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ROBINS

THE TRUTH ABOUT THE TRANSVAAL

GATHERED FROM THE DESPATCHES BETWEEN THE
BRITISH AND BOER GOVERNMENTS, AND THE
OFFICIAL REPORT OF THE BLOEM-
FONTEIN CONFERENCE



AN ADDRESS

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Pam. 7

TO
THE SOLDIERS OF THE QUEEN
IN SOUTH AFRICA

THIS HUMBLE EFFORT TO PROVE THEIR COUNTRY'S
CAUSE NOT UNWORTHY OF THEIR VALOUR,
IS AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED

NOTE TO SECOND EDITION.

I draw attention, with double satisfaction, to the article by Captain A. T. Mahan, U. S. N., in *THE NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW* for the present month.

It is extremely gratifying to me that a writer of Captain Mahan's reputation, and moreover an American, uses precisely the same data and reaches identically the same conclusions as myself. Having neither literary standing, nor prominence in any other way, to recommend my effort to the general public, the support of Captain Mahan's article is particularly welcome.

I also congratulate myself that my address was delivered and printed early enough to relieve me of the suspicion of plagiarism.

Although Captain Mahan refers liberally to the Parliamentary Blue-Books his extracts therefrom are necessarily very brief. I, on the other hand, have quoted copiously from that source, which encourages me to hope that this pamphlet may be found by many a useful supplement to Captain Mahan's article.

This pamphlet, which pretends to be nothing more than a mere compilation of evidence such as any careful student might make, has been printed in response to the wish of a number of American citizens who heard the address, and who share my earnest desire for the most cordial relations between the United States and Great Britain.

In common with a great majority of my countrymen I deeply regret that American opinion is so largely unfavorable to England upon the South African question. I am persuaded that this arises from lack of correct information; and I am therefore hopeful that in presenting the unquestionable facts, I may have performed a slight service to both countries. No intelligent American who knows the truth can, I am sure, doubt that England's success will be in the interest of justice and liberty as well as of lasting benefit to the Boers themselves.

Should the reader agree with these remarks I trust he will recommend the pamphlet to his friends, a hope I feel at liberty to express inasmuch as no pecuniary advantage will accrue to myself.

THE AUTHOR.

WALKERVILLE, ONT., March, 1900.

INTRODUCTION.

I find myself to-night in a position which calls for some explanation. The platform is not my sphere, nor have I any inclination for it; much less do I presume to be here by reason of any weight which my opinions may carry. I stand before you, against my own wish, from a profound sense of duty, and I beg your indulgence in the performance of a task which I would gladly leave in abler hands.

Ever since hostilities broke out in South Africa I have been impressed with the great importance of a proper understanding of the subject by the people of Canada, and particularly on this border, where, naturally, we are more or less influenced by the views entertained by our neighbors across the river, and they in turn to some extent draw conclusions from what they see and hear on this side. As it became more and more manifest that misconception existed in both communities, I made an effort to induce Dr. Parkin, (Principal of Upper Canada College, and perhaps second to none as an authority upon Imperial subjects), whose eloquent voice not long ago was heard in this hall, to pay us another visit. I used every argument I could command to persuade him to come; but he replied that it was absolutely impossible for him to get away.

For months I have been studying the subject for my own satisfaction, and among other things I have obtained the British Blue Books thereon. These, as many of you know, are the official record, containing the despatches on both sides. They are absolutely non-partisan, because the statements and arguments of the Transvaal are printed with the same fullness and accuracy as those of England. They are consequently free from that bias which is apt to appear, however little intended, in any other narrative.

In the course of conversation a number of my friends became aware that I possessed and had diligently read these books. Many of them found therein information entirely new to them; several confessed themselves much strengthened thereby in their previous views; and others that serious doubts formerly entertained were entirely removed, to their great peace of mind.

A number of these acquaintances represented to me that it was in my power to perform a public service by making known in a more general way what I had communicated to them privately. If that be true, as I hope it is, I should be lacking in patriotism if I hesitated to assume the task because it would be more agreeable to my feelings to sit in the audience than to stand where I now am.

It may be thought by some of you unnecessary that anything more should be said upon a subject which has already been so much

written about. There are books upon books dealing with this matter; and the magazine articles are very numerous. But the difficulty with these is that the reader suspects prejudice. Against the views of one author there are found the opposite opinions of another. They differ greatly even in their statements of fact. Moreover, but few people can possess themselves of this mass of literature; and fewer still would be inclined to read it all.

I am not presumptuous enough to add my mere opinions to this already large list. I intend to present for your consideration facts drawn from the fountain head. Some remarks of my own I must of necessity introduce in order to connect the selections made from a very voluminous record. My chief embarrassment has been to decide what to omit. I have been compelled most reluctantly to pass over a great deal of very important matter, but I can say with truth that I have not attempted to conceal anything which would be more favorable to the Boers or less favorable to the British.

I wish to make it quite clear that in considering the present situation we have no right to go behind the Agreement of 1881. Whatever faults there may have been previous to that, (and I have no doubt there were many on both sides), a fresh start was then made. A great deal of sympathy is being worked up for the Boers in connection with their migration from Cape Colony sixty to seventy years ago. It is not fair that our judgment of the present should be in any way warped by the remote past. The vendetta has no place in modern civilization. What we have to decide is whether the people of to-day have dealt fairly one with another.

I also want to make it absolutely clear that neither the Boers nor the British as a people are here on trial. The question is purely one of governments. That the Boers as a race have many admirable qualities no fair-minded Englishman wishes to deny. But, however much good there may be in the Boers individually, that cannot change the facts with regard to President Kruger, who admittedly has managed things his own way for a long time, nor as to the officials by whom he was assisted. When, therefore, I speak of the Boers unfavorably, I shall mean simply their Government at Pretoria.

The hope has been expressed that I would present both sides of this question fairly. If that were not my intention there would be no excuse for my taking up your time. I shall find it necessary to say some rather severe things about the conduct of the Transvaal Government in this controversy, and if I do not bring out anything to their credit it is simply because I have been absolutely unable to find anything. I say in all sincerity, with a full sense of my responsibility, that the official and unimpeachable history of their part in these negotiations is the most amazing chronicle of persistent bad faith which ever came under my observation.

THE TRANSVAAL WAR

THE merits of this conflict are very generally misunderstood by both foreigners and our own people. Considering the importance of the issue to the world at large, misconception in either quarter is regrettable; but in view of its special and enormous significance to ourselves it is in the highest degree desirable that we should know the truth. In a task which perhaps no living man can now measure it would be deplorable, and it might indeed prove a calamity, if we Britons are not of one mind as to the righteousness of our cause. The South African situation is in itself surrounded by many grave uncertainties. No one can yet tell the extent of the Boer resources; it is unknown how far the disloyalty of the Dutch population of Cape Colony and Natal, (far outnumbering those of British extraction), may go; there is the ever present danger from the native tribes, who are thousands to hundreds of all the white races combined. When we remember further that besides the munitions of war even the food for men and horses has to be transported at least seven to eight thousand miles, and often more, it must be seen that our difficulties are sufficiently formidable. Should there be added to these European intervention, (at present apparently unlikely), or should England become involved in a struggle elsewhere, any half-heartedness toward this contest would enormously weaken the Government, of whatever party, and might lead to the acceptance of terms which the nation would afterward bitterly regret. Moreover, if we have our quarrel just, it is due to those in London who carry the anxieties of the situation, and to those brave fellows who are gallantly representing us in the field, that a united people should be at their backs, promptly providing the money without which no war can be carried on to the best advantage, and cheerfully enduring such sacrifices as may be necessary to the complete success of the British arms.

I have friends, good, loyal subjects, whose minds are disquieted about this matter. They fear that our rulers have not acted wisely; that they have made too much of a rather small difference with the Transvaal. Some there are who even believe the tale of our enemies, that the greatest and richest empire on the globe has picked a quarrel with a small community of peaceable farmers who asked only to be left in quiet possession of their few square miles of land. Small wonder if honest men who entertain such misgivings are ill at ease; less wonder that those not of our nation who have such impressions take us to task on the street, in public meetings and through the press. But never in our history was there less warrant for any of these things. Only a knowledge of the truth is needed to satisfy our own consciences, to reassure our questioning

friends, and to confute those enemies of England who revile her under all circumstances. To me it seems clear that we have rarely gone to war with equal justification, and certainly never with more. I do not mean that the gauntlet was actually thrown down by the Transvaal. I am ready to admit that it is not he who strikes the first blow, but he who renders blows necessary, who is responsible for the fight. I am willing to make every possible allowance for the Boers; and after that is done there is enough and to spare to prove them the deliberate aggressors.

I found the other day in an American newspaper an article condemning our war in South Africa, which is a fair example of the prevailing misconception of the essential facts. The article is really friendly to England in a general way, which makes it the more unfortunate and the more mischievous that it should be wrong in its premises. Let me quote a portion of it:

“ Granted the worst of the outlanders’ grievances were true, these made no issue justifying war after the concession offered by Kruger, if they ever did. And the issue of paramountcy was set up after the war was inevitable. It will be remembered to the end of time that, more than a century after the American revolution, England attempted coercion of a free, civilized and self-centred people where that was unnecessary.”

It would be impossible for this well-meaning writer to stray further from the truth. The grievances of the outlanders would have justified war at any time during many years, and the wonder of it is that they were endured so long and so patiently. The concession offered by Kruger was no concession, and he knew it was no concession, because he attached thereto a condition which had no relation to the wrongs of the outlanders, and the refusal of which he was well aware was certain. So far from attempting more than a century after the American revolution to coerce a free, civilized and self-centred people, England is contending against ignorance, bigotry and corruption for the first principles of freedom; for free speech; for a free press; for the equality of man; for the fair administration of the law; for the political doctrine which had its birth in the American revolution, “no taxation without representation;” and last, but not least, for that security against oppression which England guarantees to her children wherever they may be.

The difficulties which culminated in this conflict were numerous and frequent; and, unhappily, it seemed impossible to end them. Most of the things complained of would not have happened, and such questions as did arise would have been much more easy to adjust, but for the bitterness between the two races. Nothing would be gained now by discussing the origin of the Boer ill-feeling toward the English; but it is necessary to note its existence, because in these later years it has unfortunately revived with most disastrous consequences. There seems to be no doubt

that, as usual, there were in the beginning faults on both sides, and we need not try to apportion the blame.

In 1877 the antipathy of the Boers had so far died out, or become dormant, that to all appearances a large section of them welcomed annexation and another large section accepted it without serious resentment. Opinions are much divided regarding the wisdom of that step on England's part, and equally so as to its subsequent revocation. But there seems to be no question that the country was in a bankrupt condition, badly demoralized politically, and utterly powerless to protect itself against the hostile natives. The then President, Mr. Burgers, addressing the Volksraad shortly before annexation was proclaimed, said:—

“I would rather be a policeman under a strong
 “Government than the President of such a State. It is you
 “—you members of the Raad and the Boers—who have
 “lost the country, who have sold your independence for a
 “drink. You have ill-treated the natives, you have shot
 “them down, you have sold them into slavery, and now you
 “have to pay the penalty.”

* * *

“We should delude ourselves by entertaining the
 “hope that matters would mend by-and-by. It would only
 “be self-deceit. I tell you openly, matters are as bad as
 “they ever can be; they cannot be worse. These are bitter
 “truths, and people may perhaps turn their backs on me;
 “but then I shall have the consolation of having done my
 “duty.”

* * *

“To-day a bill for £1,100 was laid before me for
 “signature; but I would sooner have cut off my right hand
 “than sign that paper, for I have not the slightest ground
 “to expect that when that bill becomes due there will be a
 “penny to pay it with.”

I quote also a few lines from a report by Sir Bartle Frere, a man whose honesty has, I believe, never been questioned, as to what he found more than two years later.

