

# THE EDITOR EDITED.

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The Newcastle Daily Chronicle

AND

The South African War.

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The Newcastle Daily Chronicle

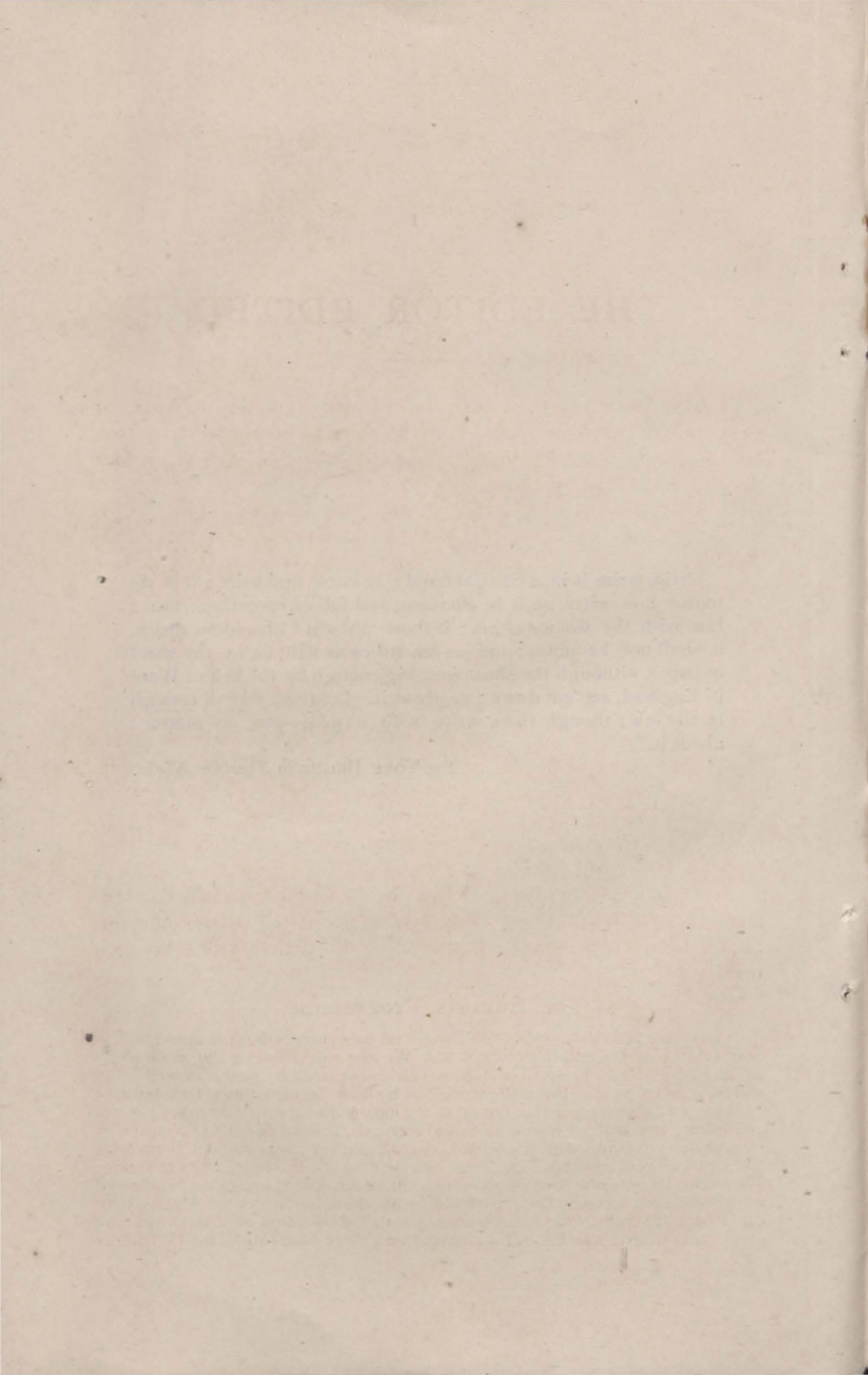
and

The South African War

FRANCIS & TAYLOR

“Go, write it in a martial hand ; be curst and brief ; it is no matter how witty, so it be eloquent, and full of invention : taunt him with the licence of ink : if thou ‘thou’st’ him some thrice, it shall not be amiss ; and as many lies as will lie in thy sheet of paper, although the sheet were big enough for the bed of Ware in England, set ‘em down : go about it. Let there be gall enough in thy ink ; though thou write with a goose-pen, no matter : about it.”

SIR TOBY BELCH in *Twelfth Night*.



## THE EDITOR EDITED.

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I have been led by the course of events in South Africa to examine the pabulum upon which the patriots in this district have been sustained, and it appears to me that its value as a brain food can now be tested by results.

I refer in particular to the editorial services of the *Newcastle Daily Chronicle* and to the guidance which it tendered to its readers upon South African affairs before and after the war began, a subject upon which the editor continues to offer the public the benefit of his counsel.

### Oracle or Blind Man ?

Is he then an oracle upon whom we can rely, or is he a blind man under whose guidance we have fallen into the ditch ?

The examination of his case against the Boers now presented to the public is based exclusively upon his own statements made since June, 1899. They are printed in reduced type, prefaced by the date of their issue, and in quoting them every care has been taken to preserve strict accuracy without doing any violence to the context.

His deliberate conclusion upon the issue between our Government and the South African Republic is presented in the following fulmination, which, for the purposes of this article, will serve as a text.

### The Editor's Programme.

September 8th, 1899.—We are for a final assertion of British supremacy in South Africa as the end to be aimed at. We are indifferent to the method by which that end may be secured. If it can be secured by peace as well as by war let it be by peace. But if the work can be done better by war, then let it be by war ; war with no more lamenting of the means than a surgeon makes over an operation ; war without humanitarian hysterics or the weak-minded rhapsodies of confused religion ; war at once and war in earnest ; war without hesitation, and war without compunction ; war that will be swift, short, and shattering. There can be only one kind of ultimatum whose acceptance ought to be allowed to prevent such a conclusion. It would be an ultimatum which would dictate to the Boers the recognition of suzerainty ; the demolition of their forts, the observance of every article of the Convention ; the concession to the Uitlanders

of an adequate representation in the Raad, as well as of a satisfactory suffrage in its elections, and the permanent establishment of racial peace throughout South Africa by the final acknowledgment of racial equality. If Mr. Kruger should submit to an ultimatum of that character, well, the end would be achieved, and the particular method of war would be objectionable, because unnecessary. But unless these terms in their entirety get peremptorily enforced by the mere despatch of an ultimatum and the mere mobilisation of an army corps, we say, very deliberately, that anything which prevented war and the complete settlement following war, would be the worst of evils.

“O that’s a brave man, he writes brave verses, speaks brave words, swears brave oaths, but all’s brave that youth mounts and folly guides.”

### The Vote: Demanded but not Demanded.

The first of these five items actually demanded by our Government was Electoral Reform.

The word “demanded” can, however, only be used in this connection under protest from the Editor.

October 11th, 1899.—According to him (Kruger) we are not entitled to demand for the Uitlanders admission to the franchise and a share of representation in the Raad. As a matter of fact we have preferred no such demand.

Sir A. Milner, supported by the Government, merely proposed that the franchise should be extended to the Uitlanders as a likely way out of the trouble, and the best way from Mr. Kruger’s point of view.

We have, however, the Editor’s authority for using the word.

July 1st, 1899.—Sir Alfred Milner, it will be remembered, demanded a five years retrospective franchise.

July 8th, 1899.—In a sentence, the High Commissioner demanded a five years retroactive franchise and a moderate measure of re-distribution.

July 11th, 1899.—He (Sir A. Milner) therefore demanded that all settlers in the country prior to 1891 should be enfranchised forthwith and that later comers should be entitled to the vote after five years’ residence.

It was not, therefore, a friendly proposal which they might decline without offence, but a demand which to reject was to endanger the peace.

This is still further evident from the Editor’s admission, dated September 22nd, 1899:—

And though war upon a mere detail of electoral law would be in itself a criminally excessive method, we have sent out troops.

### Vital but Worthless.

In making this warlike demand for the franchise, we had fully persuaded ourselves that it would act like physic on the corrupt oligarchy.

July 26th, 1899.—The rulers of the Transvaal are a band of brigands, and to admit the Uitlander to the franchise means the stoppage of plunder, exposure, and disorganisation.

It would also restore our dignity.

July 14th, 1899.—Sir Alfred Milner’s object in insisting that a proportion of the Uitlanders should be enfranchised at once was that they might be

relieved of the stamp of an inferior caste. They might be a minority, even a helpless minority. But at least the sense of inferiority would be removed.

