



The Struggle of the Dutch Republics.

(Open letter to an American Lady)

by

Charles Boissevain

Editor of „Het Algemeen Handelsblad“

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THE DUTCH REPUBLICS.

Open Letter to an American Lady.

"Perhaps there was never an instance of a colony so much and so long persecuted with vehement and malicious abuse as ours has been for near two years past by its enemies here, and those who reside in it. The design apparently was, by rendering us odious as well as contemptible, to prevent all concern for us in the friends of liberty here, when the project of oppressing us further and depriving us of our rights by various violent measures should be carried into execution."

London, 3 February 1771.

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.

Amsterdam, May 10th 1900.

DEAR MADAM.

May I draw your attention to the quotation of Benjamin Franklin's words at the head of my letter?

I believe it to be a succinct answer to the three questions you ask me in the letter, I had the honour to receive from you. As you kindly give me permission to print it, I use it as an introduction to what I want to say on the three subjects you mention.

NEW YORK, April 15th 1900.

»Dear Sir,

"My husband brought me a copy of your Open Letter to the Duke of Devonshire. It brings out the awful tragedy of this war and though I read it with the English prejudice of my race, there was not one word to jar, or stimulate opposition.

"It is a grief to me and to thousands in America that our English friends are at war with men of the race that crushed Spanish tyranny.

"We here in New-York—the New-Amsterdam of the first, settlers—do never forget what we owe to the Dutch . . . we always recollect that France and Holland fought for our independence, that the Union-flag of the free States of America was for the first time saluted by the Hollanders at St Eustatius.

"No immigrants are made so welcome here as the sturdy, honest men of your country and we never cease to thank God for Holland's hospitality to John Robinson and the English Non-conformist exiles, who came from Amsterdam and Leiden, when in their native land they were hunted like rats.

"We think that England is in the wrong in this war. We feel that there was a party in England, that *meant* to have war, and also that it is a false patriotism that takes as its watch-cry: our country right or wrong.

"England must be in a sad moral condition, when the English laugh at the Boer's Bible and hymn-singing and when they joke at Kruger's favorite psalm.

"How they forget the Puritans, their fervent belief, their passion for liberty, their power as fighting men.

"We in America are a chivalrous nation and we admire the heroism of the Boers, but our sympathy for them would be much stronger, if we did not hear from our English friends, that it was domination the Dutch wanted, as they had conspired to drive the English in the sea . . . that they form a corrupt oligarchy, which refuses to give votes to all citizens . . . that they persecute the black natives and treat them as slaves . . . that they represent an old and retrograde civilisation, doomed to death."

* * *

Benjamin Franklin complained in the words I quote that it was the evident design of the English to render American colonials odious as well as contemptible, to prevent all concern for them in the friends of liberty.

Again the same complaint is heard!

What happened a century ago, when the Americans successfully passed through the ordeal the Dutch republicans are undergoing now, happens again to day.

Three men, three simple, serious men, occupying high positions in the South African Republic and the Orange Free State, have been deputed by the Government of the Republics to make one more effort to stop further bloodshed, and to convince Europe and America that this War was forced on the Republics, who are Peace-loving, by nature and of the nature of the aspirations of their not very numerous population, which, of all things, was least prepared or longing for a War of conquest!

When these three noble patriots, these three earnest, moderate men arrived in the Hague, nothing struck me so much as their astonishment and fierce indignation at the lies told in the English press and by British Statesmen about their fatherland and people.

They were deeply impressed by the calumnies and the false imputations under which the good name of the Republics had to suffer in Europe and America, and against which they wanted some Hollander who could write English to protest. Before they came here they had not even dimly realised how the English, to justify the War, had aspersed the Boers.

* * *

In heathen ethics an enemy was not entitled to have the truth spoken to him or about him; and at present

the moral code of the pro-war people in Great Britain is little better!

I don't know any subject on which the public mind of an honest and great people as the English has ever been more effectually abused and befooled than on this South African question.

England went to war because the papers had made the public believe that the lot of the Uitlander in some way resembled that of the Armenian.

Did not the *Daily Mail* assure its readers on 10 October that "the Englishman is fighting . . . to protect his women from insult," repeating thus the same lie by which England's poet laureate immortalised his unknown name?

The war press described the Boers collectively as "hounds" "baser than savages," too "devilish" in character to be "considered civilised beings." Some clergymen even identified the Boers with the devil of the Apocalypse.

What is one to say of a clergyman like the Rev. E. K. Elliot, the Vicar of Broadwater, who wrote in March to the papers:

"I may mention that a year ago a Mr. Edgar, residing in the Transvaal, when standing at his door was shot dead by a Boer who happened to be passing, simply because he recognised him to be an Englishman."

This he wrote many weeks after it had been proved that this Edgar had inflicted on another Uitlander, Foster, injuries from which the latter died some days later. Edgar then fled to his house. A Boer policeman of Welsh extraction named Jones followed him to effect an arrest. Edgar attacked the policeman with a life-preserver, and the latter then shot him in self-defence!

And not satisfied with this slander the Rev E. K. Elliot goes on:

"To-day a gentleman called upon me who, eight years ago, was in the Transvaal, and, what is more, a guest of Cronje during part of his sojourn in that country. Whilst with Cronje he saw him shoot two old Kaffir women because (as he said) they were too old for work!"

We have been deluged with stories of the brutality of the Boers, stories in which the sjambok was a prominent feature, and yet the *Times* correspondent told us the other day that the treatment of the refugees during the stampede from the Rand would compare favourably with what might have happened in any European country under the circumstances.

Lies, always lies, just as when the "women and children" letter was sprung upon the British public by the *Times* and the Rand capitalists, to introduce and excuse the Raid. There was first the murder of Mr. Lanham, who was kicked to death in the columns of the *Daily Mail*, but shortly afterwards turned up "alive and well." Then again there was the "armoured train outrage." Without a word of telegraphic authority the many papers informed their readers that the Boers had wantonly destroyed a train conveying refugee women and children. These were its headlines:

Armoured Train Destroyed.
Refugee Women and Children Killed.
Dastardly Outrage.
Official Confirmation of the Awful News.

In all of this there was not one word of truth.

We in Holland have the greatest reverence for the Queen of England, and not even in England have the mean

caricatures of this noble queen and woman been condemned more severely than by us.

But are the falsehoods invented to blacken the character of president Kruger, than whom there is no man in South Africa imbued with a stronger sense of duty and of right, not as bad as scurrilous prints?

What can one say of a Mr. Herbert-Jones, F.R.G.S., who before the Independent Church Guild at Haverhill said?

“Natives could still be found in the Transvaal who bore the marks of sores made by the hand of Kruger himself, *and years ago he drove them in the plough instead of cattle.*”

What of the Rev. John Allsopp who, speaking of his experiences in South Africa, said?

„Paul Kruger had been charged with wedging a young girl between two pieces of wood and sawing both wood and girl through the middle with his own hands because she refused to divulge the military secrets of her own tribe. That charge had not been denied!”

I have a long list of quotations of the same sort, which may serve for a longer work.

What do God-fearing men and women in America say of these English clergymen, who try to make a compromise with the Almighty, praising God and slandering and damning their brother far-away, who cannot answer?

How a war for conquest demoralises a free people! If you read the papers and reviews and listen to the talk in English drawing rooms and in the street you see a rising tide of hate, revenge, intolerance, and bitterness. Alas! the British public now has tasted blood.

And words of the most eloquent English preacher,

I ever heard, come back to me. Did not Spurgeon, that mighty motive power for the Christian life, say:

"There is always a war party in England. I fear the Jingo is no foreigner but the genuine offspring of the British bulldog. An unconverted Britisher is all for blood, and fire, and glory; and as the unconverted are the majority among us, we remain a fighting nation. Fighting, how we delight in it! Down with the Afghans, down with the Zulus! The Boers—destroy them. We cannot get our fill of glory and honor unless we get knee-deep in blood. The policy of peace is voted dishonorable, and so we go from land to land till there is hardly a nation which has not been stained with blood by British hands. How fiercely these English talk; but is not Christian talk. May the Lord teach us the language of peace. Be you at peace, whereunto also you were called."

English religion has shown itself bankrupt in this war. I repeat what the Rev. J. Page Hopps so bravely said at the meeting in Exeter Hall, while a well dressed mob tried to rush the building and a storming party attacked the platform entrance —

"I thoroughly agree with Mr. Stead, who said—and a most remarkable sign of the times it is—that we have had to turn away from the official, conventional¹ Christianity of this country in the nineteenth century to the outsiders, to the simple-hearted and sensible human men and women in the street."

The clergy does not preach that there is a distinction between right and wrong as much in public as there is in private life. Have any protests been heard in the churches and chapels of England against the horrible spirit of revenge and cruelty, which breathes through many of the private letters from the seat of war to the friends of British soldiers, or against the revolting deeds to which these soldiers confess in their letters?

