt, lead to the extension of market gardening near these populous centres, but the development of the general agriculture of the country will be a slow process. The chances are that, for a time, it will go back in the two new Colonies, because the Dutch population will not henceforward exercise so much control over the black people who have done this work, and the area of cultivation will naturally contract. A great deal has been written about irrigation being the probable salvation of the country. Many small local ventures have been marvellously successful in transforming what was desert into Gardens of Eden. At Douglas, for example, a prosperous community has sprung up on small plots, many of which were sold recently at £53 per acre. Land under ordinary farm crops is held at Oudsthoorn at from £50 to £150 per acre of capital value. Fruit lands of good quality have, in some instances, run up to several hundreds of pounds per acre, and at Warrenton, in a report issued by Government authority, the record annual return of £100 per acre is mentioned. A good many promising irrigation schemes have been examined in various districts of Cape Colony, but most of them involve the expenditure of a large amount of capital, and will require to be worked with much skill and care to make them pay. But all the possible schemes put together would not form a scheme large enough to produce any appreciable difference on the development of the vast area of South Africa. Admitting that there are many small irrigation ventures that are likely to be financially successful, even with a considerable capital outlay, it is a fact that no great irrigation undertaking, like those of India, is possible. There the cause of success of the great canal systems of Northern India is that the inlets are supplied near the basis of the mountains by the never-failing drainage from their ever snow-clad summits, and most abundantly when the sun is hottest and when water is most wanted. In South Africa the conditions are quite different. There is no summer reserve of snow. The torrential rains pass off in a few days by deep channels from which water can only be taken in limited quantities, at few points, and at great expense. No deep storage dams could be contemplated in the mountains to supply an area, say, of 100,000 acres, and the shallow dams which it is possible to form in a flat country, with an evaporation of a depth of from five to seven feet of water annually, become in a few years salt marshes. This fact has been abundantly demonstrated at Van Wyk's Vlei, in the dry Carnarvon district of Cape Colony. The irrigation dam at Beaufort West has also demonstrated that shallow dams in the Karoo rapidly fill with silt washed in from the drainage area. Without irrigation the extent of South Africa that is capable of cultivation with satisfactory results is an infinitesimal fraction of the whole, and even that is subjected to periodical droughts, which at times destroy a whole season's crop; to destructive hailstorms, which are especially prevalent on the central plateau; and to fungoid parasitic pests on the common grain crops, which make the growth of European cereals practically impossible during the wet season of summer. It is highly probable that among the new disease-resisting breeds of cross-fertilised grains which have been produced at Newton-le-Willows by the brothers Garton species of both oats and wheat may be found on experiment to overcome this difficulty, but still sufficient reasons remain why South Africa will never be a great agricultural country capable of exporting grain. With the development of the local irrigation schemes that are possible, and better systems of management, it may more nearly produce the amount of food requisite for internal consumption. The possible development in the numbers of live stock is, for the present, curtailed by the prevalence of so many diseases, which reduce profits and introduce an additional element of speculation, which cannot fail to check the investment of capital in the industry. The common diseases and parasitic affections are nowhere better represented, but in addition South Africa has a number of diseases peculiarly her own, for which specifics have not yet been found. The prospects in the live stock industry are, nevertheless, decidedly more promising than those of cultivation, but the introduction of means to combat the present difficulties will necessarily be a slow process, involving a period of probably many years. To my mind the most important question at issue in South Africa is that of labour. Unless some method be found to induce the black men to work, the development of South Africa in all but the richest mines will be indefinitely postponed.

APPENDIX B.

A CONVENTION CONCLUDED BETWEEN HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN, &c., &c., AND THE SOUTH AFRICAN REPUBLIC.

NOTE.—*The words and paragraphs bracketed or printed in italics are proposed to be inserted, those within a black line are proposed to be omitted.*

Her Majesty's Commissioners for the settlement of the Transvaal Territory, duly appointed as such by a Commission passed under the Royal Sign Manual and Signet, bearing date the 5th of April, 1881, do hereby undertake and guarantee, on behalf of Her Majesty, that from and after the 8th day of August, 1881, complete self-government, subject to the suzerainty of Her Majesty, Her Heir and Successors, will be accorded to the inhabitants of the Transvaal Territory, upon the following terms and conditions, and subject to the following reservations and limitations:—

Whereas the Government of the Transvaal State, through its Delegates, consisting of Stephanus Johannes Paulus Kruger, President of the said State; Stephanus Johannes Du Toit, Superintendent of Education; Nicholas Jacobus Smit, a member of the Volksraad, have represented to the Queen that the Convention signed at Pretoria on the 3rd day of August, 1881, and ratified by the Volksraad of the said State on the 25th October, 1881, contains certain provisions which are inconvenient, and imposes burdens and obligations from which the said State is desirous to be relieved; and that the south-western boundaries fixed by the said Convention should be amended with a view to promote the peace and good order of the said state, and of the countries adjacent thereto; and whereas Her Majesty the Queen, &c., &c., has been pleased to take the said representations into consideration. Now, therefore, Her Majesty has been pleased to direct, and it is hereby declared that the following articles of a new Convention. . . . . shall when ratified by the Volksraad of the South African Republic, be substituted for the Articles embodied in the Convention of 3rd August, 1881; which latter, pending such ratification, shall continue in full force and effect.

