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WAR IN SOUTH AFRICA

THE CASE FOR THE BRITISH

By the Rev. James Stewart, D.D.

THE CASE FOR THE BOERS

By George W. Van Sicken

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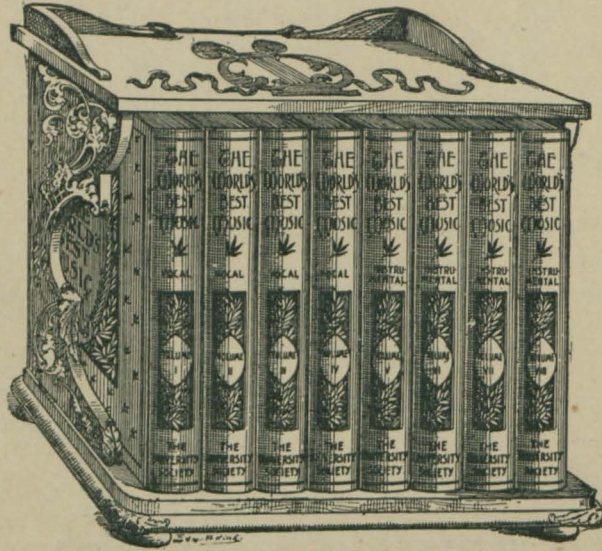
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WAR IN SOUTH AFRICA

'The Case for the British

By the Rev. James Stewart, D.D.¹

[As Interviewed by a Staff Correspondent]

THERE are interesting men in South Africa. Take, for instance, Sir Alfred Milner. He is a strong, cautious, and pacific man. I talked with him last when I passed through Cape Town, and was more than ever impressed with these qualities. The confidence felt in Sir Alfred by the British population of South Africa is unqualified.

Then take Mr. Schreiner, Prime Minister of the present Cape Colony Cabinet. He is the son of a missionary of the Wesleyan Society. His mother was an Englishwoman—I think she is still living. His brother is engaged in philanthropic work, largely temperance, among the whites and the blacks in Cape Colony. His sister is, of course, well known as the author of "The Story of an African Farm," "Trooper Peter Halket," and other books. Evidences seem to be found of Premier Schreiner's Africander rather than British sympathies—if we are to believe the newspaper reports—in the strange lack of defense of places like Vryburg, for instance. Again, there was his non-action in reference to the recent transit of ammunition for the Boers through Algoa Bay. Of course, I admit that we were not at war with the Boers.

Take Mr. Cecil Rhodes as an interesting man. There is a curious feeling about him now. In the first place, to him, more than to any other, is due the extraordinary development of South Africa. He has undoubted ability, and there is still a large amount of popular confidence in him, though, of course, many have failed in their allegiance since the Jameson raid. That naturally shook confidence in him. To what extent he knew about it I do not venture to express an opinion. He certainly could not have authorized such a stupid piece of insanity. To us British his unfortunate expression some time ago about "the elimination of the imperial

factor" also operated to his damage. If his aims were only on a higher moral level he would have enormous power, but he seems to have only material ends in view.

Take, if you please, the Boer Presidents as examples of notable men. Sir John Brand was the first President of the Orange Free State. I knew him, and he was a man of progressive ideas. There was hardly a ripple of disturbance while he was President. Nor, until the present, has there been any disturbance under President Steyn.

Now take Mr. Rhodes's great rival, President Kruger. I want to give a fair answer as to whether the latter is bigoted or not. From my talk with him I cannot say that he has so impressed me, but that he is so is an entirely just inference from his policy. That policy would indicate that his ideas are, to say the least, antiquated. So far as I can make out, his Government belongs to the beginning rather than to the end of the nineteenth century. It denies all political, municipal, and civil rights to the majority of the population. A good way to present the Transvaal crisis to Americans is, as The Outlook has already done, to put the maladministration of the Kruger Government into a series of indictments. These indictments have already been formulated in the Outlander demands:

1. The right to vote for the real legislative authority—the First Chamber of the Volksraad, not the impotent Second Chamber.

2. Such a redistribution of seats for the gold-fields in the Volksraad as will give to them a proper representation. At present there is none at all. The Transvaal now offers one-fifth, but the Outlanders represent three-fifths of the people. They pay nine-tenths of the taxation, yet they have nothing to say about the expenditure of a penny. You Americans justly went to war with us on account of taxation without representation.

