

"THE CAUSES OF THE WAR IN
SOUTH AFRICA."

AN ADDRESS

DELIVERED AT THE

JUNIOR CONSTITUTIONAL CLUB,
PICCADILLY,

BY

Mr. THEOPHILUS LYNDALL SCHREINER,

ON

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 7th, 1901.

Mr. H. CROUCH BATCHELOR

IN THE CHAIR.

London:

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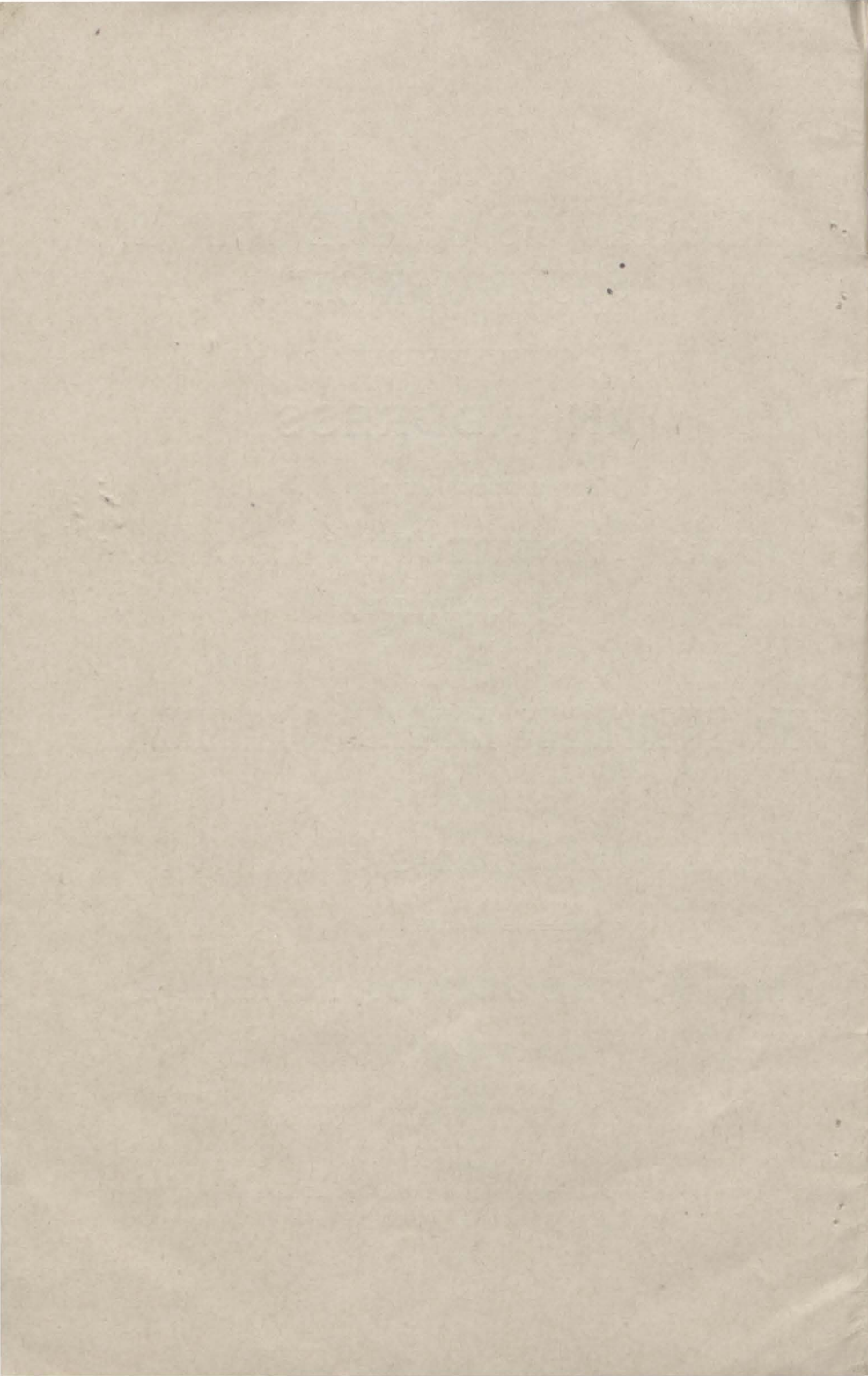
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On Thursday Evening, February 7th, 1901, an Address entitled "THE CAUSES OF THE WAR IN SOUTH AFRICA," was delivered at the Junior Constitutional Club, Piccadilly, by Mr. THEOPHILUS LYNDALL SCHREINER. Mr. H. Crouch Batchelor in the Chair.

Mr. SCHREINER, who was received with applause on rising to address the meeting, said: Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen, I think I owe you an apology for not keeping my appointment on the last occasion, but I really was not in sufficiently good health to do so. Your climate, as you are aware, is sometimes a little bit trying to people like myself, who have been accustomed to sunshine all my life. I have been somewhat acclimatised by this time, however, and have ventured to try and keep my appointment with you this evening. I have been wondering whether you desired that the appointment should be kept, in view of all that has been happening to us as a nation and an empire during the last fortnight. I think I am only speaking what is in the hearts of each one of you when I say that our hearts are in the grave with the Queen. (Hear, hear.) That is where our hearts are: I am sure it is true of you—and I think it is even more so of us loyalists in South Africa—for we seemed to feel that we had more reason to love the Queen than you had. I cannot say that we have had much reason to love any of the Governments of England, or any of its Ministers, for they do not seem to have understood the wants of South Africa at all. Of course, when I say this, I am excluding His Majesty's present Ministers—(laughter)—and most pre-eminently I exclude Mr. Joseph Chamberlain—(applause)—who, we feel in South Africa, is