“I was particularly impressed by the replies of a
 “very fine specimen of a Boer of the old school. He had
 “been six weeks in an English prison, daily expecting exe-
 “cution as a rebel, and had been wounded by all the enemies
 “against whom his countrymen had fought — English,
 “Zulus, Basutos, Griquas and Bushmen.

“‘But,’ he said, ‘that was in the days of my youth
 “‘and inexperience. Had I known then what I know now
 “‘I would never have fought against the English, and I

“will never fight them again. Old as I am, I would now
 “gladly turn out against the Zulus, and take fifty friends
 “of my own who would follow me anywhere; but I dare
 “not leave my home till assured it will not be destroyed
 “and my property carried off in my absence by the men
 “who call me REBEL, because I will not join them against
 “the Government. My wife, brought up like a civilized
 “woman in the Cape Colony, has had five times in her life
 “to run from the house and sleep in the veld when attacked
 “by Zulus and Basutos. One of our twelve sons was asse-
 “gaid in sight of our house, within the last ten years, by
 “a marauding party; and in my absence from the house,
 “when it was surrounded by Basutos, my wife had to fly
 “in the night by herself, leading one child and carrying
 “another on her back. She walked nearly fifty miles
 “through the Lion Veld, seeing three lions on the way,
 “before she reached a place of safety. It is not likely that
 “we should forget such things, nor wish them to recur;
 “but how can I leave her on my farm and go to Zululand
 “when the malcontent leaders threaten me that if I go
 “they will burn my house and drive off all my stock?
 “Assure me that we are not to be deserted by the English
 “Government, and left to the mercy of these malcontent
 “adventurers, and I and my people will gladly turn out to
 “assist Colonel Wood.”

And later, when the war of independence was over, Mr. Thomas Fortescue Carter, in his book “A Narrative of the Boer War,” which is by no means complimentary to the motives of the British Government, thus describes the attitude of the Boers toward annexation:

“Anyone who knows the acquaintance Sir T. Shep-
 “stone had with the Boers of the Transvaal, years prior to
 “the annexation, cannot doubt that, regarded as a friend
 “and almost as one of themselves, no one better than he
 “could have been selected for the task of ascertaining the
 “desires of the people; and no one who knows Sir T. Shep-
 “stone will believe that he did not take sufficient evidence
 “to prove to any man that the Boers were anxious to be
 “extricated from the dilemma they were in, and really wil-
 “ling at that time that their country should be annexed.
 “Men who during the late war were our foes were at the
 “time of the annexation clamouring for it, welcoming Sir
 “Theophilus Shepstone as the Deliverer and Saviour of the
 “country.

“The natural aversion of the people to English rule
 “was overcome for the moment by their greater aversion to

“being wiped off the face of the Transvaal by the blacks;
 “that was a contingency staring them in the face, and yet
 “not even that imminent common danger availed to secure
 “unity amongst them, or would rouse men individually to
 “take upon their shoulders the responsibility which rests
 “upon every member of a state.”

There were then, as now, crafty and designing men ready to work upon the simple minds of the Boers, to revive their slumbering dislike of the British and to play upon their deep love of independence. Unfortunately the great majority of them were then, as they are still, very ignorant; and, unfortunately too, certain promises made by England when she annexed the country were not carried out as promptly as expected. This did not result from any bad faith, but from the fact that just then Sir Bartle Frere found his hands full with many matters which might well appear to him much more urgent, as described in that admirable book, “The Transvaal From Within,” as follows:—

“The failure to fulfill promises was not deliberate.
 “Circumstances combined to prevent Sir Bartle Frere from
 “visiting the Transvaal, as intended and promised. Native
 “wars, disagreements between the Colonial and Imperial
 “authorities, the obstructions and eventual dismissal of the
 “Molteno-Merriman Ministry, Natal and Diamond-fields
 “affairs, and, above all, the Zulu War, all combined to pre-
 “vent Sir Bartle Frere from fulfilling his obligations to set-
 “tle Transvaal matters.”

Nothing could have been more unlucky for both races than what then took place. The Boers, forgetting the enormous benefits which they had so lately reaped from the British occupation, (whatever might be said for or against it in the long run), suddenly took up arms against the very few British soldiers then in the country, whom by superior numbers and skill with the rifle they defeated.

Shortly came the disaster of Majuba Hill; then the armistice, resulting in the restoration of independence to the Transvaal, subject to British suzerainty, under an agreement known as “The Convention of 1881.” A second Convention was made in 1884; and the dispute which is now being decided by the sword has to do with those two documents. Except as to its influence upon the temper of the parties to these agreements, nothing that went before has any bearing upon the rights or wrongs of this war. I have referred to the annexation because it explains the revival of bad feeling, and also because in many quarters it is charged against England as an unwarranted aggression.

It is both impossible and unnecessary here to consider all the many differences which have arisen under these Conventions, whether settled or unsettled, because two are recognized by both combatants as pre-eminent. They are:

- (1) The alleged grievances of British subjects in the Transvaal;
 (2) The English claim of suzerainty;
 which we will consider in the above order.

THE ALLEGED GRIEVANCES OF BRITISH SUBJECTS IN THE TRANSVAAL.

Our fellow-subjects were continuously complaining of gross injustice, and there is no denial, except by the Boers themselves, (and not by all of them), that these complaints were abundantly well founded and of long duration. Neither does it seem possible to deny that the condition of these people grew steadily worse instead of better.

So much has been written on this subject that it can scarcely be necessary to go into details. I will only quote from the report of a speech made in the Volksraad in August, 1895, by a Boer member, Mr. Jeppe :

“Who are the people who now demand from us a
 “reasonable extension of the franchise? There are, to begin
 “with, almost a thousand old burghers who consent to such
 “extension. There are in addition eight hundred and ninety
 “petitioners, also old burghers, who complain that the
 “franchise has been narrowed by recent legislation, and there
 “is lastly a monster petition bearing 35,700 names, chiefly
 “from the Rand goldfields; and in passing I may mention
 “that I have convinced myself that the signatures to it, with
 “very few exceptions perhaps, are undoubtedly genuine.
 “Well, this petition has been practically signed by the entire
 “population of the Rand. There are not three hundred
 “people of any standing whose names do not appear there.
 “ * * * It embraces also all nationalities; they all
 “have signed it. So have—and that is significant—old
 “burghers from the Free State, whose fathers with yours
 “reclaimed this country; and it bears too the signatures of
 “some who have been born in this country, who know no
 “other fatherland than this Republic, but whom the law
 “regards as strangers. Through our own act this multitude
 “is compelled to stand together, and so to stand in this most
 “fatal of all questions in antagonism to us. * * *
 “Shall we convert them into friends, or shall we send them
 “away empty, dissatisfied, embittered? * * *
 “Well, should we resolve now to refuse this request, what
 “will we do when, as we well know must happen, it is
 “repeated by two hundred thousand one day? You will all
 “admit the doors must be opened. What will become of us

“or our children on that day when we shall find ourselves
 “in a minority of perhaps one in twenty, without a single
 “friend amongst the other nineteen, amongst those who will
 “then tell us they wished to be brothers, but that we by our
 “own act made them strangers to the Republic? Old as the
 “world is, has an attempt like ours ever succeeded for long?
 “Shall we say as a French king did that things will last our
 “time, and after that we reckon not the deluge?”

The request of the petitioners was refused by a vote of sixteen to eight. The President several times spoke against the petition, and one member is reported thus :

“The Raad had frequently heard that if the fran-
 “chise were not extended there would be trouble ; he would
 “say ‘Come on and fight ! Come on ! Come on and have
 “it out ; and the sooner the better !’ ”

And so the Outlanders, seeing no other hope, got ready for the fight, which, however, they trusted would be avoided when the Government saw that they were determined. They laid in arms and prepared for a movement at the end of the year. But the Jameson raid—a most deplorable act for the Outlanders and all South Africa—spoiled their plans. The raiders were captured ; the Government had prepared itself ; and the outcome of the whole matter was that at the request of the British High Commissioner, and upon plausible promises by President Kruger, the Outlanders gave up their arms.

The President's promises were not kept, and matters continued in a most unsettled and dangerous condition until May, 1899, when, at the instance of President Steyn, of the Orange Free State, it was arranged that President Kruger and Sir Alfred Milner, British High Commissioner, should meet at Bloemfontein with a view to finding some friendly solution of the difficulty, which by this time had been rendered acute by a petition to Her Majesty from 21,000 of her subjects setting forth their wrongs and appealing for that protection which is the birthright of every man who owes allegiance to the Union Jack.

President Kruger, accompanied by two members of his executive Council, the Transvaal State Attorney and other officials, met Sir Alfred Milner on May 31st last, when it was agreed that Mr. Fischer, a member of the Executive Council of the Orange Free State, should act as interpreter, which he did throughout.

At the request of President Kruger, Sir Alfred Milner opened the conversation. I quote his exact words because it is desirable when possible to follow that course, and, moreover, neither I, nor, I think, any other man, could hope to find language more convincingly expressive of the sincerest desire for a friendly settlement and to avoid asking any thing which could be reasonably objected to by the Boers.

Sir Alfred Milner said :

“It is my strong conviction that if the Government of

“the South African Republic could now, before things get worse, of its own motion change its policy towards the Uitlanders, and take measures calculated to content the reasonable people among them, who, after all, are a great majority, such a course would not only strengthen the independence of the Republic, but it would make such a better state of feeling all round that it would become far easier to settle outstanding questions between the two Governments.

“I know that the citizens of the South African Republic are intensely jealous of British interference in their internal affairs. What I want to impress upon the President is that if the Government of the South African Republic of its own accord, from its own sense of policy and justice, would afford a more liberal treatment to the Uitlander population this would not increase British interference, but enormously diminish it. If the Uitlanders were in a position to help themselves they would not always be appealing to us under the Convention.”

President Kruger having raised the point that the old burghers might be outvoted, Sir Alfred replied :

“If I made a proposal to admit strangers under such conditions as to swamp the old burghers it would be unreasonable. But the new-comers have, at present, no influence on the legislation of the Republic, which makes an enormous difference. They haven’t got a single representative.”

President Kruger proposed to shorten the period necessary for obtaining the franchise, to which Sir Alfred replied :

“There are a great many objections of the gravest kind to the process by which men may now obtain burgher rights. First of all, before he can begin the process of gradually securing burgher rights—which will be completed in 14 years at present, and in 9 years according to the President—he has to forswear his own allegiance. Take the case of a British subject, which interests me most. He takes the oath and ceases to be a British subject by the mere fact of taking that oath; he loses all the rights of a British subject, and he would still have to wait for twelve years, and under the new plan seven years, before he can become a full citizen of the Republic.