Later on we found it would be worthless.

September 8th, 1899.—If the ultimatum (from our Government to theirs) is a franchise ultimatum only, there will be great danger that Mr. Kruger may accept it. In that case the question would not be advanced a step.

### The Main Thing but not the Main Thing.

Not only did we make a warlike demand for Franchise Reform but it was the only thing we at first demanded.

August 10th, 1899.—We ask merely that after five years' residence in the country British subjects shall be enfranchised and shall have some representation—a very little—in the legislature. If Mr. Kruger chooses to concede these terms, well and good. If not, there will be war: but it will be war of his making not of ours.

We had not only persuaded ourselves that the vote was at the bottom of the affair, but had left that impression on our brother Boer.

September 22nd, 1899.—We have led the Boers to believe that Franchise Reform would amount in itself to a substantial settlement.

It turned out afterwards, however, that the vote was not at the root of the matter.

September 23rd, 1899.—There is no enthusiasm for procuring for the Uitlanders a five years' or any other franchise.

September 25th, 1899.—It is a similar situation to that which led the United States to the Civil War. The question of Slavery was not the real issue then, any more than the Uitlanders' grievances alone are the real issue now.

September 28th, 1899.—The exclusion of the Uitlanders from the franchise in the Transvaal is a mere incident, and not, as Sir William Harcourt would have us believe, the main issue.

### The Bayonet as an Olive Branch.

In our anxiety to preserve the peace we had, however, got the sword ready.

September 22nd, 1899.—And though war upon a mere detail of electoral law would in itself be a criminally excessive method we have sent out troops.

But under the altered circumstances, we could not kill our brother Boer for the vote.

September 25th, 1899.—Neither can the moral justification for war upon the Boers rest upon the franchise question alone.

More especially as he was willing to give us the vote rather than be killed.

September 1st, 1899. The Boers offered to settle on these terms:—

1. A Five Years' Franchise for the Uitlanders.
2. The allotment to the Uitlanders of at least a fourth of the seats in the Raad.
3. The abandonment of the suzerainty and a pledge to abstain from further interference.

### The Minority that was a Majority.

It is, perhaps, worthy of passing notice that the disaffected elements in the Transvaal grew in numbers as our demands upon their behalf grew in importance.

At the outset our clients were a minority.

July 26th, 1899.— . . . If (argued Sir A. Milner to himself) I procure for the Uitlanders a footing within the pale of the Convention, if I gain for them some political power, I shall enable them, although a minority, to make their voices heard and their influence felt and possibly to remedy their grievances themselves.

It was the argument of one who thoroughly grasped the situation and saw clearly a road out of it. The vote is the vote albeit the vote of a minority.

On the 9th September, 1899, they appear to have become a moiety of the population.

In dealing with the Transvaal we are not dealing with a sovereign state but with a subordinate community; one half of which has set itself to oppress the other half and to intrigue against the supremacy of the suzerain power.

A few days afterwards they became a majority—

September 25th, 1899.— . . . we cannot for a moment allow a minority of Boers to hold a majority of British in subjection.

“O monstrous, eleven buckram men grown out of two.”

### Criminal but a Moral Duty.

We have gathered from the Editor that it would be a crime to kill our brother Boer for the vote, but it was our duty to do so notwithstanding.

September 25th, 1899.—As regards the Franchise, the plain intention of the London Convention—and this no one disputes—was to confer equal rights upon all the white inhabitants existing or prospective of the Transvaal regardless of race. That is our moral engagement under the London Convention and it is our duty in the first place, our necessity in the next, to enforce that principle by the extreme means if nothing else will serve.

If extreme means are the same thing as war, it was therefore our moral duty to enforce equal electoral rights for the white population at the point of the bayonet, but it would be a crime to do so.

We may therefore dismiss the vote with a conviction that it was demanded but not demanded, that it was everything yet nothing, that it was our moral duty to fight for it, yet a crime to do so, that we had moved heaven and earth for peace, as will afterwards appear, yet pressed for this worthless vote with a drawn sword in our hands.

### The Medieval Lordship: Derelict, but Not Derelict.

The next item actually demanded by our Government was the recognition of our suzerainty over the South African Republic.

According to Chambers' Dictionary a suzerain is “one who is above: a feudal lord.”

The word appears in the preamble of the Pretoria Convention dated 1881, but this document was superseded by the London



Convention, dated 1884, of which later instrument the Editor wrote as follows, on 22nd September, 1899:—

We have always considered for our part that the authors of it were much more to blame than the Boers for all the consequences that have followed. The word "suzerainty" was deliberately left out by the Gladstonian Ministry.

The Boers concur with the Editor, as our Blue-books prove.

Our conduct since 1884 confirms the fact.

October 29th, 1901.—We had . . . to raze to the ground the fortress of tyranny and corruption constructed by Paul Kruger and his Colonial and Foreign auxiliaries during 20 years of negligence and irresolution on the part of Downing-street.

The Boers again concur with the Editor.

The suzerainty was therefore not only discarded but obsolete—statute run.

That however did not deter us from asserting that it was still in operation.

The Boers denied it.

September 19th, 1899.—The Boers declare that they will make neither these nor further concessions until the suzerainty is abandoned. We have already told them that under no circumstances can we consent to discuss the abandonment of the suzerainty.

October 2nd, 1899.—Of course, if Mr. Kruger urged or even hinted that the suzerainty did not exist or might be surrendered in return for concessions regarding the franchise, it was Mr. Chamberlain's business to point out that the suzerainty did exist, and that in no circumstances whatever could it be bartered away. That he has done.

We have therefore the Editor's assurance that this medieval lordship was deliberately left out of our bargain with the Boers 15 years ago, but he now demands, very deliberately, that it shall be put into our bargain, if necessary at the point of the sword.

### **The Boer Armaments: Permitted, but not to be Permitted.**

The next thing on the Editor's programme was the demolition of their forts.

The Editor wanted his brother Boer to pull them down, failing which we would pull them down ourselves.

August 21st, 1899.—He (Kruger) will certainly be invited to destroy the forts at Johannesburg. They are wholly unnecessary for the defence of the country, and can be intended only for the terrorisation of the Rand population.

September 9th, 1899.—What should be demanded of Mr. Kruger now is . . . the demolition of the forts at Pretoria and Johannesburg.

The demand does not appear to have been formulated by our Government unless it was covered by the "other matters" which Mr. Chamberlain had up his sleeve on September 4th, 1899.

We had, however, no title to order them down.

November 10th, 1899.—With regard to the origin of the conflict there is no gainsaying the Prime Minister's argument that it is due to the mischievous Conventions of 1881 and 1884, which deliberately permitted an obviously hostile community to enjoy the unlimited right to accumulate munitions of war to be ultimately used against us. That is indeed the long and the short of the story.

January 31st, 1900.—There is, in the first place, he (Lord Salisbury) declares, not one word in the Conventions to limit the importation of munitions of war into the Transvaal. Doubtless there is not.

Having admitted that we had no title to destroy the Boer forts, the Editor's demand for their demolition rested upon brute force alone.

The bitterest comments upon it are his own lamentations uttered over and over again during the past two years that we had no brutes to rest it upon.

### The 1884 Convention: Its Articles Stringent but not Stringent.

The next thing demanded by the Editor was the observance by the Boers of every article of the Convention.

These articles were ostensibly very onerous:—

July 24th, 1899.—The Transvaal Boers are British subjects. . . . In substance and in fact the Transvaal is a British colony upon which certain restricted autonomous powers have been conferred.

August 10th, 1899.—Those instruments (the Conventions of 1881 and 1884) . . . conferred a measure of autonomy upon the Transvaal . . . (Self-government is the equivalent in the dictionary for autonomy). . . . But to the Transvaal we gave merely a restricted autonomy conceded upon the most stringent conditions.

September 9th, 1899.—In dealing with the Transvaal we are not dealing with a sovereign state but with a subordinate community.

March 16th, 1900.—It (the Transvaal) has never been an independent state in any sense of the word.

September 4th, 1900.—The Transvaal was never independent even as regards its internal affairs.

Under these circumstances, it would appear that Kruger was a mere cypher in the Transvaal and that we were within an ace of being omnipotent in it.

They had, however, peculiar privileges, these British subjects. Although living in a British colony under stringent conditions they could have an army of their own over which which we had no control. Under the Conventions, as Lord Salisbury said, we deliberately permitted an obviously hostile community to enjoy the unlimited right to accumulate munitions of war to be ultimately used against us.

A hostile community armed to the teeth against us and in spite of us is, accurately speaking, an insubordinate community, so that we had in the Transvaal subjects at once subordinate and insubordinate.