¹Dr. Stewart has lived in South Africa for thirty years. He is at the head of the Lovedale Mission, Cape Colony.

3. A Constitution safeguarded from sudden changes. At present an ordinary resolution of the Volksraad may change the existing Constitution.

4. The heads of the Government responsible to the Volksraad.

5. Independence of the courts. At present, if a judge does not respect any chance vote of the Volksraad, he is dismissed from office. Chief Justice Kotze was so dismissed. This, in my opinion, is the great demand; the trouble is not so much a matter of the franchise. The most necessary reform is to free the judges from all interference by the Executive and the Volksraad. In all rightly governed countries the judges on the bench should be, like Cæsar's wife, above suspicion.

6. Cancellation of monopolies. This, of course, is far less important than the foregoing; it can more easily be adjusted.

7. Equality in recognition by the courts of the English and Dutch languages, just as we have it in Cape Colony.

8. Removal of religious disabilities. Neither Roman Catholics nor Jews may hold office.

9. Reorganization of the civil service.

10. A free press.

11. Proper schools.

12. Freer trade.

I ask the people of the United States: "Would you like to live without these necessities? Is their lack to be endured longer by your citizens now in the Transvaal, as well as by the English, German, and French Outlanders?" No; nine out of every ten Americans in the Transvaal support the Outlander demands. That they are just is shown by their partial sanctioning by the Boers in the proposed lessening of the conditions of the franchise and of representation.

Mr. Kruger will not grant any political reforms unless he is forced to do so. I have always said, and say still, that he never meant to give any concessions. He does not mean to do so now. He will not give anything which he is not compelled to concede by force.

Of course, in the event of his resigning from the helm, it might be possible to have quiet for a few years, especially if the Joubert Liberal faction came into power. While I say that might be possible, I do not see how the British Government can now well recede from its present stand.

If England does not defend the just rights of her subjects in South Africa and elsewhere, the time may come when she will not have any subjects to defend.

If you were to ask the majority of British people in South Africa about Mr. Chamberlain as Colonial Minister, they would say that he has been wonderfully patient. I myself am surprised at the patience he shows to President Kruger and to the Transvaal Government. If Mr. Chamberlain goes back on his present position, there will be despair in the hearts of all colonial Britons, and especially in the hearts of those in South Africa. In fact, that despair may be far more serious in its consequences than is realized in England.

The Transvaal crisis, of course, is not a dispute between President Kruger and Mr. Chamberlain alone. It is a conflict of two policies, so radically opposed that peace will never be possible until one is driven off the field, just as was the case in the war between your North and South. That had to be fought out, and then there was peace.

It was an act of grace when, in 1881, Great Britain gave back the Transvaal to the Boers. At that time there were already in the Transvaal a large number of British subjects, black and white—several thousand, I should say. This giving back of the Transvaal was supposed to have been a matter of policy. It was done on certain conditions; one was that the Transvaal could not make treaties with or war against her neighbors without the consent of the sovereign power. That was the suzerainty in 1881, and that was the suzerainty in 1884, although there was an omission of the word. The thing itself, however, was amply emphasized in the following paragraph: "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." Besides, the Convention of 1884 is meaningless without the preamble, namely, the Convention of 1881. By the phrasing of that first Convention the inhabitants (not merely the Boers) of the Transvaal have independence and equality of rights.

There have been many British blunders

concerning South Africa. One of them was the retrocession of the Transvaal. The London "Spectator" the other day said that it was "a hideous mistake." Two or three letters have since appeared calling the "Spectator" to account for that expression, but it was the proper expression, after all. When the retrocession of the Transvaal, through Mr. Gladstone as Premier, actually occurred, an American paper—the New York "Herald," I think—called it "the finest thing in history." When I saw that, I said: "If that is the finest thing in history, history has very few fine things to show us."

Now, I am not a man in favor of war. I think that if God means to punish us we shall suffer defeat. At all events, we shall have a very bad time of it at first. Still, I do not see any other way out of the difficulty than by war, if the Boers resist our just claims. War may be the only thing which will clear the air and enable us to get along comfortably together. It is not just that her Majesty's subjects have not the right to protect themselves; that they should be subjected to all sorts of disabilities. As your countryman, Mr. Hays Hammond, says in a letter published this morning, so I say: There can be no political stability or permanency in South Africa without equality of civil rights throughout that country. The granting of the franchise alone would not be the universal panacea that some optimists expect it to be. Much stress is laid on the franchise, however, because it would protect the English and other foreign capital invested in the country. As the situation now stands, Mr. Hammond is right in his statement that the Boer Government has the power to expel any resident in the Transvaal and send him across the border without trial, confiscating his goods at the same time.