the first statesman who has ever really grasped the situation. I should not perhaps say that he was really the first, because there was a noble man, the late Sir Bartle Frere, who died of a broken heart because the country did not support him. Thank God all those days are over. We feel throughout South Africa, we loyalists I mean, that the late Queen always did understand the situation, even when her Ministers did not, and we firmly believe that if she had had her way none of those grievous mistakes would have been made which have been made in the days gone by. We firmly believe that she realized the Imperial responsibility resting upon her, and so we loved her with a very special love and have idealized her. We have never seen her, but believing that she was the very embodiment of all those grand qualities and grand principles for which we love England, and which are the foundation of the British Constitution, we idealized her and looked upon her as the symbol of it all. Now she is dead and gone from us, but we feel glad to believe that her successor, our present King, will follow in her footsteps. And I am sure there is no portion of the King's dominions on the face of the earth in which there is more complete and thorough loyalty and fealty towards himself than among the loyal population in South Africa. (Hear, hear.) I think it is fitting that this meeting was not put off, because we are speaking about a subject which was very near and dear to the heart of our late beloved Queen, and we are only engaged to-night in endeavouring to carry out her heart's and life's desire. Therefore we cannot be found fault with for holding the meeting during the present week, when the dark shadow of what we have been going through is still resting upon us. There is another reason why it is well that we should be meeting,—and should be holding many such gatherings as the present one,

and it is because certain emissaries have come over from South Africa to England to enlighten the people of this country as to the situation from the Afrikaner Bond point of view. It is a very curious circumstance that the coming of Kruger to Paris synchronized with the sweeping of De Wet into Cape Colony. It seems all part of a settled plan, and one cannot help wondering whether the entry into England of these two statesmen on behalf of the Bond is likewise intended to synchronize with the attempt of De Wet, for the second time, to sweep down into the Colony. The men who are coming to England on behalf of the Afrikaner national party are men of the very highest standing in politics, men who have been in many ministries, men who are clever and talented, men indeed whom we cannot altogether despise, but who I believe are coming over on a mission of evil. I think, therefore, we cannot be too well educated in the rights of the South African question just at the present time, when an attempt will certainly be made to create a wrong impression, and to place the facts of the South African situation in a wrong light. I am anxious not to waste too much of your time this evening, but let us just examine the credentials of these men. (Hear, hear.) These gentlemen, let me tell you, who are coming over to this country to put a plan before the Government for the settlement of the war, and of the South African question generally, do not represent the loyal people in South Africa. (Hear.) You may put that down as a fact. (Hear, hear.) We were told in the *Daily News* the other day that Mr. Merriman was a loyalist. (Laughter.) Well, you might just as well say that Mr. Kruger was one—(renewed laughter)—or you might, for instance, just as well describe De Wet as a loyalist, or Dr. Tewater, a member of the late Ministry, who wished Colonial

ports and railways closed to the Imperial forces, or Dr. Hoffman, M.L.A., of ambulance notoriety, or the Editor of *Ons Land*, lately arrested for seditious libel. (Laughter.) Mr. Merriman did not for many years give any sign of being a disloyalist, but it became evident since the war began, and more particularly since last May, when he caused the downfall of the Bond Ministry by resisting the very moderate amount of punishment which it was suggested should be inflicted upon those who rose in rebellion in Cape Colony against the Queen, and who, although they had no complaint whatever to make, shot down their loyal fellow citizens and the soldiers of the Queen. (Shame.) Now Mr. Merriman was the leader of those who determined that the very moderate amount of punishment—disfranchisement for five years—should not be inflicted upon these men, but that they should be permitted to go scot free. In fact, an attempt was made to place a premium on rebellion, and Mr. Merriman was responsible for that, as he was leader of the opposition which was directed against the Treason Bill. With regard to Mr. Sauer I have just jotted down one or two of his statements taken from the Cape Hansard, the *Cape Times*, of August 23rd last year, in the debate on the Bill in question. I cannot, unfortunately, light upon Mr. Merriman's speech on the same Bill, or I would read you some extracts,—but you will remember that Mr. Merriman was quite as extreme, in many respects, as Mr. Sauer. This is what Mr. Sauer said: "After the gallant struggle that had been made by the two Republics, and after the remarkable men that had been produced, a time would come when there would be very few Dutchmen who would not blush when they told their children that they had not helped their fellow-countrymen in their hour of need." This from a man, let me tell you, who a few weeks before

was a Minister of the Queen, and who was speaking in the House of Assembly, under the Queen's flag, and as a subject of the Queen, and who was not referring to the Dutchmen in the Free State or in the Transvaal, but to the Dutch in the Cape Colony. If that was not inciting them to side with the enemies of Great Britain I do not know what was. Then, again, he says: "There was something that would always remain longer than fealty to sovereigns or any other bond, and that was the alliance of blood and language." These statements were received with loud Opposition cheers. And again: "He could conceive of no greater grievance than this, that one should see two small republics of one's own race attacked by the greatest power in the world." And once more: "If they followed the policy of vindictiveness"—by this term Mr. Sauer designated the lenient provisions of the Government Treason Bill, by which those found guilty of rebellion other than the leaders were to suffer disfranchisement for five years, instead of the fines, imprisonment, or death penalties of the existing law, which of course carried with them lifelong disfranchisement—"if they followed the policy of vindictiveness it would have but one result. The people to whom it was to be applied had long memories. They would never forget the spirit in which the Government had approached them. They would never forget that the Government had destroyed the political rights that they enjoyed." This, mark you, was said about men who, without a single cause of complaint, had risen in active rebellion and had shot down their loyal fellow citizens and the Queen's soldiers. With regard to Messrs. Sauer and Merriman I can only express the hope that these gentlemen will speak in the same way to the British public and use the same terms as they did in the Cape House of Assembly, and allow the public to judge as to whether they are worthy