We have already learnt that the Boers were not independent, but that their Magna Charta was a restricted autonomy conceded upon the most stringent conditions.

Although stringent, they were, however, generous.

November 10th, 1899.—Generosity on our part evoked only contempt from them, and when we granted them a generous measure of independence after they had beaten us, they conceived the idea of making themselves masters of the whole of South Africa.

Nay, they were worse than generous.

November 15th, 1901.—We owe the Transvaal War not to the Raid or to the reform movement on the Rand, but to the Cabinet of 1880. The Cabinet was a Cabinet of retreat and desertion. It was a Cabinet which barked but dare not bite. It was the Cabinet of falsehood and of betrayal. It was the Cabinet of organised cowardice.

Later on this same Cabinet went from bad to worse.

October 10th, 1900.—It was a Liberal Government backed by a Liberal majority which surrendered British rights in 1884.

The surrender appears to have been very thorough.

September 22nd, 1899.— . . . the Boers were led to believe that the only connection we retained with them was a right of veto upon their foreign treaties.

Since then, whether nominally independent or not, our brother Boer has revelled in the thing itself in pragmatic fashion.

February 2nd, 1900.—The independence of the Transvaal, as we have learnt from the bitter experience of the past twenty years, means the independence of the monopolist, the independence of the corruptor, the independence of the enslaver, and the freedom of the snuffling thief.

Clearly the Editor cannot have it both ways. If the Transvaal was in July, 1899, a British colony, and Kruger a British subject governed by most stringent conditions, he cannot vilify the Gladstonian Cabinet of 1880-1884 for deserting, surrendering, and betraying the country, allowing it to arm against us, and leaving it in fact, with only one bandage upon it, the veto upon its foreign treaties.

Mr. Chamberlain's unfortunate expression, as the Editor called it, in which he described the Transvaal as a "Foreign State" would more nearly describe the fact after all.

Be that as it may, whether the charter of the Boer independence was wide or narrow, generous or stringent, the Editor demanded a strict compliance with its terms, or war.

### Conditions Observed, but Not Observed.

They had, of course, not observed them.

June 6th, 1900.—It might be explained to them (the Boers) that we granted them their autonomy in a manner unparalleled for its generosity, and that of the conditions which Kruger and his associates gladly accepted, not one has been observed while all have been flagrantly, impudently, and insultingly violated to the detriment alike of the Boers and of the non-Boer settlers.

October 11th, 1899.— . . . Paul Kruger, who since 1884 has spent his days and his nights in scheming infractions of the Convention, who has violated repeatedly every article and every line of it. . . .

The precise date at which Paul began these nocturnal antics is not clear.

Apparently he began in 1884, but on July 24th, 1899, the Editor reports that "by a series of enactments dating back to 1882," Paul had managed "to filch from British settlers the rights to which they were entitled equally with the Dutch."

Later on it seems that Paul did not begin until 1890.

August 10th, 1899.—Indeed we are asking him (Kruger) for nothing but a modicum of that which belongs to us, but which since 1890 he has been en-

gaged in more or less successfully endeavoring to filch from us. . . . That the country was to be administered internally, not by a race, but by its people, was the view of Mr. Kruger as well as of the Imperial Government. And Mr. Kruger acted upon it for nine years after the signature of the first Convention. It was not until the gold fields of the Rand began to be worked, and Mr. Kruger saw that the new settlers could be plundered if they were excluded from the Franchise, and could not be plundered if they were not, that he began to heap political disabilities upon them, and thereby to violate the Convention and his own solemn and reiterated pledges.

The evidence against Paul prior to 1890 is contradictory and must therefore be rejected.

Since then, he has been concocting breaches of the Convention night and day and has violated every article and every line of it repeatedly, but he has only been more or less successful in filching our rights from us. The Editor's testimony against him is therefore not only conflicting, but lacks precision.

It is subject to a still further discount.

We had led Paul to believe in 1884 that the only reservation we had left was a veto upon his foreign treaties.

The Editor admits that he observed it, at least nominally.

September 25th, 1899.—They (the Boers) have committed no formal infraction of the letter of the London Convention so far as concerns any attempt to conclude illegal treaties not submitted for the consent of the Queen.

The Boers might therefore plead that the Convention imposed but one requirement upon them, and that they had formally observed it, upon the Editor's own admissions.

### Our Own Delinquency.

On the other hand, the Convention was a two-sided agreement.

It imposed obligations upon them, but it also imposed obligations upon us.

September 25th, 1899.—As regards the Franchise, the plain intention of the London Convention—and this no one disputes—was to confer equal rights upon all the white inhabitants, existing or prospective, of the Transvaal, regardless of race. That is our moral engagement under the London Convention, and it is our duty in the first place, our necessity in the next, to enforce that principle by the extreme means if nothing else will serve.

September 4th, 1900.— . . . in 1881 . . . partial and limited autonomous rights were retroceded, and in 1884 those rights were enlarged. But the Transvaal never ceased to be British territory, and the terms of the Convention bound us to interfere in the internal affairs of the country when the stipulations of the compacts were violated.

August 10th, 1899.— . . . we are responsible to the world for the preservation of order and the maintenance of decent government there.

We did not, however, discharge our responsibility.

We ought to have inflicted order and decent government upon them, but we shirked our duty.

October 29th, 1901.—We had . . . to raze to the ground the fortress of tyranny and corruption constructed by Paul Kruger and his Colonial and Foreign auxiliaries during twenty years of negligence and irresolution on the part of Downing Street.

## The Editorial Penalties: Delinquency Rewarded.

What then is the editorial sequel in each case?

We led the Boers to believe in 1884 that the Convention left us with only one reservation, and that reservation they have observed at any rate in the letter. They commit breaches of it otherwise, upon which the Editor's testimony is contradictory. Under these circumstances they forfeit the country and their independence.

March 16th, 1900.—A fresh measure of autonomy was granted in 1881, and it was enlarged in 1884. But these strictly limited rights of self-government were conferred in consideration of the observance of a number of stringent conditions. These conditions having been violated by the Boers, the charters become waste paper, and the territory reverts to its former status of a Crown colony having no autonomous privileges.

We, on the other hand, were bound under the Convention to interfere when these malpractices were going on, but we did not take the trouble to stop them.

We, however, forfeit nothing. The Transvaal still remains a British Colony, and everybody in it a British subject. No waste paper for us, please.

July 24th, 1899.—The Transvaal Boers are British subjects. . . . He (Kruger) and the men whom he calls his burghers have never been released from their allegiance to the British Crown. In substance and in fact the Transvaal is a British Colony.

October 12th, 1899.—A section of the inhabitants of the Transvaal . . . have . . . mutinied . . . they will be dealt with as would mutineers in any other portion of the Queen's dominions.

May 28th, 1900.—We do not like to say that the Republics ought to be annexed, because there cannot well be annexation of territory which has never been alienated. But we do say that the Free State should be annexed, and the Transvaal completely re-incorporated.

Not only do we forfeit nothing by our violation of the Convention, our status is really better after it—we become entitled to a lordship which we had deliberately left out of the instrument.

If this is a sample of the blessings of British justice one can forgive our brother Boer asking for less of it.

### Peace when there is No Peace.

The last item required by the Editor was "the permanent establishment of racial peace throughout South Africa by the final acknowledgment of racial equality."

Prodigious! How could Paul, whose interment was imminent in November, 1899, establish a permanent racial peace?

He might acknowledge racial equality, but he could not at the same time acknowledge the feudal lordship of one race over another, then guarantee permanent peace as a product of this mixture.

Paul would be safer if he guaranteed permanent friction.

The Editor's demands were mutually destructive.

He demanded that the Briton should have a feudal lordship over the Boer, and that they should also be upon equal terms.

Given two persons one of whom is lord, the other must be vassal, superior and inferior, master and servant, the one above, the other below. Even Dogberry could see that if two men ride on a horse, one must ride behind.

To demand from a man whose diplomacy is "the written lie" that he shall admit his inferiority to us, yet plead his equality with us, would not embarrass him, but if he should decline we could scarcely cut off his head for it.

### The Case Too Weak.

Having examined the five items very deliberately demanded by the Editor as an alternative to war, I submit that not one of them nor all of them put together can, upon his own data, justify the delivery by us of what was to all intents and purposes an ultimatum of war, and was so regarded by its recipients.

If we had a good case against the Boers, the Editor of the *Newcastle Daily Chronicle* has not presented it.

To draw the sword for a vote was criminal, to demand the recognition of a lordship which we had deliberately left out of our bargain, or the destruction of forts which we had deliberately permitted in it, to demand the observance of a Convention which we ourselves had violated for fifteen years, or the profession of an equality which we ourselves denied, to demand these futilities with a drawn sword in our hands was to forsake the noblest traditions of our country.