When I was for a couple of days in London last winter, I heard a man, dressed as a clergyman of the State Church, read out in a railway-carriage with a chuckle of approval these sentences out of a letter which Pte. Frank Thompson, of the 2nd Royal Lancashire Regiment, wrote to his sister at Sheffield and which the London papers published:

"I fought at the Tugela River, Colenso and Ladysmith. It was something awful to see the Boers asking for mercy. We gave them the bayonets. If you had seen me you would not have known me, as I was covered with blood from head to foot."

After reading this the rev. gentleman exclaimed: "Serve them right!"

When I quietly observed that the Boers in such a case make prisoners instead of murdering the men who ask for mercy, I was called a "pro-Boer" and a "damned foreigner", which was rude and offensive but not convincing!

For notwithstanding these urbane words the exulting cry "Vae Victis!" has a Pagan sound to me!

* * *

Mr. Frederick Greenwood has strongly condemned the way the war party works upon popular opinion in England. "By every available channel", he wrote, "a new flood of letters and telegrams descriptive of the loathly character, the abominable habits, the shocking personal appearance of the Boers and their leaders, come pouring into the newspapers; from which it appears that so far from being fit for liberty these crafty, cruel, cowardly, unwashed wretches are barely fit to live. Listen to one utterance—from Kimberley: "Cape Colony is a nest of viperous rebels and traitors... The Dutch traitor in the colony

must be hanged or shot. That will put the fear of God in his neighbours."

"I hate this atrocity-manufacturing," noble general Colley wrote home to the Government, when cruel non-combatants raised the same cry of Boer brutality and treachery. "Its effects on the men tend to make them "either cowards or butchers."

The British nation, which was amazed to see Dreyfus condemned on hearsay, accepts without question the same sort of evidence against the Boers.

Everything goes by passion and prejudice now and the way people get up lies and believe them, is certainly no proof that either systematic thinking or unaffected self-observation is the custom among the highly civilized party of the Imperialists.

It is terrible to friends of British institutions, British character, to see how in England honourable men and women, who have nothing to gain, every thing to lose by their courage and their devotion to principle, are branded as traitors for showing even the slightest wish to search into the origin of the war in Africa, and for protesting against lies.

Men like Dean Kitchen and Leonard Courtney as well as we, the foreigners—who have always loved and respected England, but who cannot harden our hearts against righteousness and evidence—are treated as a visiting football team is often treated by a hostile English crowd.

I once heard the fiendish yell of an English crowd against neighbours and friends, entitled to respect and kindness . . . that same yell reverberates from Land's end to the Tweed.

Why this brutality and this malicious abuse?

Is it a sign of strength for a great country to fight like the cruel schoolboys Stalkey and Co.?

Is it not terrible to see how crowds of Imperialists, whenever they are overcome by their patriotic instincts, begin to calumniate and to believe in each others' calumnies?

A campaign of slander is in England accompanying a campaign of blood in Africa.

But it is not the slander of evil English tongues that could defame the Americans, and just as little envenomed attacks on President Kruger and the kind-hearted Boers will harm their noble cause.

Besides the reason for these lies has been confessed!

One of the English poisoners of public opinion, "*the Times of Natal*," has acknowledged the plan of campaign of the Rhodesian press in these cynical words:

"If we are to disarm those who are now against us at home, and who will endeavor in the day of our triumph to restore as much of the Boer power as possible, out of a misplaced sentiment for a weak foe, and who could go frantic over atrocities in Bulgaria, then, if they require atrocities to assist their comprehension of facts, and to disarm their opposition, so be it. It should not now be difficult to supply the necessary chapter of horrors to strike the imagination even of these good people."

I always thought that war, like the duel has its decencies and that it is not dignified in a duellist to come upon the ground spluttering abuse of his adversary. But this law may have been changed in England together with the law of Nations!

* * *

If I am asked by you, why American women should give their heartfelt sympathies to the Boers, I give the

answer which Professor Hans Delbrück of Berlin, one of the most eminent publicists in Germany, gave to a similar question:

"Our most heartfelt sympathies are with the Boers. You ask, why? Because they are a kindred people, because they are the weaker, and finally because they were forced into an unjust war."

And there is no longer any doubt in Europe about this having been the case.

There are points in debate about this war in which both the English and we Hollanders may be misled by prejudice and ignorance. But there is no dispute among them as to the wickedness of this disastrous war, if it can be proved to be perfectly unnecessary.

Now the British nation, on the brink of war, had no idea what it was going to war about.

But the warpress, as Sir William Harcourt told us, perverted the facts, aggravated the situation, and obstructed the cause of peace whenever the question appeared ripe for settlement.

The war press, with the *Times* as leader, and the *Daily Mail* as bugler, knew that a peaceful settlement was made difficult by the rooted conviction of the Boers — the justice of which is now absolutely proved — that England cherished designs hostile to their independence. And that was why this noble press did everything possible to strengthen that belief.

They stand condemned by what Sir William Harcourt wrote under date October 2 to the *Times*.

"I undertake to affirm that the tone of the correspondence, the claim of suzerainty, and the garden-party speeches, so far from removing, have done all that was possible to confirm that belief. The spirit of the war party is the spirit of the raid, of its

authors, its abettors, and its admirers. They have never had any object but the destruction of the Republic and the annexation of its territory."

How on earth to convince the English nation of the wrong of this war? There is much truth in "Lewis Carroll's" dictum: "My view of life is, that it's next to impossible to convince anybody of anything."

They read their *Times* and *Daily Mail* and refuse to listen to the truth.

The best way to reach them is through America.

The present conduct of the English people is elucidated by a saying of Stuart Mill's: "So long as an opinion is deeply rooted in the feelings, it gains rather than loses in stability by having a preponderating weight of argument against it."

This war is so terrible because it makes honest gentlemen hate one another, as it is unbearable to one who knows the character of the Boer, his history and his aims, to see three-fourths of the British nation break out against him in falsehood, detraction and calumny.

But for this reason I like to repeat in defence of many old friends in England what Addison used to say: "Zeal for a public cause is apt to breed passions in the hearts of virtuous persons, to which the regard of their own private interest would never have betrayed them."

Just because the English people is an admirable people, with high aims and love for righteousness, there is a craving in so many minds to believe the myths and lies of the war party.

For it is awful for honorable men to feel that they have been drawn in a war, utterly unnecessary, against a small nation of protestant farmers. This is a terrible thought... and so we see men of intellect and conscience

striving to find relief in absurd fictions and salving their conscience with wild theories.

There has been in England no ministerial responsibility for the war! Lord Salisbury's, Mr. Balfour's, Lord Lansdowne's, Sir Michael Hicks-Beach's and Mr. Chamberlain's contradictions of each other in parliament are a fit theme for the comedy writer of the future.

The principles and policy which have brought the war about cannot be defended openly in a free country. This the ministers realise. It is ludicrous to hear them talk. Every speech is not a defence but an adroit evasion of a defence. Mr. Chamberlain is the cleverest fencer. The most amusing one is Mr. Balfour. Nothing equals the airy levity with which he acknowledges his absolute ignorance about facts, which a little application might have taught him, and the childish, petulant way in which he attributes the faults that the workman makes to his tools!

Lord Rosebery, looking out everywhere for a good reason for the war, discovered a most grotesque and absurd reason.

This very clever and eloquent statesman found in your country, in the United States, an explanation for this cruel war: "The Boers are like the Mormons!" he said.

According to his thesis the Mormons wished to seclude themselves from the world... and the United States Government would not allow them to do so! The Boers seek to do the same thing; and as the States Government was justified in scattering the Mormons, so the English have right to force the Boers into a closer contact with the spirit and manners of modern times.

When some years ago I paid a visit to the United

States I learnt to admire your schools. If ever again I enter such a school I'll ask the highest class:

„Why did the Federal Government interfere with the Mormons?”

And I feel sure that the answer would be:

„The Mormons had established their community on a polygamous basis, which the people of the States rightly believed to be immoral and unchristian. They saw in it a fearful potency of evil, a source of corruption to the future welfare of the Republic, which must be stamped out at all costs.”

But Lord Rosebery said: “your government only interfered with the Mormons because they wanted to live apart from the world!” just as the Boers!

What a laugh followed! And one of the girls, charming and intellectual as are so very many American girls I met, answered:

“But what a curious error Lord Rosebery made! The Mormon State is an integral part of our Republic, so the federal Government has the right to interfere, but the Transvaal is a separate, independent State. Did'nt Lord Rosebery observe how very false his analogy is?”

No, my dear American girl, Lord Rosebery did not observe it. He was looking out for a reason for the war . . . and that made him as absent minded as you know who!

* * *

The most extraordinary argument in favor of the war was used in the House of Commons by Sir Henry Fowler, when he said „that it was an insult to the army, and especially to the colonial contingents, to question the justice of the war.”

How just the wars of Napoleon must have been! how just the heroism of Turkish troops make the beneficent sway of England's old ally the Sultan!

But again a new reason for the war was found.

"It is a war for liberal principles!"

If this is a war for Liberal principles, is it not strange, yes, passing strange, that it has been undertaken by a Conservative Government with the support of that ardent enemy of Liberalism, of Ireland and of all nations struggling to be free, "The Times"?

And so the comedy went on.