of being heard or not. So much, then, for these emissaries who, we are told, are coming over to this country to put us right. (Laughter.) It is not my purpose this evening to lay before you any plan for the settlement of affairs when the war has come to an end, but I find I must go back to these two gentlemen, because we are told to-day, indeed it has been cabled from South Africa, that they are coming over with a cut and dried plan. They are going to offer it, but on whose behalf I know not. Certainly not on Mr. Kruger's behalf—(laughter)—nor yet on Mr. De Wet's—(renewed laughter)—and most certainly it is not on behalf of the loyal people of South Africa, both Dutch as well as English. As a matter of fact, I believe it is really on their own behalf alone. (Hear, hear.) They are coming over to offer to this great country a scheme of confederation, a proposal, in fact, that the Boers should lay down their arms provided the Republics get back a certain amount of independence. In that event they will agree to the confederation of all the States and Colonies in South Africa, and the dream which has for so long a period been the dream of Statesmen will be at last fulfilled. There is an old Latin proverb—you will excuse my pronunciation because I learnt the language forty years ago (laughter)—which runs as follows: "*Timeo Danaos et dona ferentes*," "I fear the Greeks even though they bring gifts." This seems to me to be a very good motto to bear in mind in regard to the plan which we understand is to be brought forward by these two delegates. (Hear, hear.) We do not want confederation from the enemy; we want him to surrender; we want the enemies to become peaceful citizens and subjects of the British Empire, and we want them to prove by a certain number of years' residence as peaceful and law-abiding citizens that they are worthy of being granted free Parliamentary Institutions. (Hear, hear.) It would be

ridiculous, it would be altogether appalling and suicidal to grant them such free institutions immediately at the close of the war. There must of necessity be an *interregnum* of Crown Colony government, and confederation must spring from properly-settled States with proper legislatures, and from a mutual desire to be confederated. And when that takes place the Home Country, the Home Government must have a say as to the terms of confederation. (Applause.) But these emissaries do not admit that the Boers have tried to get one flag, and that a Republican one, throughout the length and breadth of South Africa, and have lost and failed, and that that being so they will consent henceforth to live peaceably and quietly under the British flag. No, these men do not say that, and the present move is nothing more nor less than an attempt, by constitutional means, to gain that which they have not succeeded in securing by the sword—another instance of Dutch slimness! (Laughter.) That is about all it really is. (Renewed laughter.) Gentlemen, in saying what I have done I must, of course, have good grounds, and such I claim to have. I want, this evening, to remind you of what has occurred in the past in order that you may realize what is your duty at the present time, and also in the future in regard to South Africa. As to the war, this terrible war which is now being waged, and which seems never to come to an end, we are glad to learn to-day that the government has at last awoke to the necessity of sending some 30,000 more mounted men to South Africa. (Hear, hear.) It would have been better if it had been sixty thousand, for it would undoubtedly have paid better in the long run, and more especially if the decision had been arrived at some two or a half months ago. (Hear, hear.) Personally I feel very strongly upon this question, because knowing the Dutch as I

do, I was able to gather that exactly what has happened was going to happen. You may remember that in November last I published a letter in the papers in which I pointed out the likelihood of certain events, which have since then taken place. I claim no credit whatever for this. It is only because I know the people out there very well, and one sentence or word will reveal to me what their purpose is. I know their manner of speaking and planning. Let me share with you an idea which came to me a few days ago, as I was wishing that the Government had stirred itself three months ago, namely, that after all there is something grand, morally grand, in a big country, like a great mastiff, not moving too soon. We suffered for it at the beginning of the war. We were not ready, not even two months ago, and perhaps we are not quite ready even now for what may take place. (Hear, hear.) It may be that it will entail a sacrifice of more money and more lives, but it is nevertheless a morally grand thing for a great country not to move too fast, nor to expect that those who have no reason to rise in arms against you are going to do so—in other words, to wait patiently until they do. (Hear, hear.) My moral sense is pleased, and I feel proud of belonging to a Government and a country that can move slowly and wait to strike till it has been struck. There are, of course, two sides to the question. Our duty in this matter is, I believe, to keep pegging away at the Government if we think they are dilatory, but to support them whole-heartedly in the efforts which they are putting forth. (Loud applause.) Now this war which has lasted so long is a just war on the part of England, and an unjust one on the part of the Boers. (Hear, hear.) We are all agreed upon that. I think that even the pro-Boers—I mean those who are called pro-Boers in no opprobrious sense—even they will allow that after the

ultimatum, that outrageous ultimatum, was sent to this mighty nation there was nothing left for her but to resent it, and to be ready to defend herself against the issuers. (Hear, hear.) Remember the Republics made the war and issued the ultimatum, but we should not rest there, because there was something at the back of the ultimatum. People talk of England making war upon two little Republics! It were fitter to talk of two little Republics making war upon a mighty nation! (Hear, hear.) We want an explanation of that. The ultimatum was issued on October 9; as a matter of fact we know from documentary evidence that it was actually ready on the 26th of the preceding September, at a time, mark you, when our Ministers, both here and in Cape Colony, were sending conciliatory despatches assuring the Free State that there was no intention whatever of interfering with its independence, and begging it not to take this wrong step. Whilst there were hopes on the part of England that the dispute might possibly still be amicably settled the Boers had the ultimatum ready all the while. Had the Boers been ready in a military sense war would undoubtedly have taken place at an even earlier period than it did, but they found that they had under-estimated their commissariat necessities, and were not ready to advance. This circumstance gave a few days of breathing time, in which troops were landed from India, and thereby prevented the enemy from rushing to Maritzburg and Durban as they intended to do. As I have told you already the ultimatum had been ready weeks before, but there is something more. Anyone who knows the plans of the African Republican party—or the pseudo-Republican party, for it is a misnomer altogether to call the Transvaal a Republic, as it violated every principle of national liberty, and was nothing but