And God forbid, my dear and faithful lord,  
That you should fashion, wrest or bow your reading,  
Or nicely charge your understanding soul  
With opening titles, miscreate, whose right  
Suits not in native colours with the truth.  
For God doth know that many now in health  
Shall drop their blood in approbation  
Of what your reverence shall incite us to ;  
Therefore, take heed how you impawn our person,  
How you awake our sleeping sword of war—  
We charge you in the name of God take heed ;  
For never two such Kingdoms did contend  
Without much fall of blood : whose guiltless drops  
Are every one a woe, a sore complaint  
'Gainst him whose wrong gives edge unto the swords  
That make such waste in brief mortality.

### The Redeeming Features of a Weak Case.

Worthless though the editorial case was, it is supposed to have been redeemed by three considerations :—

- 1.—That the war was inevitable.
- 2.—That the ultimatum issued from them.
- 3.—That they invaded our territory.

## Both Parties Hankering After Peace: War Inevitable

The theory that the war was inevitable was, no doubt, invented as an apology for its failure, but it breaks down under the Editor's declarations, made before and after the first shot was fired. Both parties wanted peace.

July 4th, 1899.—Nobody in England wants war.

August 28th, 1899.—We do not want war. We have tried all means of evading it.

October 5th 1899.—Mr. Chamberlain has, for the last three years, moved heaven and earth, not merely to prevent a breach with the Transvaal, but even to prevent our relations with the Boers becoming strained.

December 26th, 1899.—The German Kruger ultimatum surprised us. We meant peace.

The Boers on the other hand did not want war either.

August 18th, 1899.—Every week that elapses renders it more and more palpable that the Boers do not want to fight.

September 4th, 1899.—But the Boers talk bullets and use none. They are not cowards, but they are extremely nervous. They would fight if they thought they could fight to win. But more and more as the situation develops they are afraid of defeat, and shrink from the thought of the final obliteration from the map of South Africa of the Transvaal Republic. . . . Mr. Kruger will not go to war—not yet. Mr. Kruger will go to Capetown.

September 19th, 1899.—The Boers and the British Government alike, it is clear, are equally unwilling to fight, and equally unwilling to surrender.

Both parties were thus striving to avoid a collision, and yet it was inevitable.

January 1st, 1902.—It is truly melancholy to find that men occupying public positions are so ignorant as not to be able to recognise that war between Briton and the Boer was inevitable, because the Boer would have either war or abject submission to his arrogant ascendancy and to his reactionary ideas.

Given two persons both striving to avoid a conflict, if anything is inevitable it is peace. The affair was really matter for a May morning, and if some Toby Belch or Hail-fellow-well-met had handled the affair it must have ended without the perdition of souls.

## The Boer Ultimatum: Unprovoked yet Provoked.

Unfortunately, whilst both parties were thus striving to maintain the peace, the Boers served upon us an ultimatum of war.

They were, therefore, reputed to be in the wrong. We were the Innocents Abroad. Nothing could have been more lamb-like than our conduct prior to the delivery of this gratuitous ultimatum.

March 9th, 1900.—We did not provoke the war.

What then did we do beforehand? Did we stir them up with anything resembling an ultimatum?

September 30th, 1899.—As the result of deliberations which extended over more than two hours yesterday afternoon, Ministers have resolved to send to Mr. Kruger a peremptory demand for the redress of the grievances of British subjects resident in the Transvaal. It appears that he (Mr. Kruger) took no official notice of Mr. Chamberlain's latest despatch . . . and he may take none of what we may describe, with substantial, although, perhaps, not with technical accuracy, as the British ultimatum.

Now that diplomacy has said its last word there can be no doubt what our policy should be.

October 3rd, 1899.—It is true, a cut and dried ultimatum has not been forwarded to Pretoria. It is also true that diplomatic relations have not been broken off, and that Mr. Conyngham Greene remains at his post. But last Friday's Meeting of the Cabinet; the intimation of the Government that they were about to formulate proposals which they knew Mr. Kruger would not accept, was, to all intents and purposes, an ultimatum. Mr. Kruger so regarded it.

Not only did we despatch what was to all intents and purposes an ultimatum but we resolved upon preparations for war before the Boer ultimatum was served upon us.

October 9th, 1899.—It is exactly because the Government are bent upon a pacific, or let us say a bloodless, settlement that they have resolved to despatch an overwhelming force to South Africa with, we do not doubt, the design of retaining it there for a while.

We English people know, of course, that had our Government harboured any desire for a bloodthirsty settlement they would have sent out an edition of George Fox's Journal or a box of Christmas cards for Mrs. Kruger, but unhappily the Boers did not understand our ways. They misconstrued our intentions, concluded that war was the correlative of an army corps, and acted accordingly.

On October 10th, 1899, they demanded that the preparations for war then going forward in our own territory should cease, and they gave us forty-eight hours to say yes or no.

The next day the Editor condemned them for it.

October 11th, 1899.—By insisting that on his demand British troops shall be withdrawn from British territory Mr. Kruger presents his opponents with their case to the full, and utterly demolishes the case laboriously built up for him by his admirers in this and other countries.

At the worst Mr. Kruger had, however, merely acted upon the Editor's doctrine. The latter had already demanded the destruction of the Boer forts, although we had no title to destroy them.

The Boers had, therefore, an equally good title to demand our disarmament, but it might be held that they had a better.

The editorial demand was put forward in cold blood: theirs after receipt of a despatch which was to all intents and purposes an ultimatum of war followed by preparation for a conflict.

### **The Boer Invasion: They began First: We should but could not.**

It is further charged against the Boers that they began the war by entering our territory.

March 9th, 1900.—They began the bloodshed, and they can end it. England's attitude is simply the attitude which the meekest of Quakers would adopt in analogous conditions. She has been attacked, and she is defending herself. . . . The Boers have unprovokedly invaded British territory.

We meant peace all the time. True, we had served upon them a despatch which was to all intents and purposes an ultimatum, and had resolved to second it with an overwhelming force in



South Africa, but these steps were intended to have a soothing effect upon Mr. Kruger's mind.

Instead of that they left a contrary impression, an impression which the Editor himself really shared.

September 30th, 1899.—Now that diplomacy has said its last word, there can be no doubt what our policy should be. It should be to enforce our demands by a short, sharp, and decisive war. We should not leave attack to the Boers, but should attack them promptly, crushingly, and remorselessly, walking, as it were, over them, and trampling them under foot until we are in a position to dictate terms at Pretoria. That would be the policy most merciful to the Boers and most merciful to South Africa, since it is the policy best calculated to localise the struggle. But unless Commandant Joubert will obligingly wait awhile, it is precisely the policy that we are unable to pursue.

The Transvaal is now virtually besieged. Arms and ammunition will not again be permitted to reach it, either over Portuguese territory or *via* the Cape Colony.

It will be observed that this incitement to invade the Transvaal was delivered some ten or eleven days before the Boers entered Natal, and it is plain from the following admission that our failure to respond was due, not to any self-restraint on our part, but to the bald fact that we could not do it:—

October 3rd, 1899.—The Army Corps, which, of course, need not have been actively employed because it had been sent out, ought to have preceded anything approximating to an ultimatum. That is a proposition which will be admitted by the meanest comprehension. As it is, however, Ministers have allowed their ultimatum to precede their Army Corps. They have let diplomacy utter its last word before their cannon are ready to roar.

October 3rd, 1899.—It must now be obvious to the Government that, however excellent their intentions were, they committed a tremendous blunder in not supporting their diplomatic representations by the despatch of the Army Corps.

*N.B.*—Eight days later the Editor writes:—

The Government and the military authorities have played a careful game very skilfully, and up to the present very successfully.

*P.S.*—Whilst we were innocently sharpening our sword with a view to a bloodless settlement, Mr. Kruger was sharpening his also but he did it in a different way. In his case it was *miching malleco* and meant mischief.

September 9th, 1899.—Mr. Kruger has posted quick-firing guns at Volkrust, on the Natal border. That is an act of War, for which one European nation would assuredly call another European nation to account. . . .

With this *casus belli* to stand upon, the Editor entered the war. If it was the best he could put together, it is a pity he was so easily excited.

“I pray you, good uncle, say what need have you to thrust yourself into these difficulties and brabbles? Were it not better to rest you quietly in your own house than to wander through the world, searching bread of blasted corn, without once considering how many there go to seek for wool that return again shorn themselves?”

Nearly three years have elapsed since the dispute, in its acute form, began, and we are now in a position to subject the military

guidance of the Editor to the test of fact, relying, as before, entirely upon his own statements.

### We were Prepared, but not Prepared.

Fortunately for the prestige of this country, we were prepared for the war when it began.