Signed at ~~Pretoria~~ *London* this ~~3rd day of August, 1881.~~

~~HERCULES ROBINSON,~~
~~President and~~ High Commissioner.
~~EVELYN WOOD, Major General,~~
~~Officer Administering the Government.~~
~~J. H. de VILLIERS.~~

We, the undersigned, Stephanus Johannes Paulus Kruger, ~~Martinus Wessel Pretorius~~, and ~~Petrus Jacobus Joubert~~, as ~~representative~~ *delegates* of the ~~Transvaal Burghers,~~ *South African Republic*, do hereby agree to all the above conditions, reservations, and limitations, ~~under which self-government has been restored to the inhabitants of the Transvaal Territory, subject to the suzerainty of Her Majesty, Her Heirs and Successors, and we agree to accept the Government of the said Territory, with all rights and obligations thereto appertaining on the 8th day of August, 1881,~~ and we ~~promise and~~ undertake that this Convention shall be ratified by a ~~newly elected~~ Volksraad of the ~~Transvaal State~~ *South African Republic* within ~~three~~ *six* months from this date.

Signed at ~~Pretoria~~ *London* this ~~3rd day of August, 1881.~~

~~S. J. P. KRUGER,~~
~~M. W. PRETORIUS,~~
~~P. J. JOUBERT.~~

Looting and Burning a Boer Farm.

(An English Artist's Sketch, as published in the London Graphic)

A PICTURE THAT SPEAKS MORE THAN WORDS CAN EXPRESS.

COULD ANYTHING BE MORE HEART-RENDING, BARBAROUS OR DESPICABLE?

Permission is granted to reprint with engraving. It is desired that it be given the widest circulation.

Additional copies will be furnished by addressing CHARLES D. PIERCE, Trustee and Treasurer BOER RELIEF FUND, 136 Liberty Street, New York.

This picture—which is not exaggerated or overdrawn—was published in the London *Graphic* and is from a sketch by an English artist, and shows how the British are waging war against women and children, whose protectors have either been killed in battle or are imprisoned at St. Helena or Ceylon. There are over 70,000 poor, suffering, homeless women and children in South Africa, imprisoned in pens and stockades under British guards, including among them many refined, elderly ladies over seventy years of ago; thousands have died from sickness, exposure and starvation.

In the illustration is shown the unprotected wife and children, driven from their once happy home, which is being destroyed; a few articles of furniture, bedding and a trunk are shown; the house is in flames; a British officer is giving instructions to his aides; two soldiers are running after chickens;—all in the presence of the sorrow-stricken mother and children.

Much has been said and written concerning the burning of Boer farm-houses by the British troops in South Africa, accurate accounts of which are constantly being published in English papers from reports and letters of officers, engineers and soldiers of the British army, many of whom have cameras with which pictures were taken to verify reports. Since Great Britain has found that she is unable to subjugate the Boers by honorable warfare, she seeks to depopulate their country and starve the people into submission. Orders have been issued by Lord Roberts and Gen. Kitchener to seize and remove all cattle, sheep, hogs, chickens, grain, foodstuffs, growing crops, wagons and farming implements from all farms, and where that is not possible, they are to be destroyed, whether the owner is present or not. The soldiers are also to blow up and burn all farm-houses and outbuildings, not allowing the family to remove any of the house furnishings, they being hastily driven away with only the clothing they have on their backs.

Looting and Burning a Boer Farm.—*Continued.*

The Boer home is usually a building of one story, the walls of which are built of blocks of stone or bricks. The roof is either thatched or covered with corrugated sheet iron. The walls being very strong, it is necessary to use a high explosive. The officer and his engineer first enter the house, throwing the carpets, bedding, curtains and all inflammable material in a heap in the middle of the rooms. The engineer removes a stone from the inside of the wall; he then places a high explosive, such as dynamite or explosive gun cotton, in the opening, attaching a fuse. The explosive is covered with earth and pieces of stone, all of which is tamped hard in order that the explosion will be most effective. The torch is then applied to the inflammabable materials; the entire building is in flames; there is a powerful explosion, a cloud of smoke, a shower of stones, and the Boer home is destroyed beyond repair.

A RELIC OF BARBARISM!

By order of the British Government. V. R. means Victoria Regina (Queen).

V. R.

(By the Grace of God.)

PUBLIC NOTICE.

It is hereby notified for information, that unless the men at present on commando belonging to families in the town and district of Kruegersdorp surrender themselves and hand in their arms to the Imperial Authorities by 20th July, the whole of their property will be confiscated, and their families turned out destitute and homeless.