a tyrannical despotic oligarchy—anyone, I say, acquainted with the plans of the Republic and thoroughly *au courant* with everything that had been going on during the last twenty years would have known, that when Mr. Reitz, the Secretary of the Transvaal Government, issued his despatch of the 9th of May, before the Conference, in which, at the close, he laid down that the independence of the Transvaal did not depend upon the Convention of 1881, nor that of 1884, but that the Transvaal claimed its independence as a Sovereign International State,—when Mr. Reitz penned that document, anyone who knew the plans and ideas of the previous twenty years would have been aware that the Transvaal had come to the decision that the time had arrived for a tremendous wrestle with England for South Africa. (Loud applause.) I knew it myself. I read it in their own newspapers and heard it as well from their own lips, that they would go on step by step, step by step, until the time arrived when they should declare that they were absolutely a Sovereign International State. That was before the Conference. They knew before the Conference was held that the time had actually come for them to make war. I could tell you ever so many facts that go to prove it. For instance, there was a certain man who carried on business in the Transvaal, and who was related to some of the leading members of the Government. He was naturally rather alarmed at all the diplomatic negotiations that were taking place, so he went and asked them what was going to happen, as he did not want to be left in the lurch. (Laughter.) “Are you,” he said, “going to give in and grant the franchise to the Uitlanders?” to which they replied in Dutch: “Ons gaan schiet”—“we are going to shoot! We are going to war, we are going to

shoot, so if you are a wise man you will just settle up your business and clear out in time!" Of course the Conference did not make him feel at ease at all, but when Mr. Kruger began to talk about the seven years' franchise, he said: "Oh, you are giving in, it is all right, everything will be settled," to which they rejoined "not a bit of it, settle all your business, we are going to shoot! It was only a blind." When he heard next about the five years, he said, "You have given in to Milner's minimum, it is all right now," and they replied: "Don't you believe it, old boy, it is just the same, we are going to shoot!" (Laughter.) And, like a sensible man he made his business arrangements accordingly. (Renewed laughter.) So much then for the ultimatum and the period when it was first mooted. Now we are told that its issue was due to the refusal of Great Britain to accede to arbitration. What did that good, wise, truthful, peaceful man, W. T. Stead—(laughter)—say in the *Daily News* the other day? I would have written a reply to his letter, only it would not have been inserted under the new *regime*, and would have shared the fate of two communications which I had already addressed to the Editor of that journal. Well, what did Mr. Stead say? He said that all the poor Transvaal wanted was arbitration, and that the ultimatum was a last plea for that. (Ironical laughter.) Note that in the original ultimatum as sent by State Secretary Reitz to Bloemfontein on September 26th, there was no mention of arbitration, only the bare brutal ultimatum; it was Attorney Fischer's astuteness which led him to prefix the demand for arbitration on all points of difference to the demands of the original ultimatum. What, to make the best of it, does this plea for arbitration amount to? It is the case of a man seizing you by the throat, placing a pistol at your head, and demanding your money or your life! (Laughter.) That is about what the Transvaa

Government did. Arbitration or we make war, but arbitration as we wish it to secure what we want, and if you don't give it us in that way we will make war upon you! That was plain language. I don't say that the Boers are so fond of blood shedding that they wanted blood, if they could have secured the end in view by constitutional means. They declared in Holland in 1884, after coming from a deputation to Lord Derby, that they hoped the South African flag would wave from Table Bay to the Zambesi, and that if that end had to be accomplished by blood instead of by ink they would not lack the men to spill it! And so it has been right away to the end. It was impossible for this country to yield to the demand of the Transvaal that certain matters should be arbitrated upon; the position of England as the Sovereign Power in South Africa made that quite out of the question. (Hear, hear.) You cannot submit to arbitration the question as to the absolute relationship subsisting between yourself and another person, as to whether a certain child is the child of its father or not. (Loud laughter.) But it is an absolute fact that everything that could rightly be submitted to arbitration England was always ready to submit. The Transvaal, however, did not care anything about these matters; it wanted this one thing, supremacy, and it felt sure that if England went to arbitration, and the point was submitted to some foreign tribunal, it would go against her. You can imagine what foreign arbitration would have resulted in by the spirit of the Continental Powers. No, we are great fools sometimes, but not so great as that. (Laughter.) On August 28th the British Government sent a despatch agreeing to submit all reasonable questions to arbitration, and on the 16th of the following month, when their military preparations were a little more

advanced, the Transvaal Government suddenly closed the door, and would not have anything more to say on the subject. So that it was it, and not England, who closed the door to arbitration. (Hear, hear.) Take another view of the subject. These men, Mr. Kruger and others, called upon the Divine Power as the final arbiter in the dispute, but now they seem to be going back to a desire for human arbitration, after expressing their conviction that God Almighty would see them through and give them victory. (Ironical laughter.) But they have been disappointed; I think I am quite right in saying that. (Laughter.) One Dutch minister, indeed, is reported to have said that he hoped the Deity would give them the victory, because they could never trust Him any more if He did not—(loud laughter),—and it has been said to me by many and many a Dutchman, that they would never pray again, or read their Bibles again, or believe in anything religious if they did not gain the victory in this great war. (Renewed laughter.) It is very awful and at the same time very ridiculous. (Hear, hear.) So much, then, about the question of arbitration! The war was caused, people say, by the refusal of the Transvaal to grant political rights to the Uitlanders, which led England to interfere in the internal affairs of the Republic, thus again placing the blame upon England. But the blame did not rest upon this country. (Hear, hear.) Shame would have been her portion had she refused to uphold the rights of her subjects in the Transvaal. (Applause.) I may tell you that I have never had any monetary interest whatever in the gold fields, but often and often have I visited the Transvaal and Johannesburg, and my British blood—for although I am a German by birth on my father's side, I am an out and out Britisher—has literally boiled at the political indignities under which the people were living. I quite allow that