“I think it is unreasonable to ask a man to forswear one citizenship unless in the very act of giving up one he gets another, and I think it is also unnecessary to ask him to do more than take an oath of fealty to the new State, of willingness to obey its laws and to defend its independence, when it is known and certain that the taking of that

“oath deprives him of his existing citizenship. I think the
 “oath should be a simple oath of allegiance, and that it
 “should not be required of a man until the moment he can
 “get full rights in a new State. Now that was the position
 “under the law of 1882. * * *

“As for the period required to qualify for the full
 “franchise, I do not see why the length of time should be
 “longer in the South African Republic than in any other
 “South African State. They are all new countries. In the
 “new country which is springing up in the north, and which
 “is getting a new Constitution this year, the period is one
 “year. The people who have conquered that country for
 “the white race may find that the new-comers are more
 “numerous than they are. *But I do not expect that anything*
 “*like that will be done in the South African Republic; some-*
 “*thing far short of that would be reasonable.* What I do
 “think and desire, and that is the object of my suggestion,
 “is this: that the numerous foreign population engaged in
 “commerce and industry — to which the country, after all,
 “owes its present great position in wealth and influence —
 “should have a real share in the Government of the Repub-
 “lic, *not to over-rule the old burghers — not at all — but to*
 “*share the work of Government with them, so that*
 “*through their gradual co-operation a time may come when,*
 “*instead of being divided into two separate communities, they*
 “*will all be burghers of the same State.* It is not enough that
 “a few people should be let in. It is obvious, however, that
 “you could not let in the whole crowd, without character
 “or anything — I do not ask it — but you want such a sub-
 “stantial measure that in elections of members of the Volks-
 “raad the desires of the new industrial population should
 “have reasonable consideration. They have not got it now,
 “and when the questions that interest them come before the
 “Volksraad it is too evident that they are discussed from an
 “outside point of view. The industrial population are
 “regarded as strangers. I have not the least doubt that the
 “laws that are made appear best to the people that make
 “them, but it is the universal opinion of free and progres-
 “sive nations that laws are best made by people who have
 “to obey them, and not by people outside. The whole of
 “the legislation of the Raad may be good or may be bad,
 “but the laws are made by the Raad for people who have
 “no voice in the Raad, and who in their view of things,
 “their sentiments and sympathies, are widely separated
 “from them, and that, in my opinion, makes the people dis-
 “contented. It would make all the difference in the world



“if, when laws are discussed affecting the new population,
 “some representatives of the new population should be
 “present to explain the views and wishes of that population
 “from the *inside*, not from the outside. * * *

“*I do not want to swamp the old population, but it is*
 “*perfectly possible to give the new population an immediate*
 “*voice in the legislation, and yet to leave the old burghers in*
 “*such a position that they cannot possibly be swamped.*”

The President protested that to adopt Sir Alfred's suggestions would destroy the independence of the Transvaal, and Sir Alfred continued:—

“*As to the question of the independence of the country*
 “*I remain firmly convinced that the things I am urging upon*
 “*the President are calculated to strengthen it. Of course I*
 “*may fail to convince the President of that, but I protest*
 “*absolutely against the view that he is defending the independ-*
 “*ence of his country and I wish to take it away. What makes*
 “*this whole discussion so difficult is the intense prejudice on the*
 “*side of the present burghers, and their intense suspicion of us.*
 “*They think Her Majesty's Government wants to get their*
 “*country back in one way or another. Her Majesty's Gov-*
 “*ernment does not; but what it does desire is that it should*
 “*have such a state of rest in the country as will remove*
 “*causes of friction and difficulty between the Republic and*
 “*Her Majesty's possessions in South Africa, and the whole*
 “*of the British Empire, and my suggestions here are directed*
 “*to that end. I do not want to say it over and over again;*
 “*I say it once for all.*”

After some discussion of the existing laws, the following dialogue took place:

PRESIDENT.—“I would now like His Excellency to propose a
 “scheme.”

SIR ALFRED.—“There are two things I have to consider. *I*
 “*have got to consider the prejudices of the old burghers. I*
 “*know that even if I were to convince the President him-*
 “*self he might have difficulty in convincing other people;*
 “*therefore I must, in proposing anything, propose something*
 “*which it can be made absolutely clear to the old burghers*
 “*will not swamp them. On the other hand I have to con-*
 “*sider that it is perfectly useless to propose something which*
 “*will give no satisfaction whatever to the reasonable desires*
 “*of the new population, which may be rejected at once as*
 “*totally insufficient, the whole object of the proposal being to*
 “*give them such an amount of satisfaction as will bring them*
 “*on to the side of the State, to throw in their lot with it, and to*
 “*work in future with the old burghers as one people.*”

"Bearing these things in mind, what I suggest is this ; that
 "every foreigner who can prove satisfactorily that he has
 "been resident in the country for five years, and that he
 "desires to make it his permanent place of residence, that
 "he is prepared to take the oath to obey the laws, to under-
 "take all the obligations of citizenship, and to defend the
 "independence of the country, should be allowed to become
 "a citizen on taking that oath. This should be confined to
 "persons possessing a certain amount of property, or a
 "certain amount of yearly wages, and who have good
 "characters. In order to make that proposal of any real
 "use for the new citizens, who mostly live in one district in
 "the Republic, and a district which only returns one mem-
 "ber in 28 to the First Raad, and one in 28 to the Second
 "Raad, I propose that there should be a certain number of
 "new constituencies created, the number of which is a
 "detail upon the discussion of which I will not now enter.
 "*But what is vital from my point of view is that the number
 "of these districts should not be so small as to leave the repre-
 "sentatives of the new population in a contemptible minority.*"

The foregoing brings us only to the morning session of the second day. The meetings extended over five days, and during the succeeding sessions the following was said:

SIR ALFRED.—*"If the President thinks that my proposal is
 "going to swamp the old burghers, I have told him that this
 "would not be reasonable, and I do not desire it * * **

*"I fully sympathise with you in not wishing to give
 "a share in the privileges of the country to people who only
 "come for a short time.*

*"There are a number of points outstanding be-
 "tween the Governments independently of the position
 "of the grievances of the British subjects in the South
 "African Republic. There are a number of other points
 "arising out of the complaints of the British subjects
 "on internal affairs. As far as these latter points are con-
 "cerned I hope that it may not be necessary to discuss them,
 "because the moment that the people who raise these complaints
 "are put in a position to fight their own battles within the
 "State I shall, with joy and delight, say to them if they raise
 "complaints: 'You are burghers of that State; you have no
 "'right to complain to me; you must fight your own battles.'
 "There are a lot of questions which would drop if we could come
 "to an agreement on this.*

*"The ground on which I approach the question of the
 "Uitlanders' grievances and my proposal as regards the fran-*

“chise is the existence of grievances and discontent which
 “has lasted for years, which shows no signs of diminution,
 “the existence of which is a danger to the Republic, is a
 “danger to the good relations between the President and
 “Her Majesty’s Government: and which, on the merits of
 “that question alone, I contend ought to be dealt with. I put
 “forward a suggestion as to one way in which it might be
 “dealt with, and I should be glad to hear before we go any
 “further what the President has to say about that pro-
 “posal. * * *

“If the President tells me his view about it we may
 “agree; if we cannot, then I shall begin to feel rather hope-
 “less about the outcome of the whole Conference. *But still*
 “*if a way could be shown me to give the Uitlander population*
 “*a better position as regards the management of their own*
 “*affairs without the franchise, then I am prepared to consider*
 “*it.* * * * *But, of course, I do not contemplate*
 “*for a moment that if that extension of the franchise is given*
 “*Her Majesty’s Government should interfere in constitutional*
 “*questions in the South African Republic.* * * *
 “The moment you give these people a really substantial posi-
 “tion inside the State, always providing against their swamp-
 “ing the whole population, then they will have less tempta-
 “tion to appeal to outside, *and not only Her Majesty’s*
 “*Government, but all fair-minded people, will say that they*
 “*ought not to appeal outside.*”

PRESIDENT.—“But can His Excellency not understand that
 “*if I should give in to what he proposes they get self-control,*
 “*and then I would be practically giving my land away* * * *
 “If it were not that these new-comers are perpetually
 “appealing to outside they would have by this time been
 “burghers amongst us, for that is the principle we started
 “on.”

SIR ALFRED.—“Surely those people were agitating for years
 “within the State first of all.”

PRESIDENT.—“Only on account of the support from outside.
 “They were always seeking for help from outside. I want
 “to allay race feeling, and if they had not continually gone
 “outside they would have been incorporated among the
 “burghers. It is the inroad of Rhodes that has caused the
 “difficulty in not giving them rights.”

SIR ALFRED.—“Really, as an historical fact, the agitation
 “went on for four or five years before it was taken up by
 “Rhodes or any of the capitalists. In fact, the reformers
 “were abusing the capitalists.” * * * * *

PRESIDENT.—“I have already said yesterday, and I repeat, “that the proposition made by His Excellency I cannot “agree to, but we are still considering how far we can meet “him and come nearer and nearer. I have to consider my “Volksraad and my burghers, and if I have to go back and “convince them on matters I must tell them that something “has been given in to me if I give in to something” * *

At this point the President endeavoured to introduce a number of other subjects, notwithstanding that he had invited Sir Alfred to open the discussion, and the one question Sir Alfred had presented as that which in his judgment was the most vital, and the settlement of which he believed would pave the way for an amicable understanding all round, had not been progressed at all. *In fact, Mr. Kruger tried to drive a bargain, holding out the expectation of something being done for the Uitlanders if Sir Alfred would concede to him on points in which the Uitlanders had no interest.* Sir Alfred took the ground that the Uitlander grievances should be dealt with on their merits; in other words, that if there were injustice it should be redressed because it was injustice, as a matter of conscience on the part of the Transvaal and because the dissatisfaction existing was detrimental to the Transvaal itself.

The discussion proceeded upon these lines, the President urging strenuously that consideration of franchise reform should be conditional upon concessions on the other points, and Sir Alfred maintaining that each proposal should be considered upon its merits, but with the assurance that if they could agree upon the question which he regarded as the key to the whole situation he would do everything in his power to bring about a settlement of the whole controversy. Finally it came down to this:—

PRESIDENT.—“I have said already I wish to meet His Excellency as far as possible in his proposal about the franchise. “*** His Excellency has not got any nearer in the matter “of Swaziland, or in the matter of the Indemnity, and on “the point of Arbitration. *But if he will not come nearer to “me on these three points I should get nothing by coming to “an agreement on the point of the franchise.”*

SIR ALFRED.—“However much I may desire to come to a “settlement about this question of the position of the Uit- “lander population, I will not buy such a settlement. I am “convinced that it is very much in the President’s interest, “more in his interest to get it settled. I consider the “present position to be an absolute danger for the South “African Republic.

“I came down here, and my main object was to dis- “cuss this Uitlander question, and I have not put forward “proposals in my interest any more than in the President’s. “I decline to accept the basis he proposes that I should buy

“a just settlement which is as much in his interest as in mine. On the other hand, I quite agree that it is common interest also that there should be a system of settling future differences between us, that it should not be a perpetual case of ‘I say this, and you say that,’ and that nothing should settle it but war — that is common interest too — and on this footing I am willing to consider the question, but not to exchange the two things one for the other; that is a sort of Kaffir bargain. * * *

*“I have come down here at a time of crisis in order to see if one big, straightforward effort might not be made to avert a great disaster, such as an open breach between the two Governments, and I claim that a proposal I have made to that effect should be discussed on its merits. If agreement is not possible on that point, then everything else is waste of time; if it is possible, then I will do everything in my power to remove other difficulties out of the way, and I will be engaged in that work while the President is engaged in obtaining the approval of his burghers to the plan on which we both agree — if we agree. * * **

“When we come back I must ask the President whether he is willing to go into the question which I have propounded.”

PRESIDENT.—“Possibly yes and possibly no; but I will consider and tell His Excellency this afternoon at two o’clock. If His Excellency doesn’t want to go into any point but the franchise it will not be my fault if we do not agree.”

SIR ALFRED.—“I am not asking the President’s adoption of my proposal, but for the expression of his opinion, and to go on with that subject until we have settled it one way or the other, because if that doesn’t succeed nothing else is of any use.”

At the next meeting, (the same afternoon), the President produced an elaborate franchise scheme, the principal provisions of which were as follows:—

NECESSARY TO NATURALIZATION.

1. Six months’ notice of intention;
2. Two years’ continued registration;
3. Residence in the Republic during that time;
4. No dishonouring sentence;
5. Proof of obedience to the laws;
6. Proof of full State citizenship and franchise or title thereto in former country.

NECESSARY TO FULL FRANCHISE.

1. Continuous registration 5 years after naturalization;
2. Continuous residence during that period;
3. No dishonouring sentence;
4. Proof of obedience to the laws.