July 4th, 1899.—Nobody in England wants war, but we are prepared for it.

July 20th, 1899.—In plain English, they (our Government) are steadily proceeding with their military preparations—and they are wise.

August 30th, 1899.—We are steadily, although quietly, pushing forward our own preparations for a conflict.

September 28th, 1899.—It is, therefore, a matter of profound satisfaction to us to learn that at last Ministers have resolved to take the step of despatching to South Africa an entire Army Corps.

October 11th, 1899.—Our military position remains unaltered. We were ready for the Boers a week ago. We are ready for them still. It is not too much to say that, considering the manner in which they propose to visit us, we are anxious to meet them. The Government and the military authorities have played a careful game very skilfully, and, up to the present, very successfully.

October 13th, 1899.—If they think proper to attack us we are prepared for them.

As they followed the Editor's reports over these four months, the patriots must have gone to bed with the conviction that the Empire was in the hands of the right men this time.

We were ready for any emergency.

Later on, however, it transpired that we had not prepared at all :—

November 22nd, 1899.—The war has not commenced so far as we are concerned ; we are still occupied in putting our pieces on the board.

December 7th, 1899.—The infantry of the Army Corps did not begin to leave until towards the end of October ; and no mounted corps, whether cavalry or artillery, left until fully three weeks later.

September 29th, 1900.—We question very gravely whether it is worth while to rebut the charge preferred by Opposition speakers that the Government neglected to prepare for a war which all intelligent persons now see to have been inevitable. If there had been preparation the Government would assuredly have been accused of seeking to hound the country into bloodshed. But if it is worth while to reply to the allegation the Liberals are best answered out of the mouth of the Liberal French Premier of Canada, Sir Wilfrid Laurier, who has declared it to be to the everlasting honour of Great Britain that Mr. Kruger's ultimatum found her unprepared.

December 14th, 1900.—We had not prepared for it (war) at all.

It will be observed that on October 11th, 1899, the Editor reports that we were ready for the enemy a week ago, that is on October 4th, 1899.

Upon referring, however, to his advice dated October 3rd, 1899, we read as follows :—

The plain English of the case is that he (Kruger) is ready and we are not. He is on the frontier. We are nowhere near it.

It would, therefore, appear that on October 3rd, 1899, we were, in plain English, not ready for them, but that on the following day we were.

From the foregoing extracts it is clear that our military preparations up to October 13th, 1899, if not later, were a sham and a newspaper concoction. Mr. Leonard Courtney had the moral courage to say so at the outset, whereupon the Editor reprobated him in the following terms:—

July 29th, 1899.—Speeches like that of Mr. Courtney . . . hints that our military preparations are shams and newspaper concoctions, are seriously detrimental to the cause of peace. They will all be telegraphed to the Transvaal, published prominently in the subsidised press and used to convince the Boers and their President that the British nation is not at one and that the party divisions upon which Mr. Kruger has successfully relied in the past may be relied upon in the present emergency. That way lies war.

Did the Editor then keep up the impression that our preparations were genuine when he found out that they were not?

September 21st, 1899.—The simple truth is that we are not ready. It is advisable to gain three or four weeks before any precipitation of hostilities. . . . After nearly five months' delay the Boers are ready—we are not. Further diplomacy upon our part ought not to have been necessary at the eleventh hour, but that it is necessary is plain.

That way lies war, Mr. Editor.

### Our Resources: More Men Wanted but Not Wanted.

A few details of our alleged preparations are to be found in the following extracts:—

August 18th, 1899.—Were Mr. Kruger to provoke a conflict, the Government would have at its disposal more men than it could utilise or than the needs of the case would require. At the Cape itself, every preparation has been made to put an army of 30,000 men in the field at short notice.

September 18th, 1899.—There is only one way to wage war in South Africa. It is to send out 40,000 men. We must end it now.

October 9th, 1899.—They (our Government) have resolved to despatch an overwhelming force to South Africa.

October 9th, 1899.—The total number of reservists summoned is about 25,000; but men who may volunteer will be accepted. As the likelihood is that many will volunteer, there being a prospect of active service, the additional force acquired may reach 30,000 men. The Army Corps, with the Reserves, will not number fewer than 50,000 men; and, independently of it, we have, or shall shortly have, 26,000 men in the Cape and Natal. The grand total will thus amount to between 70,000 and 80,000 men. It is a total which should cause the burghers to think.

The 80,000 men went out, but they were not enough. The Editor then began to think.

July 28th, 1900.—Roberts must have more men.

July 30th, 1900.—Meantime it is becoming daily more obvious that Roberts's army is not large enough to enable him to checkmate Mr. Kruger's scheme . . .

Half our enterprises fail owing to lack of numbers.

August 7th, 1900.—That he (Roberts) needs more men is obvious.

August 9th, 1900.—In plain English he (Roberts) wants more men.

August 14th, 1900.—But what does prove that more men are wanted is the condition of our battalions and still more of our batteries.

It afterwards transpired that we did not want more men.

July 16th, 1901.—We have always contended, and have seen no reason to modify our opinion, that we could deal with the Boers much more conveniently

with a smaller number of men, provided they were horsed as the Boers are horsed.

October 7th, 1901.—The truth is, as we have insisted almost every day during the past two years, that what we want is not more men, but more mobility.

November 22nd, 1901.—It is not numerical strength that we want so much as the capacity to move about.

In dealing with our resources before the war began, it will be observed that the Editor magnified them; they were redundant, overwhelming, and should cause the burgher to reflect.

### The Boer Resources: Insignificant.

In dealing with their resources he belittled them.

September 5th, 1899.—The Boers have no rallying power. If nothing will content them but war they must be struck at and smashed at one blow.

October 9th, 1899.—The military strength of the Boers has been absurdly exaggerated. Exact information on the subject is difficult to procure; but it is more than dubious whether the two Republics combined could put into the field a force of more than 30,000 men. And these men, albeit courageous and good marksmen, are undisciplined, and in a war which will be won largely by tactics, will have at their head no commander with the slightest pretence to be regarded as a strategist. The available Boer Army will hardly be stronger numerically than the English Reserves.

October 12th, 1899.—Sir Redvers Buller's duty will be rather to restore order and legality than to wage warfare in the correct sense of the word. He will be engaged in "measures of police," to borrow Mr. Gladstone's description of the task he set Lord Wolseley in Egypt.

October 27th, 1899.—The statement that the two Boer Republics have now 100,000 men in the field is palpably a Javanese lie, the more transparent inasmuch as its author recently admitted that he was receiving no news whatever from South Africa. A liberal computation would put the total Boer forces at 30,000, and of these, perhaps 20,000 are in Natal.

October 10th, 1899.—Mr. Rider Haggard, who knows his Boers as well as anybody, believes that they can be conquered without any fighting. All we need do, he thinks, is "to sit still round their boundaries."

### Boers Disunited.

They were subject to the further drawback of being a disunited people.

October 23rd, 1899.—The inhabitants of the two Republics can see for themselves what is happening; and already there are rumours of willingness to lay down arms on conditions, of widespread demoralisation, of recrimination, and of contemplated appeals to third parties.

February 27th, 1900.—The existence of grave dissensions between the allies has long been indisputable. Now Kruger and Steyn are understood to be at loggerheads, the older man reproaching the younger with his absence from the front.

May 30th, 1900.—The war in brief has been brought to the stoep of the Transvaal Boer, and the Transvaal Boer, as anyone acquainted with his character might have foretold, and as indeed was foretold by us, has begun to sing "God save the Queen."

### The Boer Character Severely Discounted.

They were, moreover, blighted with moral weakness.

August 10th, 1899.—We have reached that stage of our long-standing controversy with the most unenlightened, the least progressive, the most

tyrannical, the most corrupt and, in a word, the worst section of the Dutch element in South Africa.

September 8th, 1899.—The Boers are the nearest analogy that white civilisation presents to the ignorant and obstinate tribes of coloured barbarism, with which we know how to deal.

October 12th, 1899.—It would ill become them (the Imperial authorities) now to argue with the chiefs of a band of brigands and assassins.

October 18, 1899.—He (the Boer) is first and foremost a bully, with most of a bully's characteristics.

November 14th, 1899.—We had then (1880-1881), and we have had since, many opportunities of judging the Boers, and from President to burgher, they have invariably proved themselves to be what Mr. George Lacy has just declared they still are, "the craftiest, most hypocritical, most dishonest, most untruthful, cruellest, most ignorant, most overbearing, most immoral and stupidest race of white people in the whole world."

They have always murdered their prisoners, black or white, when they thought they safely could.