many of them did not seem to care much about any political privileges at first, and seemed to be perfectly satisfied if they were making money. But eventually they made a demand for political rights. Take the franchise question. Now, just because in the Conventions of 1881 and 1884 there was no mention absolutely made in so many words of political rights, the Transvaal declared that it was in no sense bound to give them, and they were only bound to grant commercial and other rights; forgetting altogether that at the Conference which was held at Newcastle in May, 1881, at which Mr. Kruger, and others, were present, and at which the question of political rights was brought forward, the reply was made by Mr. Kruger and Dr. Jorissen that the "new comers" would have to wait a little while! The question was asked at another Conference "How long," and Dr. Jorissen replied: "According to our grondwet you had to reside a year in the country." There was thus an absolute understanding in regard to the question of political rights, and the action of the Transvaal Government was a direct violation of the understanding upon which the retrocession of that country was made. The result was that very shortly after the retrocession, the Volksraad raised the term from one to five years, and when it appeared as if some of the foreigners would become Burghers the period was lengthened and lengthened, until in 1894 we reached the condition in the South African Republic that a man must have lived in the country fourteen years, during ten of which he must have been naturalized and forsworn allegiance to the Queen, and then he must have the vote of the Volksraad in his favour, together with a majority of the Burghers living in his particular ward. (Laughter.) And then he must be forty years of age. (Renewed laughter.) Was it possible that anyone would accept the franchise under such conditions

as these? Would anyone give up ten years' citizenship in the country to which he belonged on such a chance? Was it not right therefore that the men of Johannesburg should rise in revolution, and if ever a revolution was justified it was that one, although it ended in a fiasco. (Hear, hear.) They would most certainly not have been worthy of the name of men if they had not risen in defence of their rights. (Hear, hear.) They were descendants, many of them, of men whose ancestors had battled for their rights in England and elsewhere, and it was simply impossible for them to live there as helots without sacrificing the best part of their nature. With regard to the question of the Franchise, I would ask you to read carefully everything that Sir Alfred Milner—that truly great and grand Englishman—(applause)—said at the Conference, and the dispatches which he wrote, and you will, I think, be struck by what I may call their magnanimity. It was not only Mr. Gladstone who was magnanimous, for did not Sir Alfred Milner lay down at the Conference as a *sine qua non* that if the Uitlanders secured the Burgher's rights they should relinquish those in the countries to which they belonged? An attempt had previously been made by those in authority to let the two run together, but Sir Alfred Milner said "No, let them give up their citizenship, and immediately they are ready to do that, and have lived five years in the Transvaal, let them become full-fledged Burghers." Sir Alfred's object in insisting upon the Franchise was to get the people who were complaining to England, and for whom England was interfering, placed in such a position that they could right their own wrongs and look after themselves in their own courts in the Transvaal. It was statesmanlike, it was grand, it was noble—(applause)—but the Republic refused it. There was a reason for this, and we shall at a later period have to give

that reason, why the Transvaal wanted arbitration on its own terms, and why it refused to grant political rights to the Uitlanders. Now let me for a few moments just glance at some of the things which were not the causes of the present war in South Africa. The Jameson Raid was not the cause of the war. I do not justify that incursion into the Transvaal; it was unjustifiable from any point of view, indeed, it was the height of folly, but the revolution at Johannesburg was entirely justifiable. I have spoken about the question of the Franchise, but there are other things to which I would direct your attention. For instance, was there not the Public Meetings Prohibition Act, by which people who met together to discuss matters without the consent of the Government were liable to fine and imprisonment. Then there was the Press Act, by which the Press was placed in the power of the President and his advisers. Was there not also an Act by which the right to petition the Government was denied to anyone except the Burghers? Was there not an Alien's Expulsion Act, by which the President, on the advice of his Attorney-General, could expel anyone from the country whose presence there was supposed detrimental to the well-being of the State? Was there not, too, an Act by which the very foundations of the Constitution were changed, and by which judges were placed at the mercy of the President. Under this Act one of the finest of them all was actually turned out, because he refused to bow down and approve of the Volksraad's action. And then there is the Franchise Act. Are all these things not enough to justify a revolution designed to change the existing Government and to bring in a better state of things? If ever a revolution was justifiable surely it was that one! And it was not the capitalists who brought the revolution about, for only towards the close did the ordinary common

people manage to get the capitalists to assist them. There are capitalists and capitalists, but people do not seem to understand. The capitalists, generally speaking, do not trouble themselves much about anything except monetary matters. (Laughter.) I remember meeting a German capitalist from Johannesburg some time ago, and he said: "Mr. Schreiner, the capitalists will be worse off than ever when the British flag flies out there. In old days we could do anything with fifty or a hundred pounds—(laughter)—but we shall never be able to do that again." And, he added: "I hope the British flag will come, because it will no doubt make things better, but it won't make things better for us; we shall be worse off." Now that is a very honest opinion—(laughter)—but as a matter of fact the capitalist will be better off—as everyone else will—and I will tell you why. (Applause.) It is because the Transvaal depends for its prosperity upon its mines, and you cannot work them without the coloured population. Under the old *regime*, these unfortunate black people were always being threatened, because there was simply no protection obtainable, and they would tell you that all these so-called native friends who are engaged in spouting in England about the Boer being the friend of the black man know nothing whatever about the matter. They realize who are their friends, and under which flag security and liberty and protection is vouchsafed to them. And when the British flag waves there, and things are once more settled, you will find they will troop back to work at the mines as never before, because they will not be exposed on returning to their homes, some two or three hundred miles away, to robbery at the hands of those living in the Transvaal, but will be protected; and with all this influx of labour the mines will be worked more prosperously, and mines not worked hitherto will be brought into operation

and more money will be spent in the country. In addition to this there are other industries which will be opened up in the Transvaal. Mr. Kruger had no wish to see the country develop. As a matter of fact it did develop far too quickly for him, and he set his face dead against it. There is untold wealth in the Transvaal, which will now have a chance of being developed under the British flag, and there will be prosperity for the capitalist as well as for the working man and the black man under the British flag. (Hear, hear.) The present war did not originate with the capitalists, but with the working men of the Rand, such for instance as that fine fellow, Mr. T. R. Dodd, who, I am sorry to see, has just passed away. (Hear, hear.) That gentleman came on board ship and wished me good-bye before I started for England, and it was men such as he who started the petition to the Queen which led to the interference of Great Britain, and brought about as its final result the present war. They felt that it was their last chance, and that they must try and see whether the mother country would stretch forth her hand to help the helpless. And, thank God, England rose for once to her duty and discharged it, and is discharging it now. (Loud applause.) Now you and I have to see that no mistake is made, and that that duty is carried out to its final fulfilment. (Renewed applause.) But what is at the back of all these things of which we have been speaking? What is at the back of it all? Take this one question alone. Why did the Transvaal refuse to grant political rights? Is it inherent in a Dutchman that he will refuse to grant rights to others who come to live in his country? Why in the Transvaal should those rights be denied? Simply because Mr. Kruger said: "If I give these rights I shall lose my independence." And would he? Not in the sense that you and I understand it. If he had given the rights to the Uitlanders they would have