SIR ALFRED.—“This will be carefully looked at. Of course
 “the plan which it embodies differs absolutely from my plan
 “in that it does not provide for an immediate or even an
 “early enfranchisement of people who may have been in the
 “Republic for many years, and that it makes no provision
 “for an increase in the number of seats in the Volksraad.
 “* * * I should like to take the proposal with me in order
 “to look it over at leisure, but I do not foresee any likeli-
 “hood of its providing that settlement which I hope for, and
 “I should therefore invite the President when we meet
 “again, if I find that on looking at it carefully my first im-
 “pression is realized, to consider whether there is any other
 “way, apart from the franchise, of giving the districts in
 “which the foreign population principally reside some
 “power of managing their own affairs; because I foresee
 “that in the period which will elapse before this franchise
 “proposal produces any appreciable effect upon the tone of the
 “legislation and administration the conflict between the old
 “and the new population is likely to become more severe,
 “and I cannot hold myself responsible for recommending a
 “solution of this kind.” * * *

PRESIDENT.—“*I would regard the last point to which His
 “Excellency refers—that they should have the ruling of
 “themselves—as virtually giving up my land to them.*”

SIR ALFRED.—“Not in any form?”

PRESIDENT.—“Of course it would depend, but it may mean
 “that they have to get full authority, because I am already
 “here giving them so very much.”

SIR ALFRED.—“I meant rather powers of government such
 “as were proposed by the Secretary of State in his despatch
 “of February, 1896, when he suggested *an extended munic-
 “ipality for the whole district, control of sanitation and public
 “order, and power of raising rates for local purposes, but not
 “to make laws or to impose general taxation.*”

PRESIDENT.—“I must look to that because of the first inrush
 “of a greater number who are not burghers; *if I gave
 “it away in the way suggested I would be giving away my
 “land.* You must admit that it would be as unfair as if I
 “had a rich farm and lots of water, and I said to others,
 “‘Come and help work my farm for me, and you must give

“me a little of what you win on this farm,’ and when they ‘have got rich on my farm they said, ‘Give me the title ‘deeds of that farm.’ They actually have more rights than ‘I have myself, because the Gold Fields form the richest ‘part of my land. Instead of being thankful for what they ‘get there they now begin to want the title deeds, and ‘because they are more numerous they would like to have ‘my farm.”

At the next meeting the President introduced an additional proposal, the character of which is best shown by the dialogue.

PRESIDENT.—“It escaped my memory yesterday to say that ‘I will put the proposal for the creation of new electoral ‘divisions before the Volksraad when I get back.”

SIR ALFRED.—“The proposal which the President put in yesterday I naturally regarded as his complete proposal, and I ‘have written a memorandum in answer thereto on that ‘basis, but perhaps the best thing would be for the President ‘to tell me now, if he is prepared to tell me, what kind of ‘proposal he has in his mind.”

PRESIDENT.—“To make more electoral divisions, that is my ‘intention.” * * *

SIR ALFRED.—“From my point of view this question of the ‘number of electoral divisions is one of the vital points. I ‘had before me yesterday a proposal which was very carefully framed in full detail, and I think if this suggestion ‘which the President throws out now is to be regarded as ‘part of that proposal it should be laid before me in the same ‘manner as that proposal.”

PRESIDENT.—“It was only when thinking over these matters ‘afterwards that this point occurred to me; it had remained ‘in abeyance.”

SIR ALFRED.—“I feel that this matter is one of such great importance that I do not want to forego the discussion if ‘*there is the least hope of coming to an agreement.* I have ‘very great objections to the proposal such as was put before ‘me yesterday, which I have put into formal shape. I think ‘it would be better for me to put in the memorandum I ‘wrote on the proposal that was put before me yesterday. If, ‘after considering that memorandum, the President is prepared to make another proposal including the things which ‘he omitted yesterday, or otherwise altering his original ‘scheme, I should be prepared to consider it.”

PRESIDENT.—“I cannot make other proposals. I might modify ‘some points and fill in this point which has been omitted.”

Sir Alfred Milner's paper read.

PRESIDENT.—“I would like His Excellency to know exactly
 “what I think. His Excellency is really not sufficiently ac-
 “quainted with the facts of the case, or he would not make
 “proposals like this. * * * *It is wholly against*
 “*God's Word to let strangers carry on the administration,*
 “*seeing that they cannot serve two masters at the same time.*”

SIR ALFRED.—“My proposal absolutely gets over the diffi-
 “culty about their being strangers. The whole basis of
 “negotiations is that they must be citizens of one State or
 “the other. The President must recognize my difficulty.
 “*It is an extremely difficult thing for me to propose that the*
 “*people whose interests I am defending should give up the*
 “*citizenship which they at present have and to which they are*
 “*sincerely attached. They will not do it readily, but I am*
 “*sure that this is the only solution; and if I am to recom-*
 “*mend this great sacrifice to them, then I must be able*
 “to point out to them that they are going to obtain
 “something really valuable in return. What I say is
 “this, these people are complaining about the way in which
 “the Government fails to regard their interests; they are
 “always complaining, and they very often call on the British
 “Government to help their position in one respect or in an-
 “other. Well, my objection to that state of things is this
 “—I sympathize, and the British Government sympathizes,
 “with many of the complaints they make; but our difficulty
 “is this: We say, if we have to take up their individual
 “grievances, two things will happen—one is, we should be
 “perpetually dealing with internal questions in the South
 “African Republic, which is most objectionable, and the
 “other thing is that such representations as we may make
 “will not really help them; they will only annoy the Gov-
 “ernment of the South African Republic, and they will not
 “be productive of really substantial results for the benefit of
 “the people. Therefore, with reluctance, I have come to the
 “conclusion that the best way to enable these people to have
 “their reasonable desires attended to is to urge upon them to
 “take up the citizenship of the State in which they are
 “living; that is to say, those of them who desire to live there
 “and to have their families there, and bring up their
 “children there, and to make it their permanent place of
 “residence. Of course, there are thousands of people who
 “only want to stay in the State for a few years and go away
 “again; their position is different. I am thinking now only
 “of people who want to make the country their home. *For*
 “*those British subjects who want to make that country their*
 “*home, I say it is the best thing to go in heartily as burghers*

“of the Republic; but then, if they are to resign their British citizenship, let them be really equal citizens of their new State. I could not reasonably urge them as a body to give up the one thing without getting the other, and this is my objection to this particular scheme. It is hedged in with so many difficulties, and delays the attainment of any substantial reform or any substantial influence to the new citizens for so long, that I feel it will not meet the desires of the people whom it is my object to benefit, and whose interests in the State are so large.”

PRESIDENT.—“Tell His Excellency I say he misunderstands the case, and from a very trifling thing he makes a very big thing, owing to the people’s talk. * * * * *
“You must remember that in England there are millions of burghers, and the number of burghers in the South African Republic is very small in comparison; that makes the difference. * * * * *”

SIR ALFRED.—“They would not be out-voted by my plan.”

PRESIDENT.—“I know they will be out-voted; they work with money, which they use freely, and we would be out-voted. But I do not want to go further into that matter.” * * * * *

SIR ALFRED.—“I understand the President’s difficulties, but I cannot get him to understand the feelings of the people on the other side.”

PRESIDENT.—“Of course, they are always pursuing something; *they are like naughty children, if you give them a finger they will want the whole hand, then an arm, then a head, and then they want the whole body bit by bit. After I have given them the arm, they still go and try to get the same rights as my burghers in a short time.*” * * * * *

At the next meeting, (morning of the fifth day), Sir Alfred Milner put in written objections to the President’s franchise proposals, giving the reasons why he could not consider them at all likely to satisfy the minimum legitimate demands of the Uitlanders.

PRESIDENT.—“His Excellency must understand in connection with all I have proposed that I am not ready to hand over my country to strangers * * * * *
“I regret that our friendly conference here together should result in nothing. *I understand from His Excellency’s arguments that if I do not really give the whole management of my land and government to the strangers there is nothing to be done.*” * * * * *

SIR ALFRED.—“I also regret that our discussion should result in no agreement on the subject, but I must protest against His Honor’s repeated assertion that my proposals

“amount to his giving over his land to strangers. It is not
 “my intention, nor is such a result likely to be produced
 “by anything I have suggested. I suppose the time will
 “come when the various proposals made at this Conference
 “will be before the world, and then I leave to impartial
 “judges to say whether it can be truly said that I proposed
 “anything of the kind.”

And thus, although there was another short sitting, the Conference broke up without even an approximate agreement upon the fundamental question which brought it about.

Before going further it will be well to compare the two schemes.

THAT OF SIR ALFRED MILNER WAS :

1. Five years' residence ;
2. Good character and reasonable property or income qualification ;
3. Oath of allegiance, including the defence of the country's independence ;
4. A small number of seats in the Volksraad for the Johannesburg district, where most of the Uitlander population is centered. Sir Alfred's contention was that this population which, by President Kruger's own admission, was greater than all the burghers combined, and who paid nine-tenths of the taxes, should not be “in a contemptible minority.”

THAT OF PRESIDENT KRUGER WAS :

Naturalization, with only the most insignificant privileges, after

1. Two years and a half residence ;
2. Proof of obedience to the laws ;
3. Proof of full State citizenship and franchise or title thereto in former country.

The full franchise after

1. A further 5 years' residence, with continuous registration ;
2. Proof of obedience to the laws.

There were numerous other conditions in the President's scheme, but I mention only the above in order to show their objectionable features and impracticability. In the first place there are five years during which it can be fairly said that the Uitlanders naturalizing would be under the full obligations of citizenship with none of its material rights. Secondly, conditions 2 and 3 for naturalization and condition 2 for the full franchise it would be almost impossible to comply with. Suppose one of ourselves was called upon to produce proof of obedience to the laws of

our own country, how would he go about it? Take my own case. I have been absent from Walkerville less than one month in the past five years. If I should go to our Police Magistrate and ask for a certificate that during that time, or the past two years, I had not broken any law, would he give it? Certainly not. He would say to me, "My dear Sir, all that I can state is that you have not "been charged with any offence before me. What you may have done in "other parts of the country I know nothing whatever about." How much more difficult would it be to produce such proof in a country like the Transvaal, with little of our complete legal machinery; with all the officials of a different race, speaking a different language and hostile to the new population?

Suppose again, that having emigrated to the Transvaal I require proof that I enjoyed full citizenship and franchise, or was entitled thereto, in Canada. To whom would I write for it? What officials have we who are authorized to issue such proof? If we had them what certainty would there of necessity be, unless they were familiar with my handwriting, that I was the person who formerly lived here? Having got my certificate how would I identify myself in the Transvaal as the party named in the document? How would I prove to the Transvaal that the Canadian Official was the proper person to issue it? And then consider further that the vast majority of the Uitlanders are working men, with little experience of business and affairs. Still further consider the case of men who when they left their native country had not reached the voting age, or were not possessed of the voting qualifications, or if entitled thereto had failed to get their names upon the voters' list.

Looking at these unusual, (it is not too much to say impossible), conditions, what conclusion can we come to than that President Kruger had no intention whatever of proposing a franchise which was practicable; that he merely offered the shadow without the substance, thinking thereby to give the complexion of *bona fides* to his repeated professions of a desire to meet the reasonable demands of the Uitlanders, as represented by the British Commissioner.

The Bloemfontein Conference having thus proved abortive, Sir Alfred Milner was instructed, June 6th, 1899, to forward to Mr. Kruger Mr. Chamberlain's note of May 10th, which had been held back in the hope that the Conference might render its presentation unnecessary.

That note, after referring to the petition from 21,684 British subjects before mentioned, and setting forth the right of every Government to interpose under such circumstances if convinced that the complaints are justified, proceeded in calm and friendly language to state the wrongs of the Outlanders generally; that British subjects had been arbitrarily arrested in the dead of night, dragged from their beds and cruelly beaten and kicked by ruffianly field cornets whom the Government refused to punish; that a British subject, named Edgar, had his

house broken into, and was himself shot dead by one of four policemen, who had no warrant, and not one of whom saw him commit any offence; or indeed knew that he had committed any. The charge was that Edgar struck one of the invaders with a stick, but that was denied by his wife and others. The policeman was tried and acquitted, the Judge warmly approving the verdict.