When Mr. Bryce in Parliament pointed out that there was no case for war, Mr. Goschen replied . . . that it was popular! When Mr. Bryce reminded the House that the franchise was a thing that they might advise the Transvaal to give but the English had not the slightest right to demand it, Mr. Goschen replied . . . that the franchise was a means to an end—as though that affected the legality of the matter.

I believe that true patriotism should sternly condemn all these delusions and I feel certain that the puritan reserve of England's forces will in the end insist upon truth.

I hear everywhere the voice of uneasy consciences.

Many of the lies are tributes to innate honesty. I never believed that the French army would be demoralised if an officer, whose guilt was not proved, were released from prison.

Just as little I believe that the English army would run away from Boer rifles unless their fellow-countrymen in parliament, in the press, and at public meetings, ran away from ugly facts.

A moral defeat is worse than any other and the cowardice of Liberals, who know that their country is at war because its agents did what was wrong, is worse

than a hundred defeats at Magerfontein, Colenso, and Spion kop.

After Jameson's crime Mr. Chamberlain sent to president Kruger this message:

"Treat these men with generous sympathy."

The Boer delegates arriving in Europa discovered what generous sympathy was shown to them in their need.

With Franklin they had to exclaim: "there never was a country so much and so long persecuted with vehement and malicious abuse!"

* * *

But worse than lies are half-truths, insinuations, suppressions of essential dates and statements, with just that amount of truth that makes them dangerous. Such incomplete information is given by Mr. Fitzpatrick in his *Transvaal from within*, which is the sheet anchor of the Jingo.

The way he twists facts to suit his argument of the moment, shows how partial is his reasoning. In his book, written in Africa, he pleaded fiercely for interference on behalf of the wronged Uitlander. But when he arrived in London he entered another atmosphere. A better reason for the war was wanted. So now he enlarged on the aggressive design involved in armaments, which excited no suspicion in his mind when the original book was penned in 1896, or printed in 1899.

And how does he do this?

He writes in *the Fortnightly Review* and finds the proof of the Napoleonic aims of the Boers in the manifesto published just before the Raid, but he *firstly* omits the date of that document and *secondly* he so alters the text he had himself given in his own book as entirely to change

the sense. The difference is in a word, so that the *future* may appear the *past*, thus :

Fortnightly Review Dec. 1899.

The Transvaal from Within 1896.

In 1894 we had seen the commencement of preparations on a large scale which are to-day demanding toll in British blood. In the manifesto published before the Raid, the Uitlanders complained of the £ 250,000 spent on Pretoria forts, £ 100,000 on Johannesburg fort, the importation of cannon, Maxims, and small arms, and the hiring of German mercenaries.

£ 250,000 is to be spent upon the completing of a fort at Pretoria, £ 100,000 is to be spent upon a fort to terrorise the habitants of Johannesburg, large orders are sent to Krupps for big guns, Maxims have been ordered, and we are even told that German officers are coming out to drill the burghers.

Controversialists, who commit such mistakes, are not to be believed implicitly!

A picture much more lurid than any Mr. Fitzpatrick painted of the Outlanders' grievances I undertake to paint in a day, and call it "*London from within*".

Though I admire English character and English greatness very heartily, I have only to try to look at London with the prejudiced eyes of one of Mr. Rhodes' pressmen, exaggerating actual grievances, distorting substantial changes, and supplying what the "*Times of Natal*" described as "the necessary chapter of horrors."

What atrocities I could mention: murderers going free, criminals never discovered, nepotism in high places, a lewd and bad tone introduced in society, gambling and open immorality, thousands of workmen without a vote and treated worse than Uitlanders, the records of the South African Committee of Concealment showing how the good fame and good faith of a great people can be dishonoured by weakness and fear of truth.

I could prove that fierce materialism and cynicism have invaded politics and tainted patriotism itself . . . how the government did not dare to punish Mr. Rhodes, to remove him from the Privy Council, and to banish him and all participators in the Raid from South Africa . . . how the Rhodesian clique controlled England's South African policy, and controlled it by the simplest and most effective of all weapons . . . how the Select Committee of Inquiry was packed to stifle evidence, and how Mr. Chamberlain, when all was over, had to whitewash Mr. Rhodes' honor in the House.

I could reprint the unanswerable account given by Mr. Hobson of the extraordinary arrangement of journalistic forces brought to bear upon public opinion in South Africa and in England from the time of the Jameson Raid and how the whole of the British South African press was brought under the same control as the Kimberley diamonds and the Rand gold, and was used, without regard for any considerations, moral or political, in order to bring about a war between England and the Transvaal.

I remember to have seen it proved in English papers of unblemished reputation, that many great men bearing great names in England made huge sums of money by selling Chartered shares before the Jameson Raid . . . that the financial forces which produced the Raid have been mainly responsible for the war agitation . . . that the new style of imperialism means for many business-patriots the license to make money at the expense of a people, at the cost of vast human suffering, of honor, truth, fair play and justice . . . that England's Colonial Secretary admitted in the House of Commons that he wrote a despatch intended to spell "white", which all the world nevertheless interpreted to mean "black," and

which could only mean "that he was paltering with words in a double sense to involve the Republic in ruin."

I could speak of great noblemen corrupted by their own extravagance, enslaved by their love of gambling.

I could mention the great part played by social influence in the running of the British army, so that, as the *Westminster Gazette* says:

"The surest method of obtaining a good appointment is for an officer to get his name noted on the list kept by a certain lady of title; the good word of the dame will more effectually secure the advancement of her nominees than any amount of meritorious service or hard work without such a backing."

I could speak of the ministers of the Crown in England holding 40 directorships of financial companies between them... I could speak of terrible frauds in connection with army-contracts, by which England's plucky soldiers, who fight for the capitalists, are swindled and starved...

I could mention judges such as judge Grantham, whose arrogant way of treating a man like the dean of Durham is a scandal... I could ask admiration for a government intervening where intervention would sweep two feeble nations out of England's way—though solemn treaties forbade intervention!—... but refusing to intervene in Turkey, where financiers could only lose money by intervention, *but where England had the most definite obligations under solemn treaties to intervene!*

* * *

When I recollect, that one of the reasons why Her Majesty's Government intermeddled in the internal affairs of an independent Republic was that at *one* League meeting at Johannesburg the uproar which arose was

not quelled by the police, I might show to Mr. Arthur Balfour, who complained so bitterly that the right of free speech and free meeting was denied to the Outlanders in the Transvaal, by many passages in his own Blue-books, that after the one meeting at Johannesburg which was disturbed, some hundreds of public meetings were held all over the Rand, in which resolutions in support of the views, which Mr. Balfour seems to entertain, were passed without any interruption whatever.

But I might do more than this and prove that in England sporadic attacks on free speech grew this year to an organised persecution . . . that meetings have become impossible, for where they are not actually broken up, the owners of halls decline to risk their premises . . . that partizans of righteousness had to meet secretly in private houses . . . that in the end of the reign of Queen Victoria these threatened men had thus for the sake of conscience to act in a way that reminds us of the privy Masses of the persecuted Catholics in the days of Queen Elizabeth and of the conventicles of the Scottish Convenanters.

And after filling pages with the accounts of mobs wrecking meetings of Englishmen and showing their bravery by attacking a few individuals in overwhelming force . . . of Imperialists showing their patriotism by breaking windows and wrecking private residences, I could again prove how in the patriotic press toned-down accounts were given of the disgraceful proceedings, which were styled "an ebullition of patriotism," . . . how there was official palliation and condonation at headquarters yes, how the same Mr. Balfour, who complained of the one meeting disturbed in Johannesburg, as Leader of the House of Commons stood forth as apologist for what

every true statesman and freeman should set himself against like a rock.

Yes, I could write a book "*London from within*" which would shame to silence the Rhodesian scribes, who have only evil deeds to chronicle of the "unspeakable, the uncultured Boer."

But, though there would be truth—yes too much truth—in such a book, yet I should lie if I only drew attention to weaknesses and faults! I should have done too much not to do more, by acknowledging that it is a crime to judge a people, great of character, by exceptions and by some wicked deeds of a small minority.

For England's people most certainly is neither profligate nor tyrant... it will murmur soon, when it has been taught by experience and reconciled by adversity and humiliation to the principles that made the nation great.

The majority of the British people will condemn this war as soon as they learn the truth! It is no disgrace to a working-man, that he does not know much about the relations between the Republics and about the causes of this war...; this is only a disgrace for indolent statesmen like Mr. Arthur Balfour, who, with a deprecatory wave of their weak hands, contract themselves out of responsibility by a careless confession of ignorance.

* * *

Yes, I keep my faith in the honour and love of righteousness of the English people! May America arouse its conscience!

All the talk of these half-truth men, of Rhodes's back-clapping flatterers and of all the weak and violent men, to whom the power of vengeance gives malignant joy, is an admission that the case of the war party is far from

strong. If the English diplomacy had been without menace . . . if the Uitlanders had really been treated as badly as the Armenians were by the Turks . . . no new issues would have been raised *after* the war began, issues, wholly foreign to the negotiations that led *to* the war!

Else, why did the poor enormous Empire not sooner complain about the unprovoked invasion with which it was threatened by a few thousand farmers?