been his firm friends, and would never have wanted the British flag to wave over them. (Hear, hear.) The idea would never have crossed their minds of handing the country over to Great Britain. No, Mr. Kruger refused the rights because it was not real independence that he cared for—only Dutch independence for himself and his oligarchy. (Hear, hear.) He never cared anything for a Republican independence, only a Dutch one. He realized that if he granted the rights, the English were in such numbers that they might after a time swamp the Dutch, that the English language might be used with the Dutch in the Volksraad and the Courts of Law, and so on, and that English men might even be appointed to high official positions. (Hear, hear.) Indeed, it was quite on the cards that an Englishman might eventually be chosen as President of the Republic. (Laughter.) But Kruger in effect said: “Never, never, never; I would die sooner, or have war with England!” Do not forget that when you hear these people prating about independence! For the last twenty years there has been a movement in South Africa—I will not call it a conspiracy, because they do not like the name; but it was bigger than a conspiracy, a conspiracy, I take it, being when half a dozen fellows put their heads together and make secret plots and plans—there has, I say, been a movement in existence in South Africa towards ousting British supremacy from that country and establishing in its place a Republican United States. Let me assure you that if you do not take this as the groundwork and foundation of all that has occurred you will never come to a right conclusion about what has actually happened, or what will take place in the future, or as to what is happening at the present time. When I look back prior to the year 1881, I know, of course, that some of the Dutch were not satisfied with the English rule, and that they certainly wished for

their own independence; but I never heard anything to make me believe that there was a general purpose throughout the country to throw off altogether the yoke of England. I never saw any sign of such a thing until in that fatal year Mr. Gladstone gave back—(hisses)—the independence of the Transvaal. But we must not blame him too much for that, because there is not the slightest doubt whatever that, if only he had foreseen how the gift would have been abused, he would most certainly never have made the concession that he did. (Hear, hear.) We have men living at the present time who took part in that act of retrocession, and who tell us exactly the same thing. There was an Afrikaner National party that sprang into existence at the same time as the Afrikaner Bond, with this one end and aim in view—Africa for the Afrikaners. And we have the result in the terrible war which is now being waged. I will now endeavour to bring to your mind the truth of what I have attempted to lay before you. In March, 1881, according to his "Reminiscences," Dr. E. J. P. Jorissen declares that he, as the authorised mouthpiece of the Transvaal Triumvirate, wrote "the Third Proclamation" to the whole of South Africa, and here are the closing sentences:—"And now South African brethren, fight with us! We frankly call upon you to fight as one man side by side with us. Our fight is henceforth a fight for right and truth against a common tyrant, who to-day tramples us, but to-morrow you, under his foot. It is for you to say who shall reign in South Africa—the Afrikaner or the few tyrants from Downing Street. Or will you, with folded hands, look on and watch us being murdered? Our faith is yours; he who will lose his life for his freedom shall save it, but he who will save it shall lose it." He says further: "When I read this proclamation at the request of Paul Kruger, who sat on a box to

my left, there was not one present who did not fully understand that we were deliberating not only our own future, but that of South Africa. Everyone was convinced that we ought to receive the Transvaal back as it had been taken from us. If not, then war; but war without exception; a united war of all in Natal, the Free State and State Colony, who are of the same blood. In a word, a great war against England, out of which a free South Africa shall rise, or in which the Dutch Afrikaner shall be conquered." Not only statesmen of high standing in England, but the Chief Justice of the Colony, Dr. Villiers, declared that he would never have had any hand in the retrocession if he could have conceived it possible that such results would follow as had followed. The giving back of independence to the Transvaal, after the small and insignificant defeat of Majuba, without even first proceeding with the war until the Boer forces were beaten,—that would have been different, that would have been true magnanimity,—(hear, hear,) gave an impression to the Dutch people in South Africa which has never since been wiped out, or shall I say not until the present war is it beginning to be wiped out. (Hear, hear.) This was the idea. England is cowardly, is weak, is timid; it is only necessary to tread on the lion's tail and he will give in to you. It only requires ten Boers to approach one hundred British soldiers, and they will flee, or else stand up and let you shoot them down. (Laughter.) The present war has undeceived them, and they know now that the British soldier can fight fearlessly and bravely, and they respect him, and they will respect the British Government if it remains firm and just. (Hear, hear.) This retrocession of the Transvaal gave rise to the dream that you only had to insist, and to be brave enough, and cheeky enough, and England would give way, and we who live in the country

have seen this dream of Africander domination begin, increase, and grow; and spread, until it became a terrible Upas tree, covering the whole land with its baneful shadow. This idea of Dutch domination was not confined to the Republics, the South African Republic, or the Orange Free State, with whom we had no quarrel, but stretched throughout Afrikanerdom—indeed the people in Cape Colony seemed to enjoy this idea more than those who really had the independence. I mean that those in Cape Colony seemed to long with far greater eagerness than those in the Republics for the arrival of the time when they too would become independent. (Hear, hear.) Not that they had any quarrel with England, or any complaint to make against the action taken by this country, but this national idea sprang into active life with the giving back of the Transvaal in 1881, and gained fresh impetus when the wealth of the goldfields was discovered. (Hear, hear.) This dream of Dutch domination has been carried forward to no little extent in the public press. If you were to peruse the Dutch papers and read what has been written in the *Express* at Bloemfontein, in *Ons Land*, and in other organs of the Dutch press in Cape Colony, you would, I think, be utterly shocked. In this connection I have often wondered why the conductors of English newspapers did not get someone to extract from each issue of the Dutch papers the anti-British sentiments and publish them in English, so that the English people might have known what was being taught to the Dutch people. If that had been done fifteen years ago the eyes of the English people would have been opened long ago, but to do it now is too late to be of much use. (Hear, hear.) The idea of ousting England from South Africa and substituting a Dutch Republican United States was fostered in the schools and colleges in the country. There is abundant evidence that