In conclusion Mr. Chamberlain said:

“These complaints may be summarised in the
“statement that under present conditions, all of which have
“arisen since the Convention of 1884 was signed, the
“Uitlanders are now denied that equality of treatment
“which that instrument was designed to secure for them.

“The conditions subsisting in the South African Re-
“public are altogether inconsistent with such equality, and
“are in striking contrast to those subsisting in all British
“Colonies possessing representative institutions, where
“white men of every race enjoy equal freedom and equal
“justice, and new-comers are, after a reasonable period of
“residence, admitted to full political rights. In the Orange
“Free State, where similar privileges are conceded to all
“aliens resident in the Republic, the Dutch burgher and the
“foreign immigrant who enjoys the hospitality of the State
“live in harmony and mutual confidence; and the independ-
“ence of the Republic is secured as well by the contentment
“and loyalty of all its citizens as by the good relations which
“prevail between its Government and those of other parts
“of South Africa.

“Unfortunately the policy of the South African Re-
“public has been conducted on very different lines, and but
“for the anxiety of Her Majesty’s Government to extend
“every consideration to a weaker State which in recent
“years has had just reason to complain of the action of British
“subjects, and may therefore be naturally prone to suspicion
“and indisposed to take an impartial view of the situation,
“the state of affairs must have led to the most serious pro-
“test and remonstrance. Recognizing, however, the ex-
“ceptional circumstances of the case, Her Majesty’s Gov-
“ernment have refrained since their despatch of the 4th of
“February, 1896, from any pressure on the Government of the
“South African Republic except in cases in which there has
“been a distinct breach of the provisions of the Convention
“of 1884; and they have sincerely hoped that the Govern-
“ment of the Republic would voluntarily meet the expecta-
“tions raised by the President, and would take the necessary
“steps to secure that willing loyalty of all the inhabitants of
“the State which would be the best guarantee for its secur-

"ity and independence. They are most unwilling to depart
 "from their attitude of reserve and expectancy, but having
 "regard to the position of Great Britain as the Paramount
 "Power in South Africa, and the duty incumbent upon them
 "to protect all British subjects residing in a foreign country,
 "they cannot permanently ignore the exceptional and arbi-
 "trary treatment to which their fellow-countrymen and
 "others are exposed, and the absolute indifference of the
 "Government of the Republic to the friendly representations
 "which have been made to them on the subject. They still
 "cherish the hope that the publicity given to the present
 "representations of the Uitlander population, and the fact,
 "of which the Government of the South African Republic
 "must be aware, that they are losing the sympathy of those
 "other States which, like Great Britain, are deeply inter-
 "ested in the prosperity of the Transvaal, may induce them to
 "reconsider their policy, and, by redressing the most seri-
 "ous of the grievances now complained of, to remove a stand-
 "ing danger to the peace and prosperity not only of the
 "Republic itself but also of South Africa generally.
 "*Her Majesty's Government earnestly desire the prosperity of*
 "*the South African Republic. They have been anxious to*
 "*avoid any intervention in its internal concerns, and they may*
 "*point out in this connection that if they really entertained the*
 "*design of destroying its independence, which has been attri-*
 "*buted to them, no policy could be better calculated to defeat*
 "*their object than that which, in all friendship and sincerity,*
 "*they now urge upon the Government of the South African*
 "*Republic, and which would remove any pretext for interfer-*
 "*ence by relieving British subjects of all just cause of*
 "*complaint."*

Following the failure of the Conference a large meeting of Johan-
 nesburg Uitlanders, estimated at 5,000, was held, at which a resolution
 was passed that the President's proposals were utterly inadequate to pro-
 duce satisfaction. The seconder of the resolution was an American
 citizen, Mr. Seymour, a distinguished engineer.

Returning to Pretoria on June 6th, the President, three days later,
 caused his report of the Conference to be laid before the Volksraad,
 which by acclamation approved his course.

On June 12th, the President introduced in the Volksraad a draft
 franchise law which, while slightly changed, was in effect what he had
 proposed at Bloemfontein. At short intervals other changes were intro-
 duced, and these were so frequent that it was quite impossible for Sir
 Alfred Milner to keep Mr. Chamberlain informed up to date what effect
 they were likely to have.

On July 11th, Mr. Chamberlain telegraphed requesting that if the Transvaal Government desired that their franchise proposals should be an element in the settlement between the two countries the British Government should have an opportunity of considering the scheme before it became law. The Transvaal's reply was that as the measure was already before the Volksraad that was not practicable; an excuse of the most transparent kind.

On July 13th the Volksraad took up a draft franchise law in which still further changes had been made. It improved upon the former proposal in some respects, but there were still many grave objections, among others that people who came into the country as far back as 1891, 1892 and 1893 would have to wait from one to four years, and that the formalities were cumbersome and calculated to cause difficulty and delay.

Within a week this law was passed by the Volksraad with only one trifling amendment. The President and his advisers had been distinctly informed that the British Government could not regard the law as a satisfactory solution of the difficulty, but nevertheless, (in spite of all the President had said at Bloemfontein a few weeks before as to the impossibility of inducing his burghers to consent to a less liberal measure except in exchange for certain concessions by England in other directions), this law was rushed through the Volksraad; why, it is difficult to understand, unless the object was to keep up the pretence of anxiety to satisfy the Uitlanders and the British Government.

A public meeting of the unenfranchised at Johannesburg declared this law wholly unacceptable.

On July 31st, Mr. Chamberlain telegraphed to Sir Alfred Milner:

"I now authorize you to invite President Kruger to
"appoint delegates to discuss with ours question whether
"reforms which Volksraad has passed will give immediate
"and substantial representation of Uitlanders, and if not,
"what additions and alterations will be necessary in order
"to secure this result."

On August 15th, the British Agent at Pretoria, Mr. Greene, telegraphed to Sir Alfred Milner that the Transvaal Government had indicated their willingness to make certain proposals to Her Majesty's Government provided the latter would not press their request for the proposed joint enquiry into the political representation of the Uitlanders. What the British Agent understood those proposals to be was set out in detail in his telegram. They were concessions of the most radical kind, closely approximating the suggestions made by Sir Alfred Milner at the Conference. One proposal was thus expressed by the British Agent:

"The simple details of the franchise law to be dis-
"cussed with the British Agent. He may have his own legal
"adviser. Any other points which may arise to be discussed
"in the same way."

The British Government replied that it was prepared to consider the proposals indicated on their merits.

On August 19th, the Transvaal State Secretary presented a note of what his Government was prepared to recommend to the Volksraad ; *but it did not contain the proposal above quoted.*

This important omission having been brought to the attention of the State Secretary *he repudiated the British Agent's version of the matter, although the British Agent's telegram containing that identical proposition was initialled by the Transvaal State Attorney, who had represented his Government in the discussion of which the said telegram was the result.*

And further to show the shifting and unscrupulous methods of the Transvaal in these negotiations : when now, for the first time, proposing a franchise likely to prove acceptable to the Uitlanders, and consequently also to the British Government, they made it an express condition thereof that the claim of suzerainty should be abandoned, a condition which Sir Alfred Milner had declared at Bloemfontein could under no circumstances be entertained.

The British Government, while admitting that this franchise scheme was an enormous improvement on the previous ones, and expressing the opinion that it could easily be made the basis of a satisfactory settlement of the Uitlanders' grievances, firmly declined to accept the conditions attached thereto, and the Transvaal refused to withdraw them. There these negotiations really ended, although the Transvaal, until the last, kept up the pretence of wishing to come to an understanding, but with a lack of good faith which the despatches only too plainly show.

THE BRITISH CLAIM OF SUZERAINITY.

The term "suzerainty" is admittedly somewhat difficult of precise definition; but it has been stated time and again on the English side to mean that she, as the power having the vastly preponderating possessions and interests in South Africa, cannot permit anything dangerous to those possessions or interests to be done by the Transvaal, whether within its own borders or not.

The British Government maintain that the right of England to take that position is recognized by the Conventions of 1881 and 1884. They hold that although the *articles* of the former were replaced by those of the latter, the *preamble* of the first Convention was preserved. The Transvaal Government assert that the Convention of 1881 was entirely annulled by the later agreement ; and to support their contention they have not hesitated to disregard certain evident facts, nor even to make statements which are positively without foundation.

We must leave it to lawyers to decide what the true interpretation of the document is; but we may at least look at the ground taken by the parties in their discussion thereof.

The Convention of 1881 reserved suzerainty to the Queen in broad, general terms by its preamble, as follows :

“Her Majesty’s Commissioners * * * hereby
 “undertake and guarantee on behalf of Her Majesty that
 “* * * complete self-government, subject to the Suzer-
 “ainty of Her Majesty, * * * will be accorded to the
 “inhabitants of the Transvaal territory. * * *”

There were also Articles of the Convention which specifically defined certain suzerain rights.

Before long the Boers began to complain of this Convention, and finally Mr. Kruger and two companions were sent to London by the Volksraad to negotiate for a fresh understanding. They at first asked to be treated as an independent power, which request was promptly and positively declined. They then, at Lord Derby’s suggestion, formulated their views in writing under date of November 14th, 1883, from which I quote :

“The impracticability of the Convention has appeared
 “chiefly in the following points :

- “a. The Western boundary as defined in *Article 1*.
- “b. The EXTENT of the suzerain rights reserved to Her
 “Majesty by *Articles 2 and 18*.
- “c. The obligation contained in *Article 3* to previously
 “submit for the approval of Her Majesty all new
 “regulations concerning the interests of the natives
 “within the Republic before they can come into
 “force ; and
- “d. The financial settlement contained in *Articles 10*
 and *11*.”

It should be particularly noted that the objection was to “the extent
 “of the suzerainty,” and that while the *articles* which the Boers desired to
 modify were specified there was no mention of the *preamble*.

Twelve days later they submitted to Lord Derby a draft Treaty or
 Convention, which was rejected by him on the ground that it was “neither
 “in form nor in substance such as Her Majesty’s Government could
 “adopt.”

It is a very common thing for people to ask more than they expect
 to get and to get less than they ask. There is the Convention itself to
 show what the agreement was, and I would not go into these preliminaries
 but for the fact that the Boers have since dragged in all kinds of state-
 ments as to what they wanted, what transpired verbally, and what
 correspondence, &c., passed between them and Lord Derby previous to
 the signing of the Convention. My object is to show their shallow
 arguments and positive untruthfulness.

In April, 1898, Dr. Leyds, then Secretary of State, set up the following contentions among numerous others :

FROM TRANSVAAL
DESPATCHES.

"In the year 1883 a deputation was sent to London with a view to obtain the abolition of the suzerainty."

* * *

"In their report published in 1884, the deputation stated that the new Convention put an end to the British suzerainty.

"Acting on that report the Volksraad * * * ratified the Convention."

* * *

"That it was the intention to have the whole of the old Convention superseded by the new one appears moreover from the declarations of the contracting parties, which can be personally confirmed by His Honor the State President."

* * *

"If the British Government had wished to retain the suzerainty in the Convention of 1884, as well as in that of 1881, it would have been necessary for the British Government to have come to a clear and distinct understanding on the subject."

* * *

"Whenever it was the intention to preserve any stipulation of the old Convention of 1881, it was reinserted in the Convention of 1884."

* * *

COMMENTS THEREON.

It seems an odd contention that what the deputation was sent with a view to obtain they of necessity did obtain.

* * *

What the deputation may have stated about the Convention proves nothing. Moreover, the resolution of the Volksraad ratifying the Convention bears no evidence whatever that it was influenced by the report of the deputation.