Mr. Hammond is right, too, in pointing out the error of supposing that only Great Britain is financially interested in South Africa. He shows that a large percentage of the stockholders of the great mining companies are found in France, Germany, and on the European Continent generally, while some companies are entirely controlled by French and German capital. This whole question, therefore, is by no means a purely English question in its

politico-economic aspect. As to America, while your capital may not be very greatly invested, your exports, particularly of machinery, are to a marked extent involved in our prosperity. Your men also do the important technical work at the mines; almost all the mining engineers throughout South Africa are Americans.

Nor do the whites alone suffer. We should also protect the blacks. It is a fact that only within two or three years have any legal marriage laws been made for the blacks in the Transvaal.

It has been said that the Outlanders are entirely a floating population; that they are in the Transvaal only so long as they can make money, and that then they will return to England. This is not so. At least a quarter of the Outlanders expect to remain permanently. Of course heads of businesses will retire, and men who have made large sums of money will retire, but others will quickly fill their places.

Again, the Boers claim that foreigners come there only on account of the mines. It is true that Johannesburg has been built up by a mining population. The city of a hundred thousand people is only ten years old; one can hardly believe that twelve years ago it was only a sheep farm. It is five thousand feet above the sea, and, despite occasional severe dust storms, has a healthy and pleasant climate. The climate and also the soil of the Transvaal are such as to attract, not to repel, settlers. The soil in the neighborhood of Pretoria and Johannesburg is fertile and productive. In fact, what most struck my attention when I went to those cities was the depth of the soil and the rapidity with which young trees had grown. Wherever, in any part of the world, climate and soil favor it, most gold-miners become permanent settlers. Look at Australia and California.

The key to this whole question is the fact that Dutch policy and British policy are two entire opposite and opposing things. It is a case of civilization against non-progression. If it is necessary to fight it out by force of arms, I hardly think it likely that there would be ultimate defeat for those of us who are trying to secure equality and justice for men, irrespective of race and color. That is exactly our aim—justice for the whites

because they are entitled to it, and for the blacks because they have natural rights to it.

I do not think that the present American prejudice against Great Britain in this

matter is justified. I do not think that the people of the United States fully realize the moral support which Great Britain gave them in the late war.

The Case for the Boers

By George W. Van Sicen

[As Interviewed by a Staff Correspondent]

THERE ought to be founded at once a bureau for the instruction of the American people in truth. I would not limit this remark to the truth or facts about the Boers, but I will do so presently. If American citizens were correctly informed, and had not derived their information from British and purely selfish sources, no Administration and no power would be able to withstand for forty-eight hours the blast of their indignation. With one breath England says that the Boers should not distrust her intentions, and with the next breath she says to an independent State, "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 on the part of England 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; we have as much reason to anticipate that Kaiser Wilhelm will demand of the United States the right of franchise for every German born who is deprived of his beer on Sunday, as the South African Republic has reason to listen or to yield to the demands of England that the franchise be given to the Uitlanders. This question of franchise has been intentionally beclouded and the American mind misled upon it by the British and by many American newspapers. Take the New York "Tribune" as an example of the latter. I cannot conceive of Horace Greeley ever countenancing such intentionally incorrect and untrue views as have been published during the past two months in the editorial columns of that formerly American paper. The way in which the point is befogged to-day in that and other pro-British journals is this, that all that England asks is that the Dutch Republic shall admit as its citizens

those who will take an oath of allegiance in the language of the naturalization oath of the Orange Free State. They never publish the language of the latter; it expressly omits to forswear allegiance to the native country of the foreigner about to be naturalized. British casuists of the style of Sir Alfred Milner and Mr. Joseph Chamberlain say that this does not matter; that, of course, any man who takes an oath of fealty to a country impliedly renounces his allegiance to his native land; but in this instance the British Uitlanders have positively refused and do refuse to renounce their allegiance to Great Britain. How can they be trusted?