November 28th, 1899.—It (the white flag grievance) is simply a dodge for enabling a horde of the most miserable scoundrels nature has produced to murder British officers in cold blood, and so far from being reprobated by the Boer leaders, it is applauded and encouraged by them. . . . They (the Boers) have always displayed the white flag treacherously.

November 29th, 1899.—The Boers have all the vices of the Dervishes and none of their virtues.

March 23rd, 1900.—Steyn is a liar, and his deluded victims are now but too well aware of it.

April 13th, 1900.—The Boers are stubborn, cruel, ferocious, arrogant, cunning, treacherous and unscrupulous.

May 23rd, 1900.—It cannot be too often repeated, or too well comprehended, that the average Boer is essentially an assassin. . . . He delights to kill when he can do so in security, and he is especially anxious to murder the Colonial Volunteers.

December 21st, 1900.—The pious pig-breeder of Dewetsdorp (De Wet.)

March 1st, 1901.—De Wet . . . stands before the malcontent Dutch as a discredited brigand and murderer.

March 21st, 1901.—The men with whom we have now to deal are not warriors but ruffians and banditti.

August 2nd, 1901.—He (the Boer) is a savage, and as a savage he should be treated.

August 29th, 1901.—The so-called Boer commandos are merely murder associations.

January 2nd, 1902.—We knew our brother Boer. And we know him now. He is what he always has been; and those who stand up for him in this country are the advocates of slavery, of barbarism, and of corruption of the vilest description.

"O for breath to utter what is like thee! You tailor's yard, you sheath, you bow case, you vile standing tuck —"

Well, breathe a while, Mr. Editor, and then to it again, and when thou hast tired thyself in base comparisons, hear me speak but this.

### The Boers on the Wane, yet Increasing in Numbers.

Their cause was hopeless. The disparity between the two forces was fatal to their prospects. Moreover, their army was on

the decline, yet increasing. We were becoming stronger, but the ratio of mortality told another story.

October 9th, 1899.—But the Boer Militia can remain mobilised for only a brief period. The burghers have been summoned from their farms, their wives, and their families to do certain work. They are ready to do it to the best of their ability. But they are not ready to sit on the frontier week after week doing nothing while their farms are running to wrack and ruin.

October 13th, 1899.—Every day that elapses is an advantage to us and a disadvantage to Mr. Kruger. Our force gains in efficiency and strength, his tends to dwindle and lose cohesion.

October 13th, 1899.—In a word the Transvaal has not the material resources to enable it to wage a prolonged guerilla and has not the military resources to enable it to conduct a short, sharp campaign. If ever inactivity was masterly, our present inactivity in South Africa is.

October 13th, 1899.—He (the Boer) is not cut out for service in a campaign against an enemy whose keenest weapon may be delay.

November 28th, 1899.—News of his (Paul Kruger's) demise would not be in the least surprising.

December 26th, 1899.—The Boers have done their worst and their worst has failed. From now onwards their prospects must become darker and ours brighter. They recognise this.

December 26th, 1899.—We grow stronger daily. The Boers grow weaker—and they know it.

June 6th, 1900.—In brief, the grand Transvaal Army, so valorous on others' soil, commenced to melt away directly the Fatherland was threatened.

We have already learnt that the Boer Army, upon a liberal computation made October 27th, 1899, numbered 30,000 men. A fortnight later it had dwindled down to 43,000.

November 11th, 1899.—So that we may set down the Transvaal's net fighting strength at about 34,000. That of the Orange Free State will be about 9,000. Adding these together, we arrive at the following result:—

Transvaal	...	...	...	...	...	34,000 men.
Free State	...	...	...	...	...	9,000 "
						Total 43,000 "

There is also the artillery. . . . We may be sure, however, that they are fewer by some 3,500 than they were when the war began.

A year afterwards they had dwindled down to 63,000.

November 16th, 1901.—We have 42,000 Boers under lock and key, and we can account in killed, wounded, and otherwise disposed of for 11,000 more—a total of 53,000; 10,000 are believed to be still at large, and they must be hunted down as other dangerous animals would be.

### Britons Increasing, but Losing Men Disproportionately.

On the other hand, we were gaining strength as time went on. We were supposed to begin the war with 80,000 men, and that number was increased to 300,000.

December 23rd, 1901.—We have sent to South Africa . . . some 300,000 men, regulars and volunteers.

A month afterwards we were debited with 100,000 men put out of action.

January 29th, 1902.—We have fought for well on to three years, at a cost of some £200,000 sterling, and of some 100,000 men killed, wounded, or otherwise disabled.

The disparity between us was thus intensified in one sense, but inverted in another.

Upon the veldt 10,000 Boers were confronted by about 200,000 Britons. Beneath the veldt, or otherwise put out of action, 11,000 Boers were accompanied by 100,000 Britons.

Not a very swift war, Mr. Editor, nor short, but decidedly shattering—to us.

### Delay Agreed with us, but Disagreed with us.

We have already observed the Editor's anxiety for a prompt settlement, but as the War Office failed to gratify him, he, like a true philosopher, began to descry the blessings of delay, as the foregoing and following extracts show:—

December 28, 1899.—We stand to gain and the Boers to lose by a waiting policy on our side.

Happy is your grace  
That can translate the stubbornness of fortune  
Into so quiet and so sweet a style.

Later on it transpired that a slow war did not suit us at all. We had our limits.

July 19th, 1900.—The delay has already been mischievously great.

December 24th, 1900.—The delay is extremely costly, and in our judgment extremely dangerous.

February 28th, 1901.—The country wants the war finished, wants it finished quickly, and wants it finished in one way.

### The Boer a Liar: but a good Witness.

In describing the character of the Boers we have already learnt from the Editor that they were a nation of liars. That did not, however, deter him from putting them into his own witness-box when it suited his book.

August 30th, 1899.—“There are,” said a burgher to a Bechuanaland settler recently, “three classes in the Republic—the Uitlanders, who find all the money; Mr. Kruger and his officials who draw it all, and I and my fellow burghers who get no money, but have to do all the dirty work and the fighting when there is any.” This represents a very widely entertained opinion in the Transvaal outside Uitlander circles.

December 15th, 1899.—When a single lyddite shell can kill and wound seventy men, as a captured burgher assures us that one of our shells did, the schedule of Boer losses must be at least as long as ours, and may easily prove to be longer.

December 26th, 1899.—Schalk Burgher . . . has just told a British officer that while he and his comrades will fight to the last he is well aware that England must win. That is the confession of a vanquished man. We, on the other hand, are just warming to our work.

December 30th, 1899.—That other conditions equal, the Briton, whether a regular soldier or a plain Colonist, is a superior fighter to the Boer, is freely admitted by the Boers themselves.

The former (Franco-Dutch Africander) is enormously the inferior of the latter (British Africander). That, we repeat, is confessed expressly and implicitly by the Boer himself.

February 27th, 1900.—The reports now current in Lorenzo Marques, to the effect that Boer officers have pronounced their army to be "knocked up," have declared that it is impossible to maintain the defence much longer, and have advised Kruger to sue for peace, seem to us eminently worthy of credence.

May 21st, 1900.—When Pretoria admits that the Burghers have had to cut and run from Mafeking, Pretoria admits that the game is up, not because of the cutting and running, but because of the publication of the truth . . . As bearing upon the duration of the war these confessions are of more importance than the news forwarded by Lord Roberts, most satisfactory and encouraging as that undoubtedly is.

May 19th, 1900.—The Free Staters do not hesitate to confess that the war is all over so far as they are concerned.

January 7th, 1902.—Hence he, Botha, bids the burghers go on fighting. In other words, his charge is that the war is being prolonged by the British opposition. It is a serious charge, and it is true. On Botha's admission, which implies the admission of the Utrecht Gang, a united front would end the bloodshed.

It will be observed that this testimony, and more of the same tenor that could be cited, is uniformly discreditable or damaging to the Boers, or Pro-Boers. Of what value then are these admissions, according to the Editor's theory of the Boer himself? Mere trash.

### The written Lie, but the written Truth.

On October 14th, 1899, the Editor had occasion to refer to Boer diplomacy, and he affirmed that "its basis is the written lie." He afterwards furnished his readers with a refutation of his own theory.

The interment of Mr. Kruger, which we had some grounds for expecting would take place early in December, 1899, was put off, owing to circumstances over which the Editor had no control.

In the following spring, the old gentleman had sufficiently recovered to despatch, in conjunction with Steyn, the liar, a telegram to our Government in which they made overtures for a settlement.

This document provoked the following comment from the Editor on March 14th, 1900:—

In giving the alleged reasons that are intended to explain why the precious communication did not reach the British Government at an earlier date, the Boer leaders use language that will deceive nobody.