* * *

The intentions of parties to a written agreement are assumed to be shown by the agreement, not by what any of them may subsequently say. Of England's representatives in the negotiations only one now survived, and he denied this claim.

* * *

The Transvaal being the complaining party it would be much fairer to say, "If the Transvaal Delegates believed that the suzerainty was abandoned they should have seen that it was clearly and distinctly expressed." There is nothing to indicate that they were not fully able to look after themselves.

* * *

Here again it is proper to remark that the Convention is supposed to show what was intended, and it certainly does not say that it contains whatever it was desired to retain of the former Convention.

* * *

"This Government is in the possession of a declaration, made by Messrs. Kruger and Esselen, respectively member of and Secretary to the deputation of 1884, stating that it was expressly agreed upon verbally with Lord Derby that the suzerainty was to be abolished."

* * *

"The text of the preamble of the Convention of London clearly shows that it was not the intention merely to alter the Articles of the Convention of 1881, (and to allow the preamble of 1881 to remain in force), but to have the Convention altered *in its entirety*."

* * *

"The Preamble of 1884 makes no mention of 'new articles,' but of 'the following articles of a new Convention.'"

* * *

"The provision made in the last part of the Preamble of 1884, that 'as long as the new Convention shall not be ratified *the old Convention shall continue in full force and effect*,' can have no other meaning than that after the ratification of the new one the old one ceases to have effect."

Lord Derby said in the House of Lords only a few weeks after the Convention was signed, and months before it was ratified by the Volksraad, "Whatever suzerainty meant in the Convention of Pretoria, (1881), the condition of things which it implied still remains."

* * *

A good many things are taken for granted by Dr. Leyds. Common sense, however, would suggest that if it had been the intention to do away with the former Convention entirely it would have been so stated. What the new Convention says is that certain *Articles* shall be substituted for other *Articles*.

* * *

Articles which were to be substituted for others would seem to be "new articles" without being so called. "New articles of a new Convention" would hardly be good English.

* * *

Here is a falsehood. *The words quoted as occurring in the Preamble of 1884 are not to be found therein.* What we do find is this: "the following articles of a new Convention * * shall when ratified * * 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."

If the word "latter" does not refer to the whole phrase, "Articles embodied in the Convention of 1881," and not to "Convention" simply, there is something wrong with the grammar of the British and Transvaal Governments.

It must be a desperate case, indeed, which needs to be bolstered up with such special pleading as the above, and positive falsification of the documents in dispute.

It is not necessary that one should be a lawyer to appreciate some very obvious features of the Convention of 1884.

The Preamble reads thus :

“Whereas the Government of the Transvaal State, through its delegates * * * have represented that the Convention signed at Pretoria on the 3rd day of August, 1881 * * * contains certain provisions which are inconvenient, and imposes burdens and obligations from which the said State is desirous to be relieved * * and whereas Her Majesty the Queen * * has been pleased to take the said representations into consideration : Now therefore Her Majesty has been pleased to direct,” etc.

This certainly is not the language which we should look for in an agreement between two independent powers; but it is quite consistent with the claim of superiority on the one side and its admission on the other. And further, the Resolution of the Volksraad ratifying the Convention concludes with these words :

“Resolves, with acknowledgment of the generosity of Her Britannic Majesty, to ratify, as it hereby does, the said Convention of London.”

These are hardly the terms in which a treaty between equals would be referred to; and they cannot be explained by any disposition on the part of the Boers to show unnecessary civility toward Great Britain.

The matters complained of by British subjects in the Transvaal did not stop with themselves. In another aspect these grievances were of enormous importance. I refer to the influence which Transvaal affairs had upon the safety and well-being of British possessions in South Africa and elsewhere.

It was alleged that the constantly increasing bitterness between the British and Dutch races in the Transvaal was strongly reflected in the adjoining colonies, and had become a very serious menace to their future, as well as a great interference with their present prosperity. It was further alleged that the ill-treatment by the Boers of natives of India tended to undermine the respect of their countrymen for their British rulers. If these allegations were true England had every right to demand a remedy. *The only question is whether they were true.*

Well, as to that, the best judges should be the people on the spot, and they spoke with no uncertain voice.

Petitions from 38,500 British subjects in Cape Colony, about 7,500 in Natal, by 2,000 in Rhodesia, affirmed that the treatment of the English speaking population of the Transvaal caused an intense race feeling which was dividing and embittering all South Africa, and that only by the removal of these grievances could peace be put upon a firm foundation.

It was unanimously resolved that:

“The Legislative Assembly of Natal desires to express its sympathy with, and approval of, the action of the British Government in its endeavor to secure equal rights and privileges for all Europeans in South Africa, *whereby peace, prosperity and the termination of racial animosity in this country can alone be assured.*”

Public meetings were held in all parts of British South Africa, at which resolutions were passed declaring in emphatic language that the situation created by the Transvaal conditions demanded immediate relief.

If these representations by the people concerned were true, the Transvaal was breeding political pestilence to the great injury of Her Majesty's subjects in Her Majesty's Dominions; and any nation which under such circumstances should refrain from demanding redress would deservedly forfeit sooner or later the allegiance of its appealing subjects, besides ceasing at once to rank as a first-class power.

I submit, then, that no Convention is needed to justify the position taken by Great Britain. Self-preservation is the first law of nature for nations as well as for individuals. The Boers cannot deny this obvious proposition, for they have themselves more than once put it forward in their despatches regarding the suzerainty.

The United States has declared that she is, and intends to be, the paramount power in this Hemisphere. The Monroe doctrine, (whether originally or not, certainly in its modern form), is based upon that claim.

It will be remembered that the first demand of the American Government upon Spain was not that Cuba should be given independence, but that a speedy end should be put to the war, because it was against the interests of the United States that such a condition of things should continue indefinitely.

When we consider that in her case the seat of disturbance was far away—among a population entirely different from her own—with no really great national interest affected, while in our case the British possessions border upon the Transvaal—the same races inhabit both—the friction between them in the Republic was most seriously reflected in the Colonies—it must be at once conceded that the comparison is vastly in our favor.

In his message to Congress, April 11, 1898, President McKinley said :

“The only hope of relief and repose from a condition which can no longer be endured is the enforced pacification of Cuba. In the name of humanity, in the name of civilization, *in behalf of endangered American interests which give us the right and the duty to speak and to act*, the war in Cuba must stop.”

Here, it seems to me, is clear recognition of the principle which animated England in South Africa. Whether the state of things affecting humanity and civilization were worse or better in Cuba than in the Transvaal, I think there can be no doubt about the *endangered British interests* in the British South African possessions.

THE INSINCERITY OF THE BOER GOVERNMENT.

A thorough examination of the negotiations shows that the candour and patience displayed by Mr. Chamberlain and Sir Alfred Milner from first to last are as conspicuous as are evasion, exasperating disregard for facts, and puerile argument on the part of President Kruger and those representing the Transvaal.

We have seen how the President declared again and again that to give to the Uitlanders a pronounced minority representation in the Volksraad would swamp the old burghers, although he made no attempt to show how; we have seen also that when Sir Alfred Milner, despairing of any effective franchise concession, expressed himself willing to be satisfied if the Uitlanders were granted mere municipal control of their own city, the President insisted that this likewise would endanger the independence of his country. His utterly inappropriate references to the Scriptures, and his really silly parables, are perhaps the oddest examples of diplomatic discussion to be found in print.

I have shown that the Transvaal State Secretary in one of his despatches positively falsified the language of the Preamble of the Convention of 1884.

We find that later his successor repudiated a telegram which bore the initials of his colleague, the State Attorney, who was acting on behalf of his Government.

Mr. Smuts, the State Attorney, writing on August 25th to the British Agent at Pretoria, with regard to this same matter said:

*"I never intended these conversations to be conveyed to
"your Government."*

The amazing character of this statement will be realized when it is known that the Transvaal Government's note of August 19th, was sent in consequence of the British Government's reply to what Mr. Smuts *did not intend should be communicated to the British Government.*

In other words, the Transvaal State Attorney comes to the British Agent and says his Government is prepared to make certain proposals if they would be favorably received; thereupon the British Agent drafts a telegram to his Superior, which the State Attorney approves by his initials; in due course the Transvaal State Secretary (the Superior of the State Attorney) is advised that the British Government invites the said proposals; next, the State Secretary presents in writing several proposals

identical with those telegraphed and one materially differing therefrom; following this he denies the accuracy of the telegram which his subordinate approved; and, finally, the subordinate blandly declares that the telegram was not intended to be sent.

If this story were not absolutely authenticated by the official documents it would be impossible to believe it.

Again, *after the State Attorney had thus declared that his conversation with Mr. Greene was not intended to be communicated to the British Government*, the State Secretary wrote this:

“This Government has observed with the deepest regret that Her Majesty’s Government have not been able to decide on accepting the proposals set forth in its notes 19th August and 21st August, *the more so that from semi-official discussions they had thought that they might infer that their proposals would have been acceptable to Her Majesty’s Government.*”

And, yet, according to Mr. Smuts, these “semi-official discussions” were supposed to be unknown to the British Government.

The reply of Mr. Chamberlain to the Transvaal notes of August 19th and 21st, was that he could not accept the conditions as to suzerainty, etc., but he made counter-proposals, and suggested a further conference between the President and Sir Alfred Milner.

The answer of the Transvaal to this was a withdrawal of the whole proposition, and no other was substituted for it.

On September 16th the Transvaal State Secretary wrote:

“This Government wishes to state that it learns with a feeling of deep regret that it must understand that Her Majesty’s Government withdraws from the invitation sent in your letter of 23rd August, and *accepted by this Government.* * * * “It cannot understand why *as soon as this invitation was accepted (as was done by this Government in its note 2nd September), etc.*”

But as a matter of fact the note of September 2nd neither accepted Mr. Chamberlain’s invitation, nor even remotely indicated any disposition to accept it. And as if one such example of duplicity were not enough at a time, the State Secretary proceeded:

“The proposal which has now lapsed, contained in the letters of this Government of 19th August and 21st August, *was induced by suggestions given by British Agent to State Attorney, and these were accepted by this Government in good faith and on express request as equivalent to an assurance that the proposal would be acceptable to Her Majesty’s Government.*”

Thus at last, when it suited the Transvaal to try another game, the conversations which Mr. Smuts did not intend should go to the British Gov-

ernment are called "suggestions from the British Agent to Mr. Smuts," which, if correct, Mr. Smuts's intentions could have nothing whatever to do with them.

On June 14th, Mr. Chamberlain telegraphed that there had appeared in newspapers a report, stated to be on the authority of Dr. Leyds, that the franchise proposals were conditional upon the British Government's acceptance of arbitration. This being communicated to the Transvaal Government their answer was that the President "repudiated the idea of any bargain, and expressly proposed that each subject "should be treated on its own merits." But later, as we have seen, the Transvaal Government took up an entirely different position.

Again, on June 18th, the Transvaal State Secretary wrote with regard to the above mentioned newspaper report, "With reference to "telegram to Leyds 6th June, there must be some mistake, as no such "telegram has been sent by South African Government." Five days later the State Secretary expressed his sorrow at discovering that the telegram in question had after all been sent to Dr. Leyds!!!

In a written proposal made by the President at the Conference he said, "Naturalized citizens in the South African Republic also have the "right to serve as jurymen, and likewise to select the local officials, such "as field cornet, commandant and landdrost, and they obtain thereby a "very important influence on the local Government."

After his return to Capetown Sir Alfred Milner discovered that before the Conference the appointment of landdrosts on all gold fields throughout the country had been entirely taken away, even from full burghers, and placed in the hands of the Government. The landdrost is a Stipendiary Magistrate, who administers justice and receives the revenue of a district. As Sir Alfred Milner remarked, the President's statement was "misleading on a point of importance."