the young people were brought to look forward to that as the aim and end of their being, and even in the churches ministers fell under the fascination of this spell. (Laughter.) I have many friends among Dutch ministers, and whilst I admire them for their religious character, I do not admire them for yielding to this national idea of ousting Great Britain from South Africa, and I denounce them accordingly. It was altogether contrary to their duty as ministers of the Prince of Peace to spread these disloyal teachings, and it is impossible to estimate the power which they have exercised on the wrong side. (Hear, hear.) If ministers of the Dutch Reformed Church had only done their duty in the last twenty years there would have been no war. (Hear, hear.) If they had taught the people of Cape Colony that they ought to be willing to live under the Power under which God had placed them, and to set their faces resolutely against any idea of throwing off British authority, the Republicans would not have seen any chance of ousting the British from South Africa, and they would have had to be content to hold their own independence, and get on as well as they could with the British colonies in the country. (Hear, hear.) I have referred to the statement made in Holland in 1884, when Messrs. Kruger, Smit, and Du Toit visited that country after they had secured from Lord Derby what is known as the 1884 Convention. This is what one member of the deputation said: "We hope that the South African flag shall wave from Table Bay to the Zambesi, be that end accomplished by blood or by ink. If it must be blood we shall not lack the men to spill it!" And then quite lately Mr. Reitz tells us for the last time what kind of a war it is that we are waging. He writes: "The struggle of now almost a century, which began when a foreign rule was forced upon the people of the Cape of Good Hope, hastens to an end.

We are approaching the last act in that great drama, which is so momentous for all South Africa. We have reached a stage when it will be decided whether the sacrifices, which both our fathers and ourselves have made in the cause of freedom, have been offered in vain. Whether the blood of our race has been shed in vain. And whether by the Grace of God the last stone will now be built into the edifice which our fathers began with so much toil and so much sorrow. The hour has struck which will decide whether South Africa, in jealously guarding its liberty, will enter on a new phase of its history, or whether South Africa will be dominated by capitalists without conscience, acting in the name and under the protection of an unjust and hated government 7,000 miles away." You see the same thing right through. What did Sir Alfred Milner say?" In his despatch to Mr. Chamberlain, dated 4th of May, 1899, he writes: "A certain section of the Press, not in the Transvaal only, preaches openly and constantly the doctrine of a Republic embracing all South Africa, and supports it by menacing references to the armaments of the Transvaal, its alliance with the Orange Free State, and the active sympathy which, in case of war, it would receive from a section of Her Majesty's subjects. I regret to say that this doctrine . . . is producing a great effect upon a large number of our Dutch fellow colonists Thousands of men peaceably disposed are being drawn into disaffection." Now, you do not suppose for one instant that Sir Alfred Milner was stating that which he knew to be inaccurate. The statement, of course, is absolutely true, and he was one of the first High Commissioners in South Africa to find it true. You know what happened to High Commissioners in the past. When they came to South Africa they speedily fell into the hands of the Bond party. The

Ministry was run by the grace and permission of that party, and as soon as anyone came from England he got into their hands at once, and did not have a chance of learning the real truth about the state of affairs in the country. But Sir Alfred Milner, as you know, was determined to find it out for himself. First of all, he set himself to learn the Dutch language on his way out to the Cape, so that when he arrived there he understood it to some extent. I believe also it is true that Van Oordt's book, "Paul Kruger and the Rise of the South African Republic," which has upon it the imprimatur of the late President, opened his eyes to the real purpose of Dutch Afrikanerdom in South Africa—(hear, hear)—and if you will only take the trouble to read that book you will have no doubt whatever that since 1881 there has been a steady movement towards uniting all the peoples of South Africa to oust Great Britain. The Dutch people are a very slim race indeed, and I believe even the present High Commissioner feels that he is not a match for the slimness of these Dutchmen. (Laughter.) Sir Alfred, I need not remind you, is a straightforward man. England by her weak and vacillating policy had tempted the Dutch Afrikaner to dream all these dreams to which I have alluded. When I was a boy—in 1852 and 1854—the old Union Jack was flying at Bloemfontein, where it now flies once more. (Applause.) The Home Government Commissioners came out and said: "We are going to abandon the Sovereignty," as it was called, and immediately the people held public meetings, and petitioned the Government not to do so. They sent Dr. Andrew Murray as a delegate to England to beg the British Government not to give up the Orange River Colony, but they did, and it became henceforth the Orange Free State. England was for ever drawing back under pressure of the Little Englanders. I do hope

that breed is now extinct. (Laughter.) Then there was more oscillation. England was responsible for allowing this dream to come into existence, and no wonder when your great man Froude actually suggested that the best plan would be for England to give up the mainland,—and keep Simonstown as a station on the way to India. Small wonder therefore if the Dutchmen in South Africa also got hold of the idea. (Hear, hear.) That was their idea from the very beginning. We have heard much of the loyalty of the Cape Dutch, because of the vote of £30,000 per annum to the British Navy, passed by the Cape Parliament in 1897, but when this question first came on the Afrikander Bond were dead against it. There was to be nothing of the kind. They got talked to by their leaders, and they became amenable to the arguments which they put forward. (Laughter.) I was not myself present at the meetings, but a great change came over them when the matter was brought forward next year. The argument which, no doubt, was brought to bear upon them amounted to this:—“My dear fellows, don't you see that this is exactly what we have been wanting; this is the thin end of the wedge. Don't you mean to say it is worth while giving England £150,000 a year if she withdraws from the mainland and just protects the coasts? It is a step in the right direction.” And they persuaded them! (Laughter.) I do not know what meaning underlay Mr. Merriman's speech on the subject, but it was a curious expression that he made use of. He said that he believed “a true principle of nationality, a true principle of freedom was behind the motion.” (Laughter.) Just note the statements made by their leaders and your eyes will be opened. They no doubt felt too that by voting the contribution they were humbugging the poor stupid Englishmen, and throwing dust in their eyes! (Laughter.) That vote of £30,000 was no proof of loyalty.