This brings us to the extraordinary accusation of the English, which you mention in your letter, that what the farmers of the Republic wanted was not independence but domination!

Not Independence but Empire!

The British government and the war press have put the war before the country in a false light, but they never deceived the people so grossly as when they repeated, without any attempt at proof, the fantastic myth about the vast Dutch conspiracy to drive the English in the sea!

According to an old tradition among Dutch shepherds eagles approach their victim from the North, so that their shadow may not warn it.

But in South Africa the birds of prey, not doubting of their strength of wings and talions, swarmed with the sun behind them . . . and their black shadow gave the alarm to the shepherds and their flock on the "veld".

These birds of prey formed the Rhodesian clique.

* * *

There was a conspiracy in South Africa . . . but it was one of half-British, half-foreign financiers.

The real plotters are known since the confession by one of them.

On January 31 Dr. Darley Hartley, one of the South African League leaders and founders, delivered a speech in Capetown, in which, speaking, as he said, "with a full sense of responsibility", he gloried in the fact that the League had brought about the war. Here is an extract:

"All present who carried their minds back over the three years during which the League had been in existence would find very little difficulty in tracing the present state of things in South Africa was largely due—one might almost say entirely due—to the efforts of the League. He spoke with a full sense of responsibility, but he asked them to reflect how far the present position would have reached if it had not been for the persistent efforts of the South African League in Johannesburg. To illustrate that he detailed the history of the famous Johannesburg Outlanders petition, which emanated from the League and could not have been successful unless it had been worked by men versed in every possible technicality in the work. That organization in Johannesburg was the outcome of the organization in Cape Colony and that showed what their organization had done "

To speak after Mr. J. A. Hobson about the real causes of the war in South Africa—I acknowledge it with gratitude—is like killing again the slain. Oh! how I wish that all American men and women could read what he has written about the policy of the Rand Capitalists and the press bought by them!

The capitalists imagined they had quelled the country when they had bought the newspapers.

This, and more than this, he has proved.

Yet I can add something to all that he revealed.

For since Mr. Hobson wrote, Mr. John Hays Hammond, the consulting engineer of the Consolidated Goldfields of South Africa and one of the four "Reformers", who signed the lying "Women and Children" appeal to Dr. Jameson, has justified the war on the ground, that it would put two millions and a quarter into the pockets of the shareholders of his company.

Since he wrote, Mr. Rhodes hoisted the British flag as "the greatest commercial asset," for, as he eloquently said :

"They were not going to war for the amusement of royal families as in the past, but they meant practical business."

Since Mr. Hobson wrote, Mr. Rhodes has been saved by the great courage of British soldiers from the bitterest humiliation. And when he emerged as from death, with a population suffering from hunger around him, he had no expression of grief for the terrible disasters of his country, no word of sympathy for the widows and orphans, not a faint expression even of hope that the killing might cease, not a word of heartfelt thanks for the great gallantry and perseverance of the British army! On the contrary, he insulted the generals, who had not saved his diamonds and him as soon as he desired . . . his only thought was of the mines and of a profit of two millions which he foresaw!

This callous selfishness makes us know better than ever the instigator of this murderous war!

* * *

Sir Henry Fowler has been philanthropic enough to defend in the House of Commons the innocent Rhodesian capitalists.

There can have been no capitalist intriguing for the war, he said, since it is clear that the Rand capitalists will be heavily taxed to pay for the war.

I hope they will, but Sir Henry forgets that they despised the Dutch patriots . . . they believed that a second raid with a small army would subjugate them . . . their chief Mr. Rhodes said repeatedly that the war would be a trifle, that the Boers would go back to their farms when it rained, and would disperse after one beating.

The burglars were disappointed, they wounded their hands with the smashed plateglass and the dog took a

bite out of their legs . . . but this does not make them unselfish citizens!

* * *

America knows and dreads the same financial forces, which produced the raid and the agitation for this war.

What Mr. A. J. Wilson, the great financial authority, wrote in the *Investors' Review*, is worth reading in your country.

"Precisely the same struggle is going on now in America between the working classes and the trusts. But in South Africa Capital has had an easier task than in America, inasmuch as it has, to use an expressive Americanism, been able to »noble« the Legislature. Mr. Rhodes for several years united in himself the offices of Prime Minister of Cape Colony, managing director and life governor of the De Beers Consolidated Mines, director of the Consolidated Gold Fields of South Africa, and managing director of the British South Africa Company. It is as though the president of the Standard Oil Trust were to become president of the Sugar Trust and of various other great corporations and were then to be elected President of the United States or Speaker of the Congress. Moreover, in South Africa the consolidation of power in the hands of a few moneyed men has been far greater than it could ever possibly be in America or in any of the European countries, because Africa is in reality a poor country, such wealth as it has not having been gradually accumulated, but brought into existence with a sudden rush and being almost entirely confined to a limited number of mining centres, all of which are worked in conjunction by the same close-knit ring of speculators."

The effect of their co-operation has been described by Olive Schreiner in words so forcible and so true that I cannot do better than quote them:

„If the Chartered Company were in ten or fifteen years' time, or much sooner, to explode, and as a company to lessen its

control over the land and people, it would yet be found that the whole real wealth of the country was appropriated, and in the hands of a few private individuals, forming syndicates and trusts . . . So, again, with regard to land tenure, while in all progressive countries there is a tendency to obtain and retain as large a part as possible of land, mines, and great public works, as the property of, and to be worked for the benefit of the nation, as a whole, we, in this country, are for ever, and completely, alienating our public lands, our minerals, our precious stones, and even our public works."

It may open the eyes of many honorable Americans to the real causes of this war, when they also read what Mr. F. Cawley, M. P. wrote:

"The real source of all the trouble is Mr. Rhodes, who has got in such a tight place with his Chartered Company that only a war can prevent the smash up of the »South Sea bubble«. Since July 1895 the Chartered Company has received from the British public something like seven millions of money. It has had deficits of hundreds of thousands of pounds (£ 530 000 for the year ending March last) each year of its existence, and seems to have no tangible assets that make any considerable showing on the credit side."

As one of the English papers rightly said: people hardly realise yet the enormous size and power of economic combinations, whose plans may embrace serious wars within their scope and who may presume to play their own tunes upon such a mighty organ as the public sentiment of England . . . and, I may add, of the United States!

* * *

After whitewashing the Rhodesian financiers, a convincing reason for the war was wanted, as the causes of the war are a subject on which difference of opinion

sometimes creates in England uneasiness in general conversation.

Though nearly everything goes now by passion and prejudice, nobody yet can be quite sure whether some fearless thinker or conscientious woman may not be present. That is why discovery of a stirring reason for the war was wanted. . . and at once an inventor advanced with a prophet's mien.

As one inspired he exclaimed:

"It is not Ahab, who wants Naboth's vinyard, no! no! it is the farmer Naboth, who wants Ahab's kingdom!"

"Bravo! Bravo!", and endless cheers from business-patriots on the Stock-exchange welcomed this prophet up to date.

Now, you can scarcely answer such an inspired man. . . you can only disbelieve him, but disbelieve him with respect too great for words, for though his arguments are false, his inspiration may be really coming from high places, from august lords and warlike ministers.

But, as no proofs are given by the prophet of the financiers, I ask: what is the probability of 36,000 farmers making Napoleontic attempts at Empire? The population of the Orange Free State and the Transvaal together is a great deal smaller than that of one of your smaller towns in the States! The Free State enjoyed undisputed independence, was flourishing and partly Anglicised. No sensible man could well believe the accusation, that these farmers intended to oust the forces of the whole British Empire from Africa, unless the accusation were backed with a crushing weight of evidence.

But, no proof is given. . . we only hear people in a panic babble about Dutch "*megalomania*". Only here and there a cool head in England argues that these

adventurous designs to drive the English into the sea, are utterly at variance with the character as well of president Kruger as of the pastoral Boers, whose one ambition, hitherto, has always been to trek to some region where they might be let alone.

The Boers armed to defend their country!

"There is no escape (*the Manchester Guardian* said) from these figures, now available to everybody, of the Transvaal's expenditure on armaments. Before Mr. Rhodes began to plot against the Transvaal its military expenditure was almost nominal — £ 19,000 in 1893 and £ 28,000 in 1894. As there was not much secrecy about the later stages of the plot that ended in the Raid, the Transvaal military expenditure, accurately corresponding to Mr. Rhodes's energy in intrigue, rose in 1895 to £ 87,000, a sum still small, and of course ludicrous, if any Boer movement against England had been dreamed of! The Raid took place in the last days of 1895, and the Transvaal military expenditure instantly leaped up from £ 87,000 in 1895 to £ 495,000 in 1896. That is the beginning and end of the mysterious conspiracy. The Transvaal is armed to the teeth now, but it was armed by Mr. Rhodes, for it was Mr. Rhodes whose attack upon it set it scouring Europe for guns, ammunition, professional military skill, every means of protection against a second attack."

* * *

"They wanted domination, *as their Independence was never threatened* until they invaded British territory!" the Imperialists dare to say!

"Their independence never threatened!"