How are we to account for this persistent prevarication? It certainly was not likely to mislead the British officials; what then was the motive? That question, I think, can be easily answered. The object was to influence public opinion throughout the world; to create a sentiment in other countries hostile to England; and to divide the British people themselves. It is practically impossible to keep before the public the facts of a controversy so wide, and which has been running for years; but to a man like Dr. Leyds, who never allows facts to stand in his way, it was not difficult to work up the desired sentiment in communities never particularly well disposed toward Great Britain; and in England itself there was, of course, the usual opposition to the Government, so that between half truths and actual falsehoods the nation was, until the real outbreak of hostilities, very much divided in opinion. There were many things in favor of the Boers. Their numerical insignificance; the dangers through which they had passed in the original settlement of the Transvaal; the stubbornness with which they had defended their independence;

all appealed strongly to the instincts of chivalrous people. With many others their reputation for deep religious conviction doubtless had its weight. A great power must have a very strong case to carry public opinion with it in a quarrel with a small power.

It is needless to say that the European peoples are to-day almost a unit against us. The most we can hope for is the neutrality of their Governments; but it is by no means inconceivable that popular clamor might push some of them into hostilities against us, either on behalf of the Transvaal or for their private ends. Certainly there is at present no public sentiment which would have the effect of holding their Governments back if they were disposed to adopt such a course. This is a great advantage to the Boers, and it supplies the motive we are looking for.

This unanimity of disapproval would be less remarkable if the discontent in the Transvaal were confined to British subjects, which was by no means the case. Mr. Rouliot, President of the Chamber of Mines at Johannesburg, a Frenchman, said:

“We are the most heavily taxed community in the world, although we are the one that has the least to say about the funds it contributes.”

Among the 64 members of the Reform Committee at Johannesburg who were arrested after the rising there in 1896 there were six Americans, one Hollander, one Bavarian, one German, one Swiss and one Turk, and of the four of these who were condemned to death, (the others all being sentenced to imprisonment), one was a prominent American, Mr. John Hays Hammond.

Such effrontery of falsehood perhaps never entered into international negotiations before. It would be incredible were the proofs not found in the official documents.

Not without good reason did Sir Alfred Milner once write to Mr. Chamberlain:

“The way in which the State Secretary juggles with the Convention of 1884 is rather irritating to a plain man.”

At Bloemfontein President Kruger insisted that he would have the greatest difficulty as to any franchise reforms with the Volksraad and his burghers, and that there would be no prospect of getting a measure passed unless he could show that substantial concessions in other directions had been made to the Transvaal by Great Britain.

But when, for effect, he rushed a more liberal measure through the Volksraad, the burghers were not consulted, and the President could not be induced to wait long enough for the British Government to satisfy itself whether the proposed law would remove the difficulty.

Everything done by the Transvaal in this connection bears the impress of insincerity; and if more were needed to show that they never intended to offer the Uitlanders any acceptable franchise it is to be found in the statement of Dr. Leyds, now European Agent of the Transvaal, (*THE NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW*, Jan., 1900):

“And every impartial and fair mind will understand
 “that it was impossible for the South African Republic to grant
 “political rights to foreigners. Why, the franchise in the
 “Transvaal was denied to friendly foreigners of our own race
 “—to the citizens of the Orange Free State. Why should
 “we have granted it to Englishmen?”

The answer to Dr. Leyds' question is another. If it were *impossible to grant political rights to foreigners why did not President Kruger at once say so at Bloemfontein*; why did the Volksraad pass a law pretending to give the franchise to foreigners; why, later on, did Kruger offer them still fuller political rights, although upon conditions which he knew Great Britain would never accept? Will Dr. Leyds tell us what it is we hear so much about from his friends and our enemies of a great concession offered by Kruger and refused? Will Dr. Leyds further explain why he himself, a Hollander, was admitted to citizenship, while another Hollander was cast into prison for asking to be enfranchised?

And, at last, the Government which had been stubbornly immovable for years—which the British Commissioner found it impossible to make headway with on any point—became most impatient to know what proposals Mr. Chamberlain would submit in place of those which the Transvaal had unceremoniously withdrawn. They were told that they were being prepared and would be presented as soon as possible; but they could not wait. They expressed great surprise that there should be any delay in so simple a matter—so simple that five days' personal discussion between President Kruger and Sir Alfred Milner on one of the many differences between the two countries had been absolutely without result. They pretended to believe that England was gaining time for military preparations, although they were by no means neglecting that sort of thing themselves; and finally, as you know, they presented an ultimatum which left no alternative but war.

The ultimatum was dated just fourteen days after Mr. Chamberlain had announced his intention to make suggestions for the settlement of every existing difference between the two Governments, which interval was declared to be evidence of deliberate procrastination on the part of Mr. Chamberlain. Yet, when Mr. Chamberlain's request for a joint enquiry into the franchise then offered was laid before the Boer Government, *ten days elapsed without the slightest sign of any reply*, and when the answer came it was not a definite one, but a counter proposition. *It would be instructive if we could apply the Rule of Three to these two periods, and the weightiness of the problems respectively under consideration.*

It really looks as though the Boers never intended to tell the truth or to keep any promise they made.

Article IV. of the Convention of 1884 reads:

“The South African Republic will conclude no treaty
 “or engagement with any State or nation other than the

“Orange Free State, nor with any native tribe to the eastward or westward of the Republic, *until the same has been approved by Her Majesty, the Queen.*”

“Such approval shall be considered to have been granted if Her Majesty’s Government shall not, within six months after receiving a copy of such treaty, have notified that the conclusion of such treaty is in conflict with the interests of Great Britain or of any of Her Majesty’s possessions in South Africa.”

Clearly, then, unless the British Government gave their decision sooner, *six months must elapse* after a treaty was made before it could go into effect.

But what did the Boers do? The Convention was ratified by the Volksraad August 8, 1884, and by September 16th following the Boers had made a treaty with natives and the President had issued a proclamation upon the strength thereof. On May 9th, 1899, the Transvaal State Secretary attempted to justify this action in the following remarkable language:

“That Article gave the right to conclude treaties with any native race to the east or west of the Republic, *subject to the assent of Her Majesty, and when Her Majesty’s Government raised objection to the approval of that agreement the proclamation was withdrawn.*”

To suppose for a moment that these cunning Boers did not appreciate the great difference between *previous assent* and *subsequent objection* would be preposterous.

At the Bloemfontein Conference President Kruger asked Sir Alfred Milner the meaning of England’s military preparations in South Africa, in reply to which Sir Alfred said that they appeared insignificant by comparison with those of the Transvaal. The crafty Kruger’s answer was as follows:

“It pleases me very much to hear what His Excellency said, but I would like to give him a correct idea with regard to his statement that the Afrikanders are being armed. Your Excellency knows that when the State was first founded the Afrikanders were always armed, but that they gradually became neglectful therein, and when a commando had to be called up against the Kaffirs we found very many were not armed, while many of those who had arms had old guns, and you can easily imagine that when one was served with a new gun they all wanted one.”

And now they boast that they have four good guns for every man, and of how cleverly they got them into the country, with plenty of the finest artillery in the world, without our finding it out.

Look at the ultimatum. Consider its suddenness, its studied insolence of tone and terms, its urgency. A demand such as no great power ever made upon another, couched in language the contemptuous character of which it would be impossible to exaggerate, was presented without the slightest premonition, and while Mr. Chamberlain's new proposals were being formulated. What is the use of talking about who provoked the war! The Boers knew well enough that their ultimatum left England no possible alternative. Nothing had happened, nothing was going to happen, to make such a precipitate movement necessary. The British troops were very few and well within their own boundaries; they had even refrained from occupying the strong mountain position of Laing's Nek, near by and on British soil. No considerable reinforcements were immediately due in South Africa. If the object of the Boers was defence they would still for weeks to come have been vastly stronger than the British; if they wanted to attack, the sooner they did it the better.

At Bloemfontein President Kruger said:

"We have never been the attacking party, but
 "always defending. We follow out what God says,
 "'Accursed be he who removeth his neighbor's landmark,'
 "and as long as Your Excellency lives you shall see we will
 "never be the attacking party on another man's land."

Pious and delightful old man! Only five months and a few days later his people, by his orders, became the attacking party on the Queen's dominions, and issued proclamations annexing the portions overrun!

Consider the claim made in respect of the Jameson raid. Mr. Chamberlain promised that the Transvaal should be suitably indemnified by the Chartered Company, whose servants the raiders were. The raid occurred at New Year, 1896, the party surrendering four days after entering the country. In February, 1897, after an interval quite sufficient to allay the first irritation, the Transvaal presented a claim for material damages amounting to £677,000 and for moral damages £1,000,000—in all, close on \$8,200,000.

These figures show the unreasonable temper of the Transvaal. Granting that the fullest compensation should be made, it is an astounding estimate of the damages caused by an expedition of only 500 men who surrendered within four days of crossing the border, with a loss to the Boer forces of 5 killed and 3 wounded. Leaving out of account altogether the fact that the raid was brought about by the intolerable treatment of the countrymen of the raiders, one has only to compare this claim with the indemnity exacted by Prussia from France to perceive its utter absurdity. What, we may well ask, would the civilized nations say if when the Boers are conquered England should demand from them compensation upon their own scale? If the claim was formulated as part of a deliberate purpose to aggravate the situation it would be intelligible; it seems to me incomprehensible upon any other hypothesis.

WHAT CAN BE SAID FOR THE BOERS?

I have tried to find the very best things said about them by their own friends. I take first their New York champion, Mr. Geo. W. Van Sicten, who has been very much in evidence in the Press.

He says that the Boers did not agree by the Conventions of 1881 and 1884 to admit foreigners to *any political rights*. I wonder whether he expects the free American people to consider that a good reason why a Government calling itself a Republic should deny to worthy foreigners reasonable opportunities for obtaining citizenship. He says that foreigners have no voice in the affairs of the United States; but he omits to say that those who so desire may cease to be foreigners upon very easy terms, and that they have long been encouraged so to do.

Astounding as it may seem, the above epitomizes all that Mr. Van Sicten is able to advance in justification of the Boers. He indulges in a great deal of abuse of England, but he advances nothing to show that the Transvaal gave the Uitlanders equitable laws, impartially administered, and those rights which free men will always demand, wherever they may be.

Mr. James Bryce, who from his present attitude might be assumed to find much good in the Boers and their Government, wrote of them thus more than two years since:

“Severed from Europe and its influence two hundred
 “years ago, they have in some of the elements of modern
 “civilization gone back rather than forward. * * *
 “They are strangely ignorant and backward in all their
 “ideas. They have no literature and very few newspapers.
 “* * * They dislike and despise the Kaffirs,
 “whom they have regarded as Israel may have regarded the
 “Amalekites, and whom they have treated with equal sever-
 “ity. * * * They know little or nothing of
 “the modern world or of international politics. * * *
 “They have a double measure of wariness and wiliness in
 “their intercourse with strangers because their habitual sus-
 “picion makes them seek in craft the defense for their igno-
 “rance of affairs.

“Both legislation and administration have been car-
 “ried on in a rough-and-ready fashion, sometimes in viola-
 “tion of the strict letter of the law, and the provision of
 “the Grondwet (Constitution), that no law should be
 “enacted without being submitted for a period of three
 “months to the people, has been practically ignored. * * *
 “As late as 1881, an immigrant could acquire the right of
 “electoral franchise after two years. In 1882 this period

"was raised to five years, and in 1887 to fifteen. * * *
 "The effect of the legislation of 1890 and subsequent years
 "down to 1894 has been to debar any immigrant from
 "acquiring the right to vote for the First Volksraad until he
 "has passed the age of forty and resided for at least twelve
 "years in the country after taking the oath. * * *
 "President Kruger hated all foreigners and foreign ways,
 "seeing in them the ruin of the ancient customs of his peo-
 "ple. * * * All sorts of abuses sprang up,
 "while the primary duties of a Government were very
 "imperfectly performed. * * * When 100,000
 "white immigrants were congregated along the Witwater-
 "strand, and were employing some 60,000 native work
 "people, an efficient police, an abundant water supply, good
 "sanitary regulations and laws to keep liquor from the
 "natives became urgently needed; and none of these things
 "were provided, although taxation continued to rise and the
 "Treasury was overflowing.