This hope then, this dream of a Dutch Republic, lies at the bottom of everything, and war was absolutely inevitable, because of it. It had to come, and the Republics determined that the time would arrive when they would have to try conclusions with Great Britain. I do not say that the Republics really chose the time, for I do think our wise statesmen at home and in the Colony had a little hand in that matter. And so far England is responsible. She said to the Transvaal Government: "Give rights to these men upon the Goldfields, we insist upon that," and she knew full well that if those rights were granted the dream would finally disappear, because the Transvaal would become an English Republic, and would consequently no longer be the focus and hope of Afrikanerdom. And the Transvaal knew that and said: "Never, never, never!" And all the franchise schemes were nothing more than a sham. There was nothing real in them, and they were only, I believe, put forward in order to gain time, because the Republics were not quite ready so far as their military preparations were concerned. (Hear, hear.) I would ask you, then, not to dismiss from your minds, as if it were a dream, or a fancy, the absolute movement which existed for the overthrow of Great Britain in South Africa. It is the key of the whole piece, and everything falls into its proper place if you take that as the key of the situation. If you do not, everything is in confusion and chaos, and you cannot properly explain to yourselves the circumstances that have taken place, and that are taking place, or the position that is being taken up at the present time by the Afrikanders. Would you not suppose that the Afrikanders in Cape Colony who have had no cause of quarrel with the Government, but who, under free institutions, have brought themselves to the height of political power, and

are really "ruling the roost," would advise the Republics and say: "Give up fighting and accept your position under the British flag? You will be no worse off than we are." But they do not do so! The fighting is still for the independence of the Republics, because they know—and every Afrikaner knows it—that, if that independence is once gone, their dream has disappeared completely for ever, but if they can only manage that in some part of South Africa there is a Dutch Republic, even under English protection, then there will be still some hope in the future for the carrying out of their long-cherished dream. I ask you to use your influence at the present time to strengthen the Government in the fulfilment of that policy which it has hitherto laid down, and which I hope it will carry out fearlessly to the end. That is, that in the best interests of South Africa, in the best interests of the Dutch as well as of the English, in the best interests of the territories once called the Republics, as well as in the best interests of the Colonies, and of the black people as well as the white, in the words of Lord Salisbury, no shred of independence should be left to either Republic. (Hear, hear.) We cannot have two flags in the country. We must see, moreover, that no more munitions of war are brought into the country. That will never do, because it will only be the old trouble all over again in a few years' time. (Hear, hear.) We cannot, I say, have two flags in South Africa. We have tried it long enough, and England has honestly endeavoured to fulfil her obligations, but the result of the experience of the last twenty years has proved that having two flags is only a source of unrest, discord, disunion, rebellion, war and bloodshed. No, we cannot have it any more. We cannot have a fratricidal war every twenty years, as those so-called conciliators predict that we shall have, if we do not

restore to the Republics their independence. England is not responsible for the war, nor for the loss of independence by the Orange Free State and the South African Republic. They have brought it on themselves by refusing to act up to the conditions on which their independence rested, and by fighting, not for their own independence, which was never in danger, except through their own action, but to bring the whole of South Africa under the Dutch Republican flag. They have fought and lost, and England has won; and there never can be two flags again. I believe that things will settle down, and that the two nationalities will contentedly live and become merged into one nation under the British flag. That is the only possible solution of the question, by which peace, prosperity and harmony can be spread throughout the whole of South Africa and among all classes of people. (Hear, hear.) In considering, then, what the settlement should be it is necessary to look back to the past, and avoid the mistakes that have already been made. I do hope that everyone of us will exercise all the influence that he possesses — whether he be a Conservative, a Liberal Unionist, or a Liberal Imperialist — all who have the interests of the Empire and the nation and South Africa at heart will do all they can to stiffen, if possible, the back of the Government in this great matter. (Hear, hear). I stand here representing the loyal people of South Africa. I do not think Mr. Merriman and Mr. Sauer can say the same thing. We have suffered much in the past because of our loyalty. There is so much said and written nowadays as to the necessity of conciliating the other side, that I am afraid England may forget her duty to the loyalists. That would be a very sad thing, as it would weaken the bonds subsisting between the mother country and South Africa. Keep this before you, that in any settlement that may

be brought about, the enemies and rebels ought not to come first. (Applause.) It will not be just that people who have plunged South Africa and the British Empire into a war of this description should have first consideration, before the loyal English and Dutch and coloured races in that country. (Applause.) With these words I conclude, thanking you very much for the kind attention which you have given to my remarks. (Applause.) I am not a professional politician, and have never been in Parliament, although I did stand once for Kimberley at a General Election. I am a plain, simple man who, during the last twenty years, has taken the deepest possible interest in these political matters, and who has travelled round the country to every town and village, and kept in touch with all sections of the community. Consequently I claim that I can feel the pulse of South Africa as well as, if not better than, most people who live in South Africa. (Applause.) I have felt it my duty, during these recent critical times, to give up for the time being that cause to which my whole life has been devoted—total abstinence and gospel work—and to do what lies in my power to spread light upon these questions. (Hear, hear.) That is the reason for my presence here this evening, as a simple plain man who claims that he knows the trend of events in South Africa, and who is desirous of sharing with you what he knows of the question, feeling assured that the policy which is being carried out by the Government in South Africa is the right one for this nation to follow. (Loud applause.)

A short discussion followed, and the proceedings terminated with hearty votes of thanks to Mr. Schreiner for his address and to Mr. Batchelor for presiding.