What a noble-sounding echo of Jingo words?

Did not the English Imperialists and the Uitlanders and capitalists say?

"The Boers might have had their independence guaranteed by us!"

Yes, on condition of their taking the first step to lose it, and of admitting to citizenship under threats in a small self-governing country recent immigrants who settled only for a time and which they had good reason to dread.

With an immovable face Mr. Chamberlain might have declared in a couple of years, "that he had indeed guaranteed the independence of the Transvaal against external violence, but that in face of a request from the Transvaal itself, he had no option but to grant the prayer of their petition, and annex it."

This sort of guaranteed independence I call a fallacious security based on an unfounded assertion. No free nation desires manumission from Mr. Chamberlain, or their liberty by virtue of an English promise!

* * *

The *Quarterly Review* tries to prove the theory of a great Pan-Afrikander conspiracy by mentioning the patriotic aspirations of the Transvaal . . . as if they were evidence of a criminal determination to destroy the English, and drive them into the sea!

It has been rightly observed that, even if, for the purpose of argument, we admit all the *Review* alleges, it amounts simply to this: That the people of the Transvaal loved their independence, that they were full of national spirit, that they wished to expand, that they desired a seaport; in brief, that they aspired to make their little country strong and free.

And when the war press accused the Boers, as the *Daily Mail* does, "of having for nearly 18 years been accumu-

lating artillery, rifles, melinite with which to oust England from Africa," I give the lie to this silly assertion by observing, that neither the Mauser rifles, nor the smokeless ammunition used by the Boers, nor the patterns of most of their artillery were invented 18 years ago!

Truly, Aesop's wolf is a wolf and a very hungry wolf still in 1900!

The chief expenditure was upon forts! But if earth works for the defence of Pretoria show an aggressive design against a neighbour, than the earthworks we erected round Amsterdam must be a terrible endeavour to oust our English neighbours out of their tight little island... they must be a means of conquering the Empire of our friends and neighbours in Germany, who never yet in all our history spilled one drop of Dutch blood, and who to our gratification make their country great and respected!

* * *

The inventors of the conspiracy-theory pile up every sort of disagreement that England has ever had with the Transvaal, and find in one and all evidence of a design on the part of the Boers to conquer South Africa. Whether there might not be a simpler explanation of the facts, which would harmonise better with common sense and common knowledge of human nature, the critics do not inquire, because the truth would at once come out! The Raid and the disgraceful failure to punish Rhodes and the other offenders were sufficiently serious to justify men, who love their independence, to protect themselves!

It has been wittily said: "right in the centre of the veldt of South African history the Raid rises like a kopje. In vain the Raiders try to get round it and behind it. They

can't. It is there. It will always be there. And their efforts to outflank it only serve to emphasise its grim significance."

The whole lamentable tale of cause and effect began with the Raid and ended in this war.

* * *

Those who have invented the myth of a great anti-British conspiracy as the reason for the farmers arming themselves after the Jameson-raid, forget, that, if a few thousand farmers had been mad enough to hope ever to overturn by force of arms British rule in South-Africa, the obvious moment would have been months and months ago, when the English were not ready.

They who cannot think of any other reason for the Boers putting their defence in order, as a long-meditated descent of a Boer Naboth on the British Ahab's kingdom, speak as if patriotism and love of independence were unknown forces to all nations but the English.

So they impute to a settled design of consistent Boer-Imperialism what was in fact owing to that passion for freedom, self-government and the flag, which has enobled Holland through the ages!

The burden of proof is upon the British Imperialists, who try to salve their own consciences by passing off this wild myth on a credulous mass of newspaper-readers. No proof is forthcoming, but they repeat and repeat their accusation. They return to the charge again and again. Is repetition of an accusation a proof? They guide people's judgment by internal evidence of the war being necessary, but, as they cannot support their hypotheses by sufficient external evidence, they are not entitled to the slightest belief.

The second sight of the Jingoës is the second sight of political quacks, who want to impress on easily satisfied readers ambiguous fallacies and artificial beliefs.

How this miscellaneous popular opinion about Napoleonic aims of the farmers makes us distrust and despise a popular dogma!

The talk of President Steyn's plotting with the Transvaal Boers to drive the English into the sea is deceiving smoke, dissipated by the simple fact that in the earlier stages of the negotiations it was his representative who, with the aid of Mr. Hofmeyr, induced the Transvaal to make the concession which Mr. Chamberlain recognised as a possible basis of settlement.

* * *

To prove this I will reprint the testimony of Dr. Mc. Call Theal, the great historian of Cape Colony, a Canadian by birth, a Scotchman by descent, who knows intimately every Dutchman of note from Capetown to Pretoria:

"I have known the thoughts and aims of the Dutch through a long period. I say to you, on my word of honor, that I am as sure as I am sitting here that the design to oust the English from South Africa and set up a great Dutch Republic no more entered the minds of men like Kruger, Steyn, Reitz, Joubert, and Esselen than it has occurred to Premier Laurier to oust the United States from the American continent and make of all North America a great Canadian Dominion. Mr. Reitz, whom the British Press has so vilely slandered, is an esteemed friend of mine: I know as a fact that he has been more "English", as far as England rules in South Africa is concerned, than many Englishmen. Englishmen have talked of eliminating the Imperial factor, but not he; I have heard him again and again speak of the advantages derived from the protection of the British fleet. The Boer leaders are not angels, but they are men of common sense. What they have sought, what they seek, is that, while

they respect British authority outside the Republics, Great Britain shall respect Boer authority inside the Republics.”

In refutation of the accusation of conspiracy is also this: The one cry of the Boers from the time of the Bloemfontein Conference to the ultimatum was “Arbitrate.”

But England refused arbitration.

Besides if it be true that the Boers have conspired against England before the Raid, why did Mr. Chamberlain say that he accepted nine-tenths of the Boer offer, and that the remaining tenth was of little importance? The theory of a Pan-Afrikander conspiracy is an afterthought.

The myth of a Dutch conspiracy against British rule in South Africa had indeed been exploded long ago. The editor of the *Edinburgh Review* described it, succinctly and accurately, as a “nightmare”. Mr Hobson sifted every shred of so-called “evidence” on the subject, and arrived at the same conclusion.

The truth is known in America and in the whole of Europe. Every one outside passionate England, who can read and think, regards the talk about the farmers “being answerable for a war of conquest because they are the invading party”, as the meanest subterfuge ever known, for the British government had already announced its own ultimatum, which it merely held back to gain time for sending more troops.

Did not Sir Wilfrid Lawson, M. P. with that indomitable pluck which we Hollanders honour in him, say:

“All the talk about the Boers having been the invading party I regard as so much idle wind. In the sight of God and man we really announced the war when we sent out forces while we professed to be negotiating, and announced an ultimatum which we did not send, merely that we might gain time in the game of military preparation.”

The Sibylline terms being advanced continually in a most significant degree, while Mr. Chamberlain had the support of *la haute finance*, in particular of Lord Rothschild and Mr. Beit, the farmers of the Republics discovered, as it has been well said, behind the proffered settlement vistas of extensive and undefined claims, all of them to be pressed forward for immediate satisfaction as soon as the Government terms were accepted; and every one of them ready at need to serve as a reason for armed intervention!

I give three eloquent dates, to speak for me and the cause I defend, to the women of America:

1. 22 *September, 1899*. The Boer offers being ignored, Mr. Chamberlain telegraphed to Sir Alfred Milner:

"Her Majesty's Government are now compelled to consider the situation afresh, and to formulate their own proposals for a final settlement."

For fifteen days no information was vouchsafed as to the nature of these proposals, but more and more troops were sent to South Africa. And then,

2. 7 *October* the Royal Proclamation calling out the Army Reserve was issued. It was not until these things had been done that

3. 9 *October* the ultimatum was presented by the Government of the Transvaal Republic to the British Agent at Pretoria.

Six weeks before the war, President Kruger was warned that the sands were running down in the glass. Those who followed the negotiations will recollect how, time after time, both the Republics earnestly asked to know the British terms, and how the only reply of the British Government was to send fifty thousand men to South Africa.

It is evident that the military position of the Boer

would have been seriously worsened if a further delay for negotiations had been utilised by the British Government in sending up more troops. Can any American, who wants to be fair to the Boers, deny that this is a relevant argument?

The Boers, harrassed and persecuted for a century, came to the conclusion that, as the British Government meant to destroy their independence, they had better die fighting, praying God to give them either freedom through victory or a brave man's death.

Is there not a mighty conscience, a great spiritual force in the United States, to which such an attitude appeals?

No reverses, no loss of life, no disappointment has broken the splendid spirit of these farmers, fighting the great Empire, its 250,000 soldiers, and boundless resources.

The explanation of this noble fortitude is given by professor Beesly: „it is that voluntarily and gladly they are risking their lives in the holiest and most inspiring of all causes, the protection of their native land from invasion by a foreign enemy.”

Which Mr. Chamberlain himself admitted in a moment of candor, when in January he exclaimed in the House:

“One of the lessons of this war is the enormous defensive power possessed by irregular or volunteer troops when *fighting in defence of their own country.*”

It was Great Britain that declared war by allowing the opponent no alternative except to fight, or to submit.