"All the Uitlanders had substantial grievances to
 "redress. Food was inordinately dear. * * * Water
 "supply, police, sanitation were all neglected. * * *
 "There was also much opposition among the legal profes-
 "sion, Dutch as well as English, for attacks had been made
 "upon the independence of the judiciary, and the reckless
 "conduct of legislation gave displeasure."

I cheerfully rest my case against the Boer Government upon this description of it by Mr. Bryce. Is there any man who knows what freedom and justice and progress mean, who could be content to live under such a government; to have the laws to which he must submit made and administered by such people?

I am often asked by my American friends why it is, if England is right, that Mr. Bryce, one of ourselves, (who is accepted in the United States as an able and impartial historian), declares the war to be an unjust one provoked by Great Britain. I see the difficulty and deplore it; but I cannot pretend to offer an explanation. I can only reply that there are three things I am entirely unable to understand. The first is that any one who has carefully looked into the facts, (which, both as a member of the British Parliament and as a writer on the subject, Mr. Bryce was in duty bound to do), can justify the Boers; the second is that any man with the slightest pretensions to patriotism should, after the die has been cast, deliberately throw his voice and his influence on the side of the enemies of his country; the third is how Mr. Bryce reconciles his former with his present utterances.

WHAT CAN BE SAID FOR ENGLAND?

The position taken by the British Government has been grossly misrepresented in the press, and, I fear, often deliberately. But whether or not the result is the same.

Of such ridiculous charges as that England planned to acquire the Transvaal because of the gold fields no serious minded person need take notice. Mr. Chamberlain disposed of that theory in these words:

"I can hardly find patience to answer a slander so wicked and so stupid. These gentlemen—what do they know of England? What do they know of that great Colonial system which now for many years has precluded us from making any pecuniary gain from the possessions of the British Crown, from our fellow-subjects in our colonies and dependencies?"

"We ask no ransom; we exact no tribute; we have nothing directly to gain by a war which will transfer to us a territory not at present ours.

"And these critics of ours, what do they know of England? What do they know of the principles that govern our action if they think that there exists among us any Government or any Minister so base as to carry into their country an unjust and unnecessary war for some personal or even for some national interest? What do they know if they are not aware that the generous instincts of the whole people would intervene to frustrate his nefarious designs, and send him skulking into obscurity, discredited and dishonored by such a policy?"

It is said that England claimed the right to dictate to the Boers that they should grant the franchise to the Outlanders, and what sort of franchise it should be. Nothing could be more untrue. There is not a word in the despatches or the proceedings at Bloemfontein to warrant such a statement.

England, it is true, pleaded with the Transvaal to enfranchise the deserving Outlanders, as an act of justice, in the interest of peace, for the good of the Transvaal itself; *but her only demand was that before bidding her devoted subjects depart she should be satisfied that their cries for bread would not be answered with a stone.*

Mr. Chamberlain and Sir Alfred Milner are accused of adopting a bullying tone toward the Boers. I detect nothing of the kind in the despatches or the discussion at Bloemfontein. On the contrary the language of England's representatives was singularly forbearing under great provocation.

Listen again to Mr. Bryce, one of Mr. Chamberlain's bitterest opponents. More than two years ago he wrote:—

“Why did not President Kruger bow to the storm and avert revolt by reasonable concessions? He had not a friend in the world except Germany. * * * Both the Free State and the Cape Boers had been alienated by the hostile tariff which the President had set up against their food stuffs, and by his refusal to employ Cape Dutchmen in the Transvaal service. * * * Had he extended the franchise to all immigrants, after say five years’ residence, he might not only have disarmed opposition, but have made the South African Republic a powerful State, no considerable section of whose inhabitants would thereafter have thought of putting themselves under the British crown.”

That is precisely what Mr. Chamberlain and Sir Alfred Milner begged Kruger to do; precisely what they said the result would be.

Mr. Geo. W. Van Sicien, who has been flooding the American papers with appeals for sympathy for the Boers, makes the grossest misstatements. In an article published in *THE OUTLOOK* of October 21st last, he said:

“England says, ‘You shall receive as citizens those whom the British Empire chooses to force upon you’ * * * We have as much reason to anticipate and to yield to a demand that every Englishman residing in the United States shall be accorded the right of franchise *without taking the oath of allegiance to the United States.*”

Look again at Sir Alfred Milner’s proposals, and ask whether Mr. Van Sicien was himself deceived or trying to deceive his readers.

As a further example of Mr. Van Sicien’s lack of information, or lack of veracity, (it is not for me to say which), he in the same article makes this statement:—

“*This treaty of 1881 was not ratified by the Congress of the South African Republic; they refused to admit that suzerainty and sent a commission to London refusing to submit to this claim of suzerainty, and it was stricken from the treaty.*”

Well, it so happens that the Convention of 1881 *was ratified by the Volksraad* on October 25th, 1881; it happens that by its express terms it would have been void if not so ratified, in which event there would have been no Transvaal independence at all. *How does it happen that Mr. Van Sicien dared to obtrude so much ignorance or so much falsehood upon the people of the United States?*

This is the sort of thing which accounts for the false impressions so prevalent among our neighbors, with the result that public opinion is largely against us when it ought to be all with us.

On which side do we find the conciliation which shows the desire for peace? Beginning with the restoration of Transvaal independence, after Great Britain had suffered several humiliating defeats in petty engagements, and at the moment when she was at last in a position to avenge them, we have following in quick succession the enlargement of Transvaal territory and the reduction in England's privileges by the Convention of 1884; again a further addition of territory, although by the last Convention the Boers had agreed to be content with the boundaries then laid down; and repeated breaches of the Convention by the Boers, and years of injustice to British subjects patiently endured by their Government. These constitute a considerable manifestation of peaceful purposes on the one side; what is there on the other? I can find nothing. I cannot even discover that the Boers or their friends claim that they did anything to demonstrate a like purpose on their part, except the hollow offers of franchise in the last few months. All their most vehement champions can advance is that *the Boers did not wrong the Outlanders, because the Outlanders were entitled to nothing.*

The Boers and their friends say "England was preparing for war." And why should she not? With the Transvaal armed to the teeth, with munitions of war pouring in every day, what would they have had us do?

Our possible antagonist was already fully prepared. Since when has it been inconsistent with pacific designs to take reasonable precautions against obvious danger?

Mr. Bryce complains that England was not sufficiently patient with these tyrant tricksters. He tells the oppressed and despised Outlanders that Kruger must die some day and they should have waited for his demise, because it is unlikely that another such despot would succeed him. This, truly, is a novel doctrine for free-born Englishmen! And meantime British subjects would be dying, as for years other British subjects had died, fearing that the proudest tradition of British citizenship had been belied; that at last the ears of the motherland were deaf to her children's cries.

Patience, forsooth! With whom? Is it this autocrat Kruger; the glib quoter of Scripture; the chief agent in stirring up the bloodshed of 1881? How much patience did he show toward us then? There was no oppression of the Boers by England; their lives and property and liberties were safe; bankruptcy had given place to prosperity; the Zulu horde which threatened their destruction had itself been crushed by British money and British blood. But, they say, the promised Constitution had been delayed; some English officials were unwisely arrogant and peremptory; and for these small sins Kruger turned his rifles upon the men who four short years before had rescued his country from financial ruin and its people from massacre!

And what of Mr. Chamberlain, who has been accused of forcing on this war to gratify his personal ambition; who, contrary to every

principle of British justice, is assumed by his critics to have connived at the Jameson raid, of which there is not an atom of proof—who is charged with wanting war when he was pretending to want peace. Fortunately Mr. Chamberlain's part in this business is on record in the despatches. This is from THE NATION (New York), after the Ultimatum :

“It was made plain, in every way that words could
 “make it plain, that England asked only a reasonable fran-
 “chise and elementary political rights for her subjects in the
 “Transvaal. * * * This was what Sir Alfred
 “Milner had said would be satisfactory. Mr. Chamberlain
 “said at the time that it would be satisfactory. * * * Is
 “there any war in that—any intention to ‘wipe out the
 “‘Transvaal?’ * * * It may be asserted—of
 “course the Boers do assert it—that the English Govern-
 “ment meant war. * * * This may be argued, as
 “any motive may be alleged, but no overt act by England
 “has exceeded her undoubted right under international law.
 “ * * * Every step she has taken has been law-
 “fully taken, and words of peace, with recognition of the
 “independence of the Transvaal, have been constantly used
 “by her.”

Every word of that is true—the despatches prove it.

England, then, has talked peace and acted peace ; the Boers have talked peace and acted war.

WHAT IS ENGLAND FIGHTING FOR?

Undoubtedly one of the questions involved is whether England shall continue to shape the destinies and mould the civilization of South Africa. In the view of many eminent statesmen the fate of the whole Empire is also at stake. I will not attempt to discuss these propositions, because the outcome of the conflict is not a matter of doubt with any considerable number of our fellow subjects.

But there is another issue which, as I believe, we shall all agree is quite big enough to justify the war, even if there were no other, and if war had not been forced upon us by the invasion of our soil. That issue is whether British citizenship shall continue to be a valuable heritage or an empty phrase ; whether the Union Jack shall still be an effectual protection or become nothing more than a distinguishing badge. If Great Britain can no longer assure the safety of her subjects beyond her own borders, then the sad day has come when the British Empire must cease to be. And, for my part, though I have no fears as to the result—nor would I have were the task tenfold as heavy—I would a thousand times rather our glorious flag should be lowered in the struggle than that one of its subjects should in vain have appealed to it for justice.

It has been worth something to be a British subject. It is worth everything, if need be, to keep our heritage unimpaired. How much let us learn from a Senator of the United States, whose words I repeat :

“I think that one of the grandest things in all the history of Great Britain is that she does protect her subjects everywhere, anywhere, and under all circumstances. I do not wonder that a British subject loves his country. This little incident, with which you are all familiar, is a marvellous illustration of the protection which Great Britain gives to her subjects :

“The King of Abyssinia took a British subject named Cameron, about twenty years ago, carried him up to the fortress of Magdala, on the heights of a rocky mountain, and put him into a dungeon without cause assigned. It took six months for Great Britain to find that out. Then Great Britain demanded his immediate release. King Theodore refused the release.

“In less than ten days after that refusal was received ten thousand British soldiers, including five thousand sepoys, were on board ships of war, and were sailing down the coast. When they had disembarked, they were marched across that terrible country, a distance of seven hundred miles, under a burning sun, up the mountain, up to the very heights in front of the frowning dungeon, then gave battle, battered down the iron gates of the stone walls, reached down into the dungeon, and lifted out of it that one British subject.

“Then they carried him down the mountain, across the land, put him on board a white-winged ship and sped him to his home in safety. That cost Great Britain twenty-five million dollars, and made General Napier Lord Napier of Magdala.

“That was a great thing for a great country to do— a country that has an eye that can see all across the ocean, all across the land, away up to the mountain heights, and away down to the darksome dungeon, one subject of hers out of her thirty-eight millions of people, and then has an arm strong enough and long enough to stretch across the same ocean, across the same lands, up the same mountain heights, down to the same dungeon, and then lift him out and carry him to his own country and friends.

“In God’s name, who would not die for a country that will do that?”

Aye, who would not! The British Isles have answered with an alacrity and enthusiasm unmistakable; the colonies, great and small, have spoken with equal clearness; it seems to some of us who have had dreams of Imperial Federation that our aspirations are about to be realized, and that their fulfilment will be well worth the cost. But, however that may be, every true British subject will earnestly desire the speedy and complete triumph of