They tell us that the message, which will probably be a preface to speedy capitulation, has been delayed, owing to the fact that so long as the Boer forces held "positions far into Her Majesty's Colonies, such a declaration might hurt the feelings of honour of the British people."

Here let it be noted that on the last day of January, 1900—that is, six weeks before—the Editor wrote: "yet not only have we



never succeeded in advancing into their territory, but we have not succeeded in expelling them from ours."

Their occupation of our territory shortly before the despatch of the telegram cannot therefore be denied, but the Editor rejected it as the consideration upon which their overtures had been postponed.

March 14th, 1900.—We know, of course, that the real reasons which have prompted the telegram from the Presidents are that the Boers are being beaten, that the struggle is being transferred from our territory to their own, and that the Alliance between the Transvaal burghers and the Free Staters is on the point of collapse.

The Editor's apprehensions were not borne out by the sequel. We rejected their overtures, but his construction of the grounds upon which they were delayed did not harmonise with fact.

January 8th, 1901.—Amongst much that is uncertain, one feature of the situation literally glares at us. It is that we, with 200,000 trained and seasoned troops in the field, with battalions of men volunteering daily, and with all the resources of the mightiest empire the world has ever known behind us, cannot drive from our own territory a few thousand half starved and poorly armed wretches who have invaded it. About that, there is no doubt whatever. We cannot even find out where they are. And we cannot locate them, and cannot expel them, simply because we cannot cope with them in mobility.

It is therefore probable, if not certain, that the written lie on this occasion was the written truth, and that it exemplified a trait in the Boer character which the Editor had already observed.

January 6th, 1900.—Like Bismarck, the Boer commandants have a confusing habit of sometimes telling the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.

### The Boers Ignorant but Well-informed.

We have already learnt from the Editor that the Boers were a supremely ignorant and stupid people. They were not well informed about us, for example.

March 22nd, 1900.—Our military resources, and the quality of the troops we could put in the field, were absurdly underrated by Piet Joubert. In his judgment, the outside number of the men we could command was 80,000.

Piet must have been reading the *Chronicle*.

On October 9th, 1899, the Editor reckoned them up thus :—

The grand total will thus amount to between 70,000 and 80,000 men. It is a total which should cause the burghers to think.

Piet had evidently thought.

### Weak in Strategy yet strong in it.

We were also assured, a few days before the war began, that the Boers would have "at their head no commander with the slightest pretence to be regarded as a strategist."

They could not produce a single general with a coronet on his brain-pan and £100,000 at his bankers.

However, we live and learn.

January 11th, 1900.—Lord Wolseley has declared . . . that he and the War Office staff had been altogether surprised at the number of men which the Boers could put into the field, and at the excellence of their armaments and their strategy and tactics.

Later on, we find that another peer of the realm obtains an insight into Boer strategy at the hands of the "pious pig-breeder."

June 26th, 1900.—Lord Roberts in a jubilant and almost jocular despatch describes the measures he is perfecting for disposing finally of Messrs. Steyn and De Wet in the eastern half of the Orange River Colony. . . . We have a quadrangle in which the Orange River Boers are enclosed. The western side of this box, as we may call it, is formed by the forces guarding the railroad from Johannesburg to Vereeniging. The eastern side is constituted by such of Sir Redvers Buller's troops as have been left in Natal to seal the passes of the Drakensberg; to the south, between the railway and Ficksburg, are Generals Rundle and Brabant; while to the north are General Ian Hamilton, Sir Redvers Buller, and others.

As in Edgar Allan Poe's ghastly story, these walls will gradually approach one another, leaving the occupants of the box the option of surrendering or of being crushed.

The plot thickens. Three days later we read:—

June 29th, 1900.—But if General Brabant's division is west of Senekal—if west is not a telegraphic blunder for east—he must have left Ficksburg, and unless his place has been taken by a force of whose movements we have been kept in ignorance, a hole is thus created in the bottom of the box, which Lord Roberts had constructed for Messrs. Steyn and De Wet.

The two assassins dropped through the orifice, leaving poor Roberts inside his perfect box with a half-finished grin upon his face.

Memorandum to interviewers. "Don't come now. Can't you see I am busy." There are moments when a British general might wish that his War Office would only give him the chance to rewrite his despatch, but upon this occasion the "inmates" appear to have been satisfied with its contents.

Yes, we know our brother Boer. "We" said on December 14th, 1900, "they were well advised in a military sense."

### The Ancient History of an Atrocity served up Afresh.

That the average Boer is essentially an assassin is not to be regarded as a mere invention of the Editor, inasmuch as he has furnished his readers with certain data from which this conclusion is to some extent derived.

Burke admitted that he did not know how to write out an indictment against a nation, but he was not an editor, nor did he enjoy the shelter of obscurity which an unsigned article confers upon its author.

It is also to be observed that Burke probably did not perceive that a large business can be done upon a very small capital, merely by turning it over again and again.

The Editor's capital consisted partly, if not entirely, of two incidents which are recorded in Fitzpatrick's book, viz., the Bronkhurst Spruit affair and the murder of Captain Elliott.

Of the former, Fitzpatrick quotes the account given by T. F. Carter, and certifies that he is a just and impartial historian.

Carter writes "whether the affair of Bronkhurst Spruit can be called an act of treachery on the part of the Boers is rather a nice question."

Regarded as evidence against the "average Boer" twenty years afterwards we may therefore rightly dismiss the affair with the Scotch verdict "not proven."

Elliott was a prisoner of war, and he was admittedly murdered by eight persons at most.

If these eight persons were not sinners above all men, but were a fair sample of the average Boer, it might be held that the latter had since qualified his reputation by returning the Jameson prisoners unhung.

In any case, it is now twenty-two years since the incident took place; and it might, therefore, have been treated merely as an historical event, such as the death of Queen Anne or of Charles I., more especially as the Editor has ostensibly striven from first to last for peace.

The healing influence of time had, however, no effect upon his mind. He has worked poor Elliott for all he is worth, and his obituary references to the deceased read like the memorial of a fresh grief—

Tears in his eyes, distraction in 's aspect  
A broken voice and his whole function suiting with  
forms to his conceit, and all for nothing.  
For Hecuba!  
What's Hecuba to him, or he to Hecuba?

October 13th, 1899.—We are waiting for "Messieurs les assassins" of Captain Elliott, and later of Mr. Lanham, to commence.

October 14th, 1899.— . . . the wretches who, having liberated Captain Elliott on parole, forced him to swim a river in full flood, and riddled him with bullets as he was crossing.

November 14th, 1899.—Captain Elliott, who had been liberated on parole, was shot in the back whilst he was endeavouring to fulfil the conditions of his release. It would be easy to fill a volume with tales of Boer treachery and brutality, in and out of the field.

Elliott's case is warmed up again on December 1st, 1899, March 21st, 1900, June 8th, 1900, October 3rd, 1900, October 10th, 1900, August 2nd, 1901, and November 29th, 1901, but the details are too stale to reprint.

No doubt a volume could easily be filled up by repeating this story, but it should be dedicated to the heathen when full.

### Briton versus Boer: Boer Intervening

The mere fact that the Boers were "assassins," "scoundrels," "murderers," "bullies," and "brigands"—the vilest cads that ever

crawled upon the surface of a gold mine—did not disqualify them for service under the British flag, nor did it deprive them of the editorial blessing.

It appears from a report of Sir Walter Peace that the British flag had to be put through the laundry, and our patriotic Government has put it through—that is, of course, practically through—without regard to the antecedents of its employees.

The flag had not been washed since 1881, twenty-one years ago, and, as it was what the housewives call a “three weeks’ wash,” we got our brother Boer to help us.

The heaviest part of the wash was done in time for the General Election, but it is evident from the following report that our staff could not put on the finishing touches.

January 8th, 1901.—Amongst much that is uncertain, one feature of the situation literally glares at us. It is that we, with 200,000 trained and seasoned troops in the field, with battalions of men volunteering daily, and with all the resources of the mightiest empire the world has ever known behind us, cannot drive from our own territory a few thousand half-starved and poorly-armed wretches who have invaded it. About that there is no doubt whatever. We cannot even find out where they are. And we cannot locate them, and cannot expel them, simply because we cannot cope with them in mobility.

We then called in the gentlemen with the cat-o’-mountain looks.

January 27th, 1902.—Full of significance too is the incident of a party of National Scouts—that is of Boers who are co-operating with us to bring hostilities to a close—marching south from Groot Olifant’s Station to Welverdiend and capturing eleven men in arms against us, with Commandant Botha, and their horses.

The policy of the military authorities in re-arming Boers who had surrendered and in organising them into the force known as the National Scouts has been sharply criticised both here and in South Africa.

There are obvious political objections to it, and the proceedings may not have been unattended by risk. It has, however, been justified by success.