When Mr. Rhodes last autumn was in England he remarked to a friend, as the *Daily Chronicle* reported:

“Three years ago I made a raid, and everybody said I was wrong. Now the Queen's Government are preparing another raid, and everybody says they are right.”

* * *

The different theories of the origin of the war are worth considering, for they go naturally with different views of the way in which the war should be terminated.

If Mr. Balfour, Mr. Chamberlain and Lord Rosebery give utterly contradictory and misleading accounts of South African history and of the aims of the Dutch farmers—at the same time requesting every one in England to be silent—friends of small nationalities cannot allow this to pass without a word of protest.

And this is why I make an appeal to the great Republic of the West.

Democracies must leave the making of wars of conquest to absolute sovereigns! For the sovereign remains responsible, but ministries retire, leave their evil deeds behind them, while the representatives of the nation are powerless to prevent or stop a war.

Neither the representatives nor the press may criticise before or during the war!

"Hush! do not speak, . . . you'll hasten the war!"

"Hush! do not speak, the war has begun . . . you'll encourage the enemy!"

"Hush! do not speak! The war is over, we have now to take care of the present and the future.

"Let the dead past bury its dead."

Just as Alice in Wonderland had jam to-morrow and jam yesterday but never jam to-day, so the time for criticism is over or coming, but for present use the jam is always too expensive or too indigestible!

And so the clumsy diplomacy of Mr. Chamberlain, the politician, was uncontrolled, and the English nation did not realise in time what his policy would lead to . . . what kind of war it would be . . . how it would endanger

the whole Empire . . . what dangerous problems it would open !

* * *

All the different theories of the origin of the war had to hide the terrible truth that, as the poet Watson, who is the most gifted of the singers of the day in England, said :

“The war is a struggle for domination, disguised by the English in a struggle for liberation.”

It is a war for paramountcy !

But does sheer strength convey any right the stronger pleases to claim ?

Is there a magic force in the word „paramountcy,” that it confers on the English the right to override the independence of the Transvaal, which they have repeatedly recognised, and to dictate changes in the constitution of a free country ?

The Dutch republics are suffering from the Egyptian plague of Imperialism. The taking of Egypt was the beginning of the attempt to exercise Empire over the whole of Africa.

The British steam-roller, passing over all Dutch institutions and treating a free protestant nation of farmers as so much road-metal, started from Caïro ! In Egypt the British hold despotic sway, and however beneficent their rule may be, they do not govern there by the consent of their subjects. Sir Alfred Milner came straight from Caïro to the Cape, he transferred the new African Empire’s method to the South, he treated Mr. Kruger as well as Mr. Schreiner as if they were poor Khedives surrounded with bayonets, and the Dutch as fellahs.

Sir Hercules Robinson, a honest ruler, who knew the Cape, said after a long experience : “There is no longer any permanent place in South Africa for direct Imperial

rule," and now South Africa is governed from London in a spirit of meddling and dictation and in violent antagonism to the principles and will of the majority of the population, in defiance of local authority.

How [Great Britain in this war is the oppressor and violator of right, was bewailed by president Steyn in his impassioned proclamation :

"The sister Republic is about to be attacked by an unscrupulous enemy who has long looked for a pretext to annihilate the Afrikanders.

"Solemn [obligations have not protected the Transvaal against an annexation conspiracy. When its independence ceases the existence of the Orange Free State as an independent State will be meaningless. Experience in the past has shown that no reliance can be] placed on the solemn promises and obligations of Great Britain when the administration at the helm is prepared to tread treaties under foot.

"The crafty plans of those to whom love of gold is the motive are now being realised. While acknowledging the honour of thousands of Englishmen who abhor deeds of robbery and violence, the Orange Free State execrates the wrongful deeds of a British statesman."

The Franchise.

Never in the history of England has its power been used for so base a purpose as that underlying this war.

The war has no other purpose than had the Raid, and is made by Tories who have no sympathy with such reform in England as they wanted to force on the Transvaal.

On Mr. Chamberlain's own admission president Kruger had broken no bargain with the English government! By goading him to war the English government stands before the world as bargain-breakers, contemptuous of the law, and oblivious above all of the great principles on which their State is founded.

The issue on which the Government intervened is the franchise; that is to say, the internal government of the Transvaal. That intervention, cannot be justified by any document having the force of law.

If you want to know why the war so violently stirs the whole civilised world, you will get your answer from Mr. Arthur Desjardins, member of the French Institute who writes: "it is because this little people is regarded as the image of persecuted international justice and violated right."

He addressed the Queen, in a letter which appeared in "*Le Correspondant*", these words:

"When it is simply a question of obtaining for nationalists residing abroad certain electoral rights, if it is permitted to

solicit such favors, it is not permissible to require them. The smallest State ought to be like the humblest individual, master in his own house.

"Has not the present Cabinet, in which your Colonial Minister occupies so great a position, committed a juridical error in wishing to impose on the Transvaal a reform of internal legislation?"

"Has it not committed at the same time a historical error in relying, for the purpose of justifying such a requirement, on a pre-existing law which no longer exists?"

It is for international justice and violated right that the professors of Leyden and Utrecht van der Vlugt and de Louter have pleaded also, with the deep conviction and passion of learned men, who know that the law of nations can not be repealed by the Parliament of Great Britain. They know that treating the Boers as rebels was impossible, the Transvaal being "a foreign country," as Mr. Chamberlain has described it, "with which her Majesty it at peace, and with which we have treaty relations."

The independence of the Transvaal had been guaranteed by the convention of 1884, when lord Derby telegraphed to the acting High Commissioner of the Cape as follows:

"Convention signed to-day; the same complete independence in the Transvaal as in the Free State; conduct and control of diplomatic intercourse with foreign Governments conceded; Queen's final approval of the treaties reserved; delegates appear well satisfied, and there is a cordial feeling between the two Governments."

Nothing can be clearer than that!

What right had England to override that recognized independence by dictating changes in the constitution of the Country? None! So the bewildered statesmen invented

“Mr. Kruger’s pledge”, to give the franchise! This plea is, to speak politely, downright inaccurate, for the representatives of England had only obtained assurances as to civil and commercial rights.

* * *

Besides the real question, as the *Speaker* so lucidly observed in its number of March 17, is not one of *enfranchisement* at all, but of *naturalisation*. There is nothing wonderful in an Outlander not at once getting a vote; no one who remains an alien ever has had a vote in any country in the world! Has England the right to be so hard on a young nation, which struggles for existence? It is instructive to remember, that just two hundred years ago, when England was afraid of being swamped by the Hollanders, who had come over with William of Orange, the British Parliament passed a law—which continued in force till 1870—that no alien born abroad should acquire political rights, even though he underwent the process of naturalisation!

To me there is something too mean for words in the enormous Empire bullying a small and very young nation, allied to it in descent and religion, for copying in the gentlest way possible what England did till 1870!

Since when has it become an elementary right that all aliens should be naturalised without hindrance within seven years or five years’ residence? Mr. Asquith spoke of the complete contrast between the Transvaal and the British colonies in this respect. We can only suppose him to be unaware of the fact that in Cape Colony naturalisation is completely at the discretion of the Governor. What would Mr. Chamberlain have said if, as a solution of the question, Mr. Kruger had proposed that naturalisation should be at his discretion?

It is, as Mr. Walter Crane wrote:

"The Boers, as any prudent people, would desire to have some security in admitting foreigners as naturalised citizens, that such will act in good faith, just as we do here. It seems preposterous to talk of war for the purpose of forcing another state to accept British subjects as citizens, except on their own terms."

and the *New-York World* rightly said:

"England spends upwards of 1,500,000dols. a day—45,000,000 dols a month—in conquering the South African Republics because the Transvaal refused to turn its Government over to her under a pretended scheme of reform."

What country would under threats at once admit to citizenship members of the country which it had found such good reason to dread? I think we all know what Americans would have done.

What small State can be safe if international law once allows it to be rushed by immigrants settling for a time in the very heart of the small nation's territory?

This will seem no argument to your Captain Mahan, who warns all big nations not to be too shy of taking what does not belong to them.

Now Captain Mahan, the writer on sea power, is dear to me, as he has done justice to the glorious Republic of the United Netherlands and its noblest son Admiral de Ruyter, Bestevaer (dearest father), as he is called in Holland.

But Captain Mahan, the Imperialist, who stands bowing as a courtier before England, when it bullies a small nation of high descent, I do not understand.

What new theory is this, that a people has no right to the land it inhabits unless it is fit to put it to the best use, while any great power with a strong army and

navy is appointed by Providence to judge of that fitness! Has the wolf to judge whether the lamb drinks in a civilized manner?

* * *

A large proportion of the British in South-Africa are of what you called in the Southern States "the carpet bagging class".

The grievances of the Outlanders were not, to use Mr. Morley's phrase, "worth a single desolated home in Ayrshire." Besides there was a party of reform within the Transvaal, which was gaining ground until the English interfered... this is matter of common knowledge to those who have cared to know anything about the case!