I have in my possession the official "Green Book" of the South African Republic, which corresponds to the "Blue Book" of the British Government, containing the stenographic notes of the official interviews between President Kruger and Sir Alfred Milner at Bloemfontein this last spring, in which President Kruger, after being pressed by the wily British Commissioner, finally stated the form—the proper form—of an oath of naturalization containing the clause which forswears allegiance to Great Britain or to the native land of the foreigner; to which Sir Alfred Milner replied that he would not agree to that at all; that the clause in regard to forswearing allegiance must be left out; and later he suggested the adoption of the naturalization oath of the Orange Free State. To this President Kruger replied that to accept that would be to destroy his country. And he said truly: Since the Report of the British High Commissioner about these negotiations, the English papers, and the formerly American papers which have so lately fallen in love with the British, gloss over and belittle this important point, by saying that the South African Republic refuses the "reasonable

modifications" of this oath demanded by England. The fact is that England has no right, in any way, shape, or manner, to demand or even to suggest a modification of the oath of allegiance of a foreigner who desires to become a citizen of the South African Republic, or of any State. The claim is made falsely that the treaty between Great Britain and the South African Republic made in 1881, and superseded by the Convention of London in 1884, gave to Great Britain the right to thus suggest and interfere with the autonomy of the Republic. This claim is absolutely false. All that the Convention of 1881 gave to Great Britain in this respect was the suzerainty over the foreign or outside relations of the South African Republic. I hold in my hand the autograph draft of the resolution written by Parnell and wired to Mr. Healy, which resolution was passed by Parliament in 1881, and which reads as follows: "Give notice to-night that Thursday, going into Committee Supply, I will call attention to the Transvaal war, and move that, in the opinion of the House, the Boers, by gallant resistance, have earned the right to restoration of their independence."

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 of three, including Kruger and Joubert, to London, refusing to submit to this claim of suzerainty, and it was stricken from the treaty. A new treaty, called the Convention of 1884, was agreed upon by the great British Empire, omitting all claim of suzerainty, but retaining simply the right to pass upon or approve or disapprove all treaties with foreign powers that had been made by the South African Republic; and even this expressly excluded the Orange Free State, which is the only country which now stands by the South African Republic in its hour of trial. To the honor of the Parliament and citizens of the Orange Free State, they have cast in their lot to live or die with the Boers—no doubt to die.

Another sophistical and untrue claim is made by those interested in destroying this little Transvaal, to the effect that the Boers have broken their agreement of 1881 and of 1884 in failing to give to the Uitlanders, as they promised, "equal

political and other rights." But they did not agree to give any *political* rights; that word is interpolated by the British and by those who argue in their behalf. What they did agree to do and what they gave was equal privileges and civil rights before the law; and, in furtherance of that agreement, Article 26 details that "all persons, other than blacks, conforming themselves to the laws of the Transvaal State will have full opportunity to enter, travel, and reside in any part of it; they will be entitled to hire or possess houses, manufactories, warehouses, shops, and other premises; they may carry on their commerce either in person or by any agents they may see fit to employ; they will not be subjected to restriction in respect to their person or property, or in respect to their commerce or industry, or in taxation, whether general or local, other than those which may be imposed upon Transvaal citizens." And Article 27 reads: "All inhabitants of the Transvaal shall have free access to the courts of justice for the protection and defense of their rights;" which is exactly what British citizens have in the city of New York. If they want more here, let England send her armies and fleets to *this* country and force us to give them the franchise without their forswearing their allegiance.

The claim is made that the taxes are unequally levied. This claim also is absolutely false; all people are taxed alike. It is true that there is a tariff on dynamite, from which some of the citizens of the Dutch Republic reap additional profits.

A great outcry is made by the foreigners, who have taken out of that country during the past year one hundred million dollars of gold, as to the burdensome taxes. Well, the latter amount to two and one-half per cent. on the profits of the mines: as the corporations which have taken away this gold have paid dividends to their stockholders varying from sixty to one hundred per cent. per annum, the injustice of this outcry is self-evident.