By Order,
G. H. M. RITCHIE, (Capt. K. Horse).
District Supt. Police.

KRUGERSDORP, *9th July*, 1900.

Verbatim copy from Johannesburg Gazette, July 21, 1900.

The following extracts are from newspapers published in London:

Mr. E. W. Smith, writing in the Morning Leader of May 21st, under date of April 29th, says:

"Gen. French and Gen. Pole-Carew, at the head of the Guards and 18th Brigade, are marching in, burning practically everything in the road. The brigade is followed by about 3,500 head of loot, cattle and sheep. Hundreds of tons of corn and forage have been destroyed. The troops engaged in the work are Roberts' Horse, the Canadians and Australians. I hear to-day that Gen. Rundle burnt his way up to Dewetsdorp. At one farm only women were left. Orders were inexorable. The woman threw her arms around the officer's neck and begged that the homestead might be spared. When the flames burst from the doomed place the poor woman threw herself on her knees, tore open her bodice and bared her breasts, screaming: 'Shoot me! shoot me! I've nothing to live for now that my husband is gone, and our farm is burnt and our cattle taken!' "

A lady in Colesburg, thus described the looting of her home:

"On Friday, March 2, the first body of troops appeared. Monday, after breakfast, eight men arrived. They forced the doors, took whatever they wanted—carts, three saddles, pillows, blankets, sheets, clothing, down to even the baby's baptismal cloak, Mr. J.'s wedding presents, family Bible, telescope, microscope—all pictures on the wall and mirrors were smashed."

Writing to his father at Whaplode, Spalding, from Enslin Camp, Trooper G. Benton says:

"We burned and blew up some beautiful houses that the Free Staters have left. You would hardly believe what furniture they have; some beautiful pianos—and all the lot go."

A special correspondent of the Manchester Guardian, after riding from Bloemfontein to Kimberly, wrote:

"The way is a line of desolation. The farm-houses have not merely been sacked—they have been savagely destroyed. The mirrors have been smashed, the pianos wrecked, children's toys and books wantonly destroyed. Even the buildings themselves have been burned."

The same correspondent writes May 8th, from Col. Mahon's headquarters, Dry Harts Siding:

"In ten miles we have burned no fewer than six farm-houses; the wife watched from her sick husband's bedside the burning of her home a hundred yards away. It seemed as though a kind of domestic murder was being committed. I stood till late last night and saw the flames lick around each poor piece of furniture—the chairs and tables, the baby's cradle, the chest of drawers, containing a world of treasure, and when I saw the poor housewife's face pressed against the window of a neighboring house my own heart burned with a sense of outrage. The effect on the Colonial troops, who are gratifying their feelings of hatred and revenge, is very bad. They swarm into the houses, looting and destroying, filling the air with high-sounding cries of vengeance."

Private Stanley of the N. S. W. contingent, writes to the Sydney Telegraph:

"When within 800 yards of the farm we halted, and the infantry blazed a volley into the house; we broke open the place and went in. It was beautifully furnished, and the officers got several things they could make use of. There was a lovely library—books of all descriptions, printed in Dutch and English. I secured a Bible; also a rifle, quite new. After getting all we wanted out of the house, our men put a charge under and blew it up. It seemed such a pity; it was a lovely house."

Mr. Porter Smith of New Westminster, writes:

"We are camped with some of the Munster Fusiliers, doing most of the scouting. They make great hauls—watches, clothes, money and jewelry."

A correspondent of the Daily Mail thus describes the flight to the Vaal, just before the arrival of the British troops:

"Huge wagons drawn by full spans of trek oxen, piled high with farm-house furniture, where perched wistful-eyed women and children, with frightened, tear-stained faces; passed deserted houses with wide, open doors, and scattered belongings; passed ambulances filled with groaning wounded. It was bitterly cold. The wind has a frost edge and cut to the quick. Thinly-clad women clasped their shivering babes. Heartrending as was this enforced abandonment of homes, few hesitated to make the sacrifice. Anything was better than to fall into the hands of the hated English."

John N. King, who served with the American scouts in the Boer army, under Capt. John A. Hassell, writes:

"As to the statement that the women and children in South Africa are not needing relief, I will say that funds were being raised in the Transvaal before Johannesburg and Pretoria fell; that over 15,000 refugees depended on what the government furnished them, and that when the English took those cities they took all the provisions we had left and gave them nothing but cornmeal to eat. There were 3,000 destitute women and children at Barberton alone, who had been driven from their homes, and who depended solely upon the government for their support."

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The following publications are authentic and among the best published; they will be furnished by this office at prices stated, cash to accompany orders, the object being to furnish literature at as near cost as possible, to disseminate the truth throughout the United States regarding the war in South Africa, and to enlist from the American people a well-deserved sympathy for those brave Boers who are fighting as heroically for liberty and independence as did the Americans in 1776. If books (or other articles) are to be forwarded by registered mail, send 10 cents additional for register fee.

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