To American workmen nothing will appeal with more force than these words of Mr. George Barnes, the general secretary of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers in England:

"That the political rights of the Johannesburg Uitlanders is the sole cause of all the fuss is a plea so thin that it should deceive no one of average intelligence. Why sir, I sat down at dinner the other day with seven other workmen, and of the eight of us only three were voters! The other five had been kept out of their political rights by the same men who want to use the resources of the country to get votes for men in the heart of Africa. This alone ought to open the eyes of workmen. Wealth and not votes, is the real object of the authorities, backed up by the Jingo's who want "to wipe out Majuba Hill." Even Mr. Chamberlain will not require Canada to enfranchise the American citizens who come to Klondyke, or instruct the Australian Colonists on what terms or after what residence they shall admit to the franchise citizenship."

As to the grievances of the Uitlanders let the English be condemned out of their own mouths.

The precedent of the Transvaal has emboldened the miners of Coolgardie to demand their separation from Western Australia. To the number of 35,000 they have just signed a petition on the model of the Uitlander manifesto. They complain of an inadequate franchise, and of over-taxation, and they dislike the "slow autocratic" ways of Sir John Forrest's administration.

And what does the *Daily News*, the once liberal paper gone over to the Rhodesians, say of this demand:

"Sir John Forrest points out that the goldfields men have no stake in the colony, do not intend to settle in it, and instead of desiring to improve the country as a whole, merely seek to gain for the goldfields special concessional advantages."

Uitlanders of the Transvaal, "*de te fabula narratur*"!

“The Oligarchy of slave owners.”

What do we see in England?

A politician, glad to get numbers on his side, using men who repeat assertions as arguments, and making believe that his accusations against Mr. Krüger, the Transvaal “Oligarchy” and the Boers as slaveowners carry conviction with them, because he finds they are conformable and comfortable to the revengeful temper of the crowd in drawing rooms and on the street, to the noisy vindictiveness of those who are not ashamed of naming the heroic fight of a few Boers against a greatly superior number of English soldiers at Majuba Hill as an adequate reason for war!

Is there anything so foolish as to speak of “the oligarchy” of the Dutch republics? What an extraordinary name to give to a perfectly unanimous nation, with all its classes banded together, with old men and striplings and women animated by one soul, one longing, one passion!

Nothing can be more convincing than what Professor Goldwin Smith, who is an honour to America and England both, writes about this “corrupt oligarchy.”

He says:

“Boer resistance is complacently ascribed to the “influence of a corrupt oligarchy” by Imperialists who apparently cannot imagine any genuine and spontaneous resistance to their will. The soldier

of the Empire goes to attack the Boer, well paid, provided with every comfort and luxury which sympathising wealth can devise, sure of the best attendance if he is wounded, sure of rewards and honors when he returns. The Boer sacrifices everything and goes forth to face hardship and death, uncheered by the prospect of any such alleviations or rewards. Men of 80 and children of 14 stand up side by side against the forces of an immense empire and the most terrible fire that has ever swept a field of battle. When was a corrupt oligarchy or anything corrupt able to command such enthusiasm of self-sacrifice? When was it produced by anything but the strongest and most passionate devotion to a cause? It might as well be said that a corrupt oligarchy produced the Scottish League and Covenant and the rising of the people of Scotland against Charles I."

* * *

To enflame public opinion in America against a small nation fighting for life, this united nation is called "an oligarchy of slaveowners."

The native question in South-Africa cannot be dismissed as the English papers do by a few white words in praise of the noble English and some very black words to the detriment of the cruel Dutch. This Pharisaism, however necessary it may be to the peace of mind of the Jingo, is not very convincing, for by exalting natives at the expense of Europeans and Englishmen at the expense of Dutchmen, a certain party in England has made South Africa suffer.

As S. D. M. wrote in the *Morning Leader*: "The South African native is neither the monster he was described to be when the late Sir Bartle Frere was preparing the way for a Zulu War, nor is he anything like the angel depicted in missionary records and sermons."

Following out this line of argument, it may be said

that equally false are the popular notions of Dutch cruelty towards natives, and the popular notions of British justice towards natives. Take the case of the Zulus as an example. For 35 years—from 1838 to 1873—the Zulus under their chief Panda, lived under the protectorate of the South African Republic, the relations between Boers and natives, in spite of occasional disputes, being always perfectly friendly. On the other hand, the history of British policy with regard to the Zulus during the ten years from 1878 to 1888 forms one of the blackest pages in the history of the relations between civilisation and so called savagery.

In order to get a fair notion of the true path of native policy one has to gain access to well-balanced views of such men as Bishop Colenso and the late Mr. Saul Solomon—men whose sense of justice extended to all races, and who never could have conceived the possibility of benefiting the black by vilifying the Boer.

There are English papers — „dear innocents” I should like to call them! — who make a good deal of the unanimity of the English-speaking ministers in South Africa in favor of this infamous war.

But none of them ever answered the question the rev. John Smith, ex-president of the Primitive Methodist conference, solemnly put to them:

„Can you name any one of the many wars in South Africa during the last 25 years of which the English-speaking ministers did not approve?”

When he went out to South Africa 26 years ago, the attitude of the English-speaking ministers towards the Zulu and other wars, equally wicked was a surprise and a sorrow to him, and now he looks vainly for the man, able to point out a single war against which the said

ministers protested or expressed their disapproval in any way.—

Did Christ, the light of the world, ever say: „Blessed are those who excite to war?”

In the Bible is the answer to this question, though English clergymen are silent!

* * *

The Boer has always regarded the subjected race as a ward, and his steady policy has the approval of all South-Africa.

You in America will not treat as the English do with a few superficial phrases this great question of the treatment of the coloured race by a superior race. It is a question that attracts the most earnest consideration of your legislators. It makes some of your best thinkers dread the increase of the coloured population by the acquisition of colonies or territories, where that race predominates. The fear of Negro domination in the South is a motive power to your democratic party. The White Man of your southern States asserts — with too much justice often — that the Negro is a menace to his home, to the honour of his women. They believe that they are justified in keeping the blacks in a state of subjection, because they are undisciplined, brutal, unfit to govern themselves and therefore totally unfit to govern others.

Nobody can deny that many of the accusations affecting the character of the coloured race morally, intellectually, and industrially are true.

So you in America will understand the difficulties of a minority of the white race struggling for existence in the dark continent . . . you will not condemn off hand their

solution of the problem, which many Dutchmen, and I with them, consider the most beneficent.

Mr. Edward Dicey observes rightly in *the Fortnightly Review* for May:

"The native population is every year becoming larger and larger in proportion to the white, and the necessity for regulating the relations between the white minority and the black majority is attracting more and more the attention of all persons interested in the permanent—as distinguished from the passing—political life of South Africa . . . Both the British and the Dutch colonists, however much they may differ upon other questions, are, with rare and insignificant exceptions, absolutely in accord upon the general principle that in the interest of South Africa the natives must not be placed on a footing of political equality with the white, and must be induced to contribute in some way to their own support by their own exertions."

This is what a leader of the British imperialists says. There is no question so difficult to treat as this.

In Bishop Thirlwall's letters I once read this passage which I never forgot as being written by a man such as he:

"It is indeed sad to see how hard, if not hopeless, it is to reclaim the savage nature so as safely to trust it to itself."

When travelling through your Southern States now twenty years ago, I felt myself more and more prepossessed in favour of the white population. I saw that fiction and partizan writers had dealt unfairly with it, though, specially for the sake of the masters themselves, I was heartily glad that slavery had been abolished.

* * *

So it has been abolished for long among the Dutch! It is of course an absurd lie that the Boers own slaves.

Did the English have to liberate *one*, when in 1877 they annexed the Republic?

But there is no doubt that some Boers on some occasions have treated the natives badly. This is to say that they have partly followed the usual methods of civilised nations dealing with uncivilised peoples.

And most decidedly it is not Great Britain that can in this respect throw the first stone at them!

English history is full of very black spots. There lies at the bottom of the history of every State, as at the bottom of every human nature, something which will not bear being exposed to light.

Who can think without a shudder of the aboriginal Tasmanians, Australians, and Maoris of New Zealand having been almost extirpated?

The history of colonisation is a history of crime the whole world over.

William Howitt has given details in his "*Colonisation and Christianity*" of the "un-Christian operations in which England more than any other country had been engaged."

Of late years the Matabele wars and the treatment of the Bechuanaas have certainly equalled if not surpassed in injustice and cruelty any conduct of which the English in former years have been guilty.

We should like to know in what way the "compound" system of forced native labour which prevails in the diamond mines at Kimberley, or the forced labour now going on among the natives, who work under fear of the loaded rifle on the Upper Nile, is better for those native races than the so called domestic slavery under the Boers, even if all the lies were true, which the English tell about that "slavery".

Only men, who read nothing and know nothing, prefer the

English way of slaughtering and tyrannising over the blacks to the firm and straight treatment of them by the Boers.