According to an English authority—Statham, in his book on "South African States"—the personal tax on any one in the Transvaal, rich or poor, does not, probably, amount to more than twenty-five dollars per year. The Crown Leaf Gold Mine Company produced in round numbers over two million dollars gold, distributed

five hundred thousand dollars profits, and paid to the South African Government, for rents, licenses, and other privileges, six thousand dollars. The Robinson Company produced three million two hundred and fifty thousand dollars of gold, and distributed one million one hundred and seventeen thousand dollars in dividends, and paid to the Government two thousand dollars. The New Times Company produced four hundred and fifty-two thousand dollars in gold, distributed four hundred and fifty thousand dollars in profits, and paid the Government thirty-four hundred dollars. The Transvaal Coal Trust produced 266,945 tons of coal, and paid the Government three hundred and fifteen dollars. The Consolidated Land and Exploration Company, which owned over two hundred and fifty farms of six thousand acres each, paid the Government thirty-six hundred dollars. As to dynamite, more is charged for it by the South Africa Chartered Company at the Kimberley mines than is charged in Johannesburg, many miles further inland, with more expensive transportation, and including the Transvaal tax.

I regret that I am interviewed upon this subject without my authorities at hand and without time to give book and page for the statements which I make. I repeat that the facts should be collated, arranged, and published broadcast, that Americans may know the truth. I refrain from denying, as I would like to and can truthfully, the many untrue, quibbling, and misleading statements that are made by the British themselves and by their sympathizers. But not all Englishmen are false-hearted, not all Englishmen are governed by their pockets; and once place before the vast majority of the masses of the English people facts that will show that they are acting unjustly, or that their Government is acting unjustly, and that vast majority will rebel against being made the tool of wrong. I rely upon the powerful voice and vote of such men in the next meeting of Parliament to do justice to the God-fearing Boers in the same way that their noble model, Gladstone, did them justice in 1881. Gladstone, not Chamberlain, is the "average Englishman."

The action of Great Britain is ostensibly based upon the grievances formulated by the Uitlanders and published in the

London "Times," which are to this effect:

That they, the Uitlanders, "have no vote in the levying of taxes." This is true of all foreigners in the city of New York, in the State of New York, and in the United States of America; will England attack us for that?

"The Uitlanders have no voice in the payment of officials." Has England been consulted as to the salaries of the heads of departments of this city which have just been passed upon by the Board of Estimates? Or as to the salaries of the President and other United States officials?

"They have no control of the education of the country." When did England control the education of her own country? They never had free schools in England until within the last forty years. Elderly Englishmen do not know what free schools are. Free public schools arose in Holland. When Leyden was rewarded for its resistance to Spanish tyranny in 1566, the reward asked by its citizens was not relief from taxes; it was not the great boon of those days, a free annual fair, but a free university; and that was granted by William the Silent and the States-General, and the University of Leyden stands as its monument to day—a university, not of buildings, but of professors and alumni of the greatest names in science, medicine, law, and theology. The free schools of Holland were brought to the United States of America by the Dutch, who settled Manhattan Island in 1626. They have free schools in the South African Republic, and they are not under the control of foreigners. Neither can Germany, if she so wished (her citizens are too wise and fair), force upon the United States the use of the German language in the curriculum of our schools, as the Uitlanders desire to force English into the Transvaal schools.

"The Uitlanders have no power in the municipal government of their town, Johannesburg." Neither have unnaturalized British subjects any voice in the control of any American city.

"The jurors by whom they are tried are not their peers, but burghers, their political masters." This is true in New York, in the United States, as well as in the South African Republic. It is fortunate for the existence of the United States.

"They pay almost the entire taxation of the country." This is not true. They pay the pro rata taxes levied as before explained, providing they are owners in the properties which produce. There is no tax levied upon Uitlanders. Foreign residents of New York City thus pay indirectly a considerable part of the taxes levied through rents and through the tariff. That does not give them any right to representation in the Legislature or in Congress; if it does, will England send her armies and navies *here*?

"Their children born in the Republic have been deprived of the birthright of citizenship." There is no such birthright in the United States or anywhere else. Children of a British subject, born in the United States, remain British subjects unless they choose to become American citizens, just as children born abroad of American citizens remain American citizens. Citizenship is not a birthright; it is granted by the State.

"Doles, loans, given as though personally from the President, are made indiscriminately to the burghers." We have heard of such things in this country as that "to the victors belong the spoils," and that the President rewards the members of his party; and we have yet to hear that Great Britain is going to war with us because some of those gifts or favors are not made to unnaturalized British subjects. The Uitlanders say that "the money comes, of course, from their pockets in the first instance." The money comes from the gold-mines and from the soil of the South African Republic. It is dug up by the Uitlanders; it is sent out of the country without enriching the latter.