Yes, it is full of significance, Mr. Editor. It signifies that our patriotic Government cannot condemn Captain Lynch, M.P., for Galway, for helping the Boers.

He merely did for the Boer Government what the National Scouts are doing for ours, with this difference, he possibly fought for sentiment, the scouts for pay.

If our Government endorses the editorial doctrine of justification by success, Captain Lynch ought to take his seat in the House of Commons without trepidation.

Never again!

### Sartorial Courtesies.

The war has not been without its sartorial amenities, each party striving to catch the other one bathing and to steal his clothes.

September 20th, 1901.—Of course, the attack was carried out by means of a ruse, the enemy being dressed in khaki so as to secure an immunity from British fire. If any British force were to disguise itself for the purpose of effecting a surprise, every pro-Boer platform in the world would ring with denunciations of our treachery and brutality, but as this piece of treachery is

only the work of the "simple peasant" of the veldt, it will, of course, be accounted to them for righteousness.

September 12th, 1901.— . . . Colonel Scobell's column is equipped like an ordinary Boer commando, and to that circumstance he owes his success.

It is to be hoped the lesson of it will be thoroughly learnt, for evidently a good deal of thug hunting remains to be done in the Colony.

"O, Bottom, thou art changed! What do I see on thee?"

Elsewhere the Colonel is warmly congratulated by the Editor for his contrivance, the thug is denounced for his treachery.

It will be observed that the thug was successful, but he is not justified by success. In vain are the blessings of British justice obtruded upon the thug. He prefers Boer tyranny.

### Briton versus Boer: the Blacks Intervening.

It remains to be added that the blacks have not been denied the honour of serving under the Old Flag.

October 14th, 1901.—Three weeks ago, it seems, he (Scheepers) deliberately murdered one of our coloured scouts.

August 2nd, 1901.—We think, too, that natives in British employment ought all to be armed, and ought further, in districts where they are attacked, as they have been in Zululand and Swaziland, to be authorised to protect themselves, and be furnished with the means of doing so.

. . . they (the Boers) have employed the natives as fighting men.

. . . no measures that we can adopt to checkmate these schemes can be regarded as unjustifiable or as too severe. Nor should there be any delay in adopting them.

According to the Editor's theory dated August 2nd, 1901, "the Boer is a savage, and as a savage he should be treated."

In soliciting the assistance of savages the Boer did not, therefore, degrade himself any more than we did by soliciting aid from our Colonial brethren. We both kept on our own plane, but his was, of course, inferior to ours.

On the other hand, we must bear in mind what the Editor told us on August 7th, 1901:—

Nothing can be more certain than that the war in South Africa has been, amongst other things, a war to secure the decent treatment of the natives. Of this the natives themselves are perfectly well aware.

We then place a musket in the hands of this native, tell him he must only shoot in self-defence, put him in the thick of a war which he knows is being waged for his edification, and yet expect that the gun will not go off until the coloured gentleman is put on his defence. Very likely.

1891  
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### The War Over, yet Boers not aware of it.

At first sight, the unenlightened state of the Boer mind might be taken as an element in our favour, but it turned out otherwise.

They failed to perceive that the war was over at the proper time, and went on fighting long after we knew it was finished.

It is a pity (writes the Editor, December 10th, 1900) that no means of enlightening the burghers can be devised; it is scarcely credible that they

would continue the struggle if they knew the truth, and especially if they were aware of the failure of Kruger's European mission.

September 17th, 1901.—When the suppression of the truth and the dissemination of unblushing lies has not been sufficient to keep the burghers on commando there has always been the skjambok for disbelievers.

*N.B.*—The skjambok is a kind of Birmingham paving stone.

We, on the other hand, knew the war was over, and were only longing to bring our brother Boer to a knowledge of the truth.

September 15th, 1900.—The war, we repeat, is over, and it is Mr. Kruger and those who constituted the Transvaal Government that tell us so. People bent upon celebrating its conclusion as they celebrated the relief of Mafeking and Ladysmith may light their bonfires and set off their squibs as soon as they please.

As the General Election drew near, the Truth began apparently to break in upon the Boers.

September 10th, 1900.—It is curious to note that the Boers, like the Portuguese, are preparing for the finish. Ben Viljoen . . . (the biggest Uitlander eater on the Rand) has become quite amiable.

Yes, it was curious, Mr. Editor, very curious.

Curious that the humour of one man should denote the presentiments of a whole nation.

Curious that two hostile nations should both be preparing for a finish at the same time and both be deceived.

Curious that Ben should betray these symptoms at such an opportune moment for the patriots. No collusion, of course?

Curious that this caprice of poor Ben's should be a posthumous humour on his part.

His preparations, if any, for a finish were completed during the previous year.

October 24th, 1899.—The vanquishers of Ben Viljoen, whose death is so satisfactory an episode of the affair at Elandslaagte. . . .

Two Ben Viljoens? No; Ben's conduct on both occasions was so praiseworthy that one cannot think he fought in duplicate. His death was so satisfactory—to the Editor; nothing in his life became him so well as his manner of leaving it. His subsequent conduct is characteristic of the man—it shows the same anxiety to oblige the Editor.

Ben, however, did not die in 1899, nor did his amiability endure for any length of time. On January 27th, 1902, the Editor issued a leading article entitled "Exit Ben Viljoen," from which it appears that Benjamin had surrendered unconditionally and that his capture was an event of "first class importance."

August 29th, 1901.—There is no war in the Transvaal.

December 25th, 1901.—For our own part, we do not recognise the existence of a war in South Africa, and we think the time has arrived when the Government ought to refuse to recognise it.

Still the Editor goes on recognising it.

March 3rd, 1902.—The quickest way to finish the war is to stick to it.

### Our Failure.

Going back for a moment to 1899 we recall the Editor setting out like Don Quixote with the benevolent object of destroying monopolies, slavery, corruption, and despotism generally at the other end of the earth by means of a short, sharp, and decisive war.

That he has gathered any wool remains to be proved ; we have not seen any yet, but, like poor Quixote, he has come back shorn himself.

April 19th, 1901.—The Coal Tax is simply intolerable. It proposes neither more nor less than the ruin of Northumberland and Durham, and the ports of the North-east Coast.

April 15th, 1902.—Ministers asked for and obtained popular support in order that they might solve the South African problem, and they are using it to upset the fiscal system under which the National trade and commerce have reached their present pitch of prosperity.

### Scapegoat Wanted : try the Pro-Boer.

The War has been long, slow, and indecisive, and it has become expedient to find a scapegoat upon whom its failure can be placed.

At the outset the Editor warned the Cabinet that in the event of failure they would not be allowed to take refuge in any excuse, and on January 3rd, 1901, he wrote :—

“ War is being waged again no doubt. But that is because the Government have again failed to realise the necessities of the case.”

He has also adopted the patriotic theory that the peacemongers or Pro-Boers are responsible for our failure.

January 21st, 1902.—It is deplorable to reflect that peace is still withheld from the burghers by the ignorant spluttering of the pro-slavery party in England.

The Editor is readily answered out of his own mouth. There is no war, consequently the peacemongers cannot be vilified for a nonentity.

In the alternative, the secret of our failure lies upon the surface of the Editor's columns.

We have had a weak case, it has been presented by our War Office, and it has been punctured accordingly.

Whilst our Colonial Secretary was moving Heaven and earth to preserve peace in the Transvaal, we yet menaced its effete republic with war, but entered it unprepared and fought for six weeks afterwards with masterly inactivity ; sent generals without maps, and officers without a knowledge of Dutch ; sent men without horses, horses that were useless, guns that could not reach the target ; rejected Colonial advice and assistance, preferred men unmounted, allowed our Vere de Veres to trail harmoniums and cooking-ranges behind them, expected our men to kill the Boers without ammunition, neglected to reconnoitre, put on the field

hunger-bitten soldiers, led them up to the jaws of death in close formation, expected our infantry to run to earth their cavalry, dumped down an army of 60,000 men and horses in a hostile country with a line of railway and telegraph wires a thousand miles long between them and their daily bread and ammunition—lines that were cut again and again, with disastrous results.

These are blunders of which the peacemaker washes his hands. Can the Editor himself escape responsibility? Have his exhortations curtailed or prolonged the agony? Of what value is he as a political guide?

January 20th, 1902.—We do hold most decidedly that every ignorant or malevolent spouter adopting an attitude calculated to encourage further bloodshed in South Africa should be so treated by the community as to leave no doubt in the minds of sane persons that his influence is nil.

The Editor has written his own epitaph.

JOSEPH W. WAKINSHAW.

Westerhope, Newcastle-on-Tyne,  
*April 26th, 1902.*