They complain that "the principle has been established that the Government should take up bonds on farms so as to prevent the lands passing into the hands of the Uitlanders." Wise old Dutchmen!

The lands will soon pass into the hands of the Uitlanders, but through murder and robbery committed by the "civilizing forces" of the great British Empire.

If time and space were allowed me, I would detail the historical facts which show beyond disproof that, from the time England conquered Cape Colony, she has pursued an unjust, false, bullying policy toward these Dutchmen, driving them step by step into a wilderness which Great

Britain did not own, and which she disclaimed owning, and show conclusively that the claims of England to-day are untrue, or are manufactured of greed and hypocrisy. The situation remains that the United States will stand by and see the citizens of this small Republic wiped off the face of the earth by the enormous power of a monarchy, without raising a voice of protest and without exercising the rights given to the United States by the Arbitration Treaty so lately concluded at The Hague, and so largely brought about by the influence of the great British Empire in conjunction with that of the great American Republic.

The 3d Article of the Arbitration Treaty expressly declares that it shall be the right of any third power, without being guilty of impertinence, to proffer its good offices and mediation to any two powers about to engage in war, or even after war is begun. Mark you! Not wait until one or both of the powers request intervention, but *proffer*. It is suggested, in behalf of the British view, that Great Britain caused these articles of that treaty to be so worded as expressly to exclude the trouble which was brewing (and which it would now appear she intended to foment) between herself and the South African Republic; but, as a lawyer, it is my opinion upon the construction of this treaty that the British point is not well covered, because the independence of the South African Republic is the very point at issue. If the point at issue is to cause war, it is then a fit subject of mediation and arbitration in order to prevent unnecessary bloodshed. That is what the Arbitration Treaty is for.

I have lately received more than a thousand letters from prominent Americans throughout the United States, from Maine to California and from Dakota to Florida, and I have been surprised to find how many of them contain expressions of fear that we shall offend England, especially because of her newly found friendship for the United States as exhibited during our recent war with Spain. I wonder if Sampson, Schley, Dewey, and the men behind the guns at Santiago and Manila were thinking of the great moral assistance given us by Great Britain when they attacked the enemy! My impression was that Americans fought those battles,

and my impression was then and is now that if the European powers had interfered, even with England included, all true Americans would have stood to their guns against those combined powers, in the way in which these true-hearted Dutchmen are now about to die for their country under the shot and shell of Great Britain. If I have got to be the friend of Great Britain in anything that she may do wrong, I do not want her friendship. Or, if I have done wrong and she backed me up in it, I do not want her friendship. Americans must remember Washington's advice to "observe good faith and justice toward all nations," and, further, that "against the insidious wiles of foreign influence the jealousy of a free people ought to be awake." Beware of England! For myself, I say with Emerson:

God said: I am tired of kings.

My angel—his name is Freedom—
Choose *him* to be your king;

He shall guard your pathway east and west,
Defend you with his wing.

And ye shall succor men:

'Tis nobleness to serve,
Help those who cannot help again.
Beware from right to swerve.

I tried to cable President Kruger on Thursday, October 12, but my message cannot reach him; it is stopped by a British military censorship, established at 5 P.M. on October 11.

This little band of devoted Christian Republicans, who have prayers in all their houses and prayers in camp every morning, have dedicated themselves to death to maintain the principle that no foreign nation shall force upon them citizens whom they do not desire. They are shut out from the rest of the world. We shall not hear any truth about them for days and times to come.

My friend General P. J. Joubert, when he kissed his wife and started to lead his men up Majuba Hill, said to her (he did not expect to see her again): "The British are mighty, but our God is almighty."

This morning I received from General Joubert a letter with his autograph signature (it is probably the last letter which I shall receive from him) in which he says: "Probably before you receive this letter England will have opened upon us her cannon. That will be the beginning; God only knows what the end will be. We read in all English newspapers of all the auxiliary troops from all lands and colonies sent to Mr. Chamberlain by Canada, Australia, India, New Zealand, all to help crush to the earth the poor little band of Boers, so that, unless there be a God who desires that they shall live, the name of 'Africander' will soon be no more spoken."

But we liberty-loving Americans stand by and cheer England on.

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