The following extract is from the November number of the *Aborigines' Friend*:—

"The treatment of blacks on Boer farms, and also on the 'Dutch' farms in Cape Colony, contrasts favourably with that of the blacks in the employment of many English and other settlers in South Africa. In the mines and other industrial centres in which effort is made, especially by newcomers, to exact as much service as possible, with most profit to themselves, cases of cruelty are far more frequent than in the farms of easy-going and more or less lethargic 'Dutchmen', whether in our own colonies or in the Boer Republics."

I should like every man in the English street to note this quotation.

Mr. Chamberlain is reported on page 1,828, vol. 263, of "Hansard's Parliamentary Debates," to have spoken thus:

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

May I venture to advise any honourable man before he lectures the Transvaal people about their treatment of the natives to read and study Sir Richard Martin's report on the treatment of the natives under the Chartered Company?

May I also draw attention to what Sir Charles Dilke the other day said in his lecture on the colonial history of the century about the recrudescence of slavery? *The Manchester Guardian* has been trying for some years past to drive home the truth about this far reaching change.

But this is as far as I know the first time that it has been clearly noted as one of the serious features of the day by a man whose knowledge of British colonial history and colonial politics is admittedly second to none. Needless to say that it is South Africa that is the dark spot. Forced labour the wise it call, but it is the beginning of a new slave system—a system, Sir Charles Dilke thinks, in some ways worse than the slavery of old days—which the magnates of finance have introduced.

When your American Bishop Hartzell encourages the English legions against the farmers of the Dutch Republics by saying "that the British cause ought to win, since the Boers do not measure with the English in their just treatment of inferior races," I think it sufficient to refer him to the survey of the present position of things in the English own colonies and possessions which the *Morning Leader* give in one of its lucid leaflets:

1. In the strip of East African coast—a British Protectorate—which faces Zanzibar, the full "legal status of slavery" is maintained, and fugitive slaves have even been handed back to their owners by British officials.
2. In Zanzibar and Pemba the manumission of slaves, presided over by Sir Arthur Hardinge, is proceeding slowly, and many thousands are still in bondage.
3. In Natal the corvée system prevails, and all natives not employed by whites may be impressed to labor for six months of the year on the roads.
4. In Bechuanaland, after a recent minor rebellion, natives were parcelled out among the Cape farmers and indentured to them as virtual slaves for a term of years.
5. Under the Chartered Company in Rhodesia the chiefs are required, under compulsion, to furnish batches of young natives to work in the mines, and the ingenious plan of

taxing the Kaffir in money rather than in kind has been adopted so that he may be forced to earn the pittance which the prospectors are willing to pay him.

6. In Kimberley what is known as the "compound" system prevails. All natives who work in the diamond fields are required to "reside" under lock and key, day and night, in certain compounds, which resemble spacious prisons. So stringent is the system that even the sick are treated only within the prison yard. On no pretext whatever is a native allowed to leave his compound.

After all, the hands of your Northern States were a little cleaner than those of English when they championed the cause of "the slave".

* * *

Does the American people know that a Kaffir named A. Makubalo, who writes in English and whom Mr. Cronweight Schreiner calls "this splendid Kaffir" has valiantly testified in defence of the much maligned Boer? He asks:

"Is Mr. Mangena aware, that at the last General Election" (in the Cape Colony) "this fact came to light—that the South African Dutch contribute more money annually to native mission work than the South African English? The English missions out here are supported chiefly by funds from home. Is your correspondent also aware that the largest and most handsome churches for colored (native) people in this country are those built by the Dutch?"

I do not like to dwell too much on the *tu quoque* argument, though it is unbearable to meet in the English press always the same shuffling with words.

What they call slavery in the case of their neighbours, they call in their own: "teaching South African natives the dignity of labor by compelling them to work."

Is not the hypocrisy of finding a justification for this war of all wars in the good times for the natives, which it is to bring, really too repellent?

The avowed object of the financial promoters of this dishonourable war is the procuring of cheap native labor for the gold mines.

"The great crux of the whole question," said Mr. C. D. Rudd, at the meeting of the Consolidated Gold Fields of South Africa Company last November, "is what is to be the policy with regard to the native population. We should try some cogent form of inducement, or practically compel the native to contribute his quota to the good of the community, and then he would have to work."

"Ah, qu' en termes galants ces choses là sont mises!"

What these noble crusaders on behalf of the black men want, they have shown already in the compounds of Kimberley, where these blacks are kept under lock and key and reduced to slavery.

Mr. Cronwright Schreiner throws a lurid light upon the tenderness for the natives of Mr. Rhodes and the other promoters of this war.

In his pamphlet he writes:

"During these months of incarceration the natives are separated from their women folk and families. The consequence is one of the most striking and shocking features of the compound system. A number of the lowest, drink-besotted, coloured prostitutes, estimated at about 5,000, have collected at Beaconsfield, where, so to speak, they constitute a colony, occupying a revolting, sad quarter of that once beauty-thronged and happy township. When the natives come out for a short spell these unhappy women receive them. It is no doubt convenient, from the standpoint of the company, to have them there; it probably prevents the natives from going away, for most of them come long distances. This

moral cancer is one of the direct and inevitable outcomes and concomitants of the compound system. If it were rigorously put down, I have no doubt it would react "injuriously" on the supply of native labor."

The aim of the little group of financiers, among whom Mr. Rhodes is the leading spirit, is to reproduce in Johannesburg the conditions that prevail in Kimberley. There native labor is "regulated," and the Kaffir miners are confined in compounds. In the Transvaal the working day for blacks as fixed by law is eight hours, in Kimberley they work for twelve; Sunday labor also is prohibited by Mr. Kruger. Moreover wages both for white and for black labor were very high. The Rand magnates had calculated that if only they could repeal these taxes and monopolies they could *cut down their wages bill by half*. Much also would be gained if they could "*compel*" the natives to work for them. (See public speeches by Rand mine owners quoted in "The Case of the Natives," the second leaflet of *the Morning Leader*, the paper that has been a leader to righteousness in this war). By this means Mr. J. H. Hammond, the consulting engineer of the Consolidated Goldfieds, in which Mr. Beit and Mr. Rhodes have the controlling interest, has calculated that a saving of 6s. per ton of gold ore could be effected. This he reckons would mean an annual increase in dividends of some two and a quarter millions.

What a victory for Pecksniff and British civilisation when the compound system is established at Johannesburg when the restrictions on Sunday labour imposed by tyrannical Boers are abolished by enlightened capitalists, when, as one financier hopes, the wages of the Kaffir will be cut down by one half, and, as others explain, he will be compelled to work whether he likes it or not. The Kaffir

will then be brought to the elevated level already occupied by the Bechuana and the Matabele.

* * *

Mrs. Jane Smeal Thompson wrote the other day in *the Friend* :

"Those of your readers who wish for a dispassionate estimate of the effect upon native races of the "punitive" expeditions of the English in West Africa I would recommend the "West African Studies" of Miss Mary Kingsley, drawing particular attention to the appendices to that volume.

"With regard to East Africa, affairs are in a still more scandalous condition. For some years now England has had under the protectorate of those noisy "Britons, who never, never will be slaves," several thousands of natives in Zanzibar and Pemba in a state of degraded slavery. How shamefully neglectful the representatives of our nation have been over this matter is well known, and the letters in the *Times* of the 17th November on this subject only point the moral and adorn the tale."

And does no admirer of England's way of treating nations ever pause a moment, when he reads how under the cry of "Civilisation" lord Kitchener mowed down lately 20,000 Dervishes with the dum-dum bullets, for which English bodies are too sacred?

The English dare to complain about the treatment meted out to "British Indians" in the Transvaal!

I read the Bluebooks about this question and am astonished at the audaciousness of the complaint.

For the treatment these British Indians receive in British Colonies from their own fellow subjects of the Queen is ten times as harsh as any they receive from the Dutch republics!

In Natal before the war not only were British Indians treated as coolies, and debarred from travelling without a pass, but the High Schools were closed against them, their immigration was restricted by exceptionally severe laws, they were debarred from trading without licences, which are hard to get, they were excluded from the franchise, and they were habitually subjected to insult and outrage. Educated Indians in Natal have been frequently refused admission to inns because they were Indians, and molested if they ventured to use the tram-cars. An Indian barrister, Mr. Gandhi, having gone from Natal to India to protest against the ill-treatment of his countrymen by the colonists, was greeted on his return to Durban with an organised attempt to lynch him.

In the "Diamond Jubilee" year Indians who attended the unveiling of the Queen's statue in Durban were hustled back, and a proposal that Indian boys and girls should take part in the procession of school children was received with indignation.

And as to the lovely way the English have in treating inferior races, which Bishop Hartsell of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States praises so heartily, I have my own opinion!

In India they speak of a much higher race than the Kaffirs as "niggers", and I read in the *North American Review* for March how Mr. A. H. Savage Landor—a name respected by all who love English literature—attributes Indian discontent to the belief that the natives can only be ruled by force:—

There is a belief prevalent among the younger lot of "civil officers" that it is only by slashing the natives with a whip across the face for no plausible reason, by not allowing them to approach, by treating those of high birth like low tramps, by

never condescending to shake hands with even the noblest of them, that the prestige of the British Empire can be kept high in the estimation of the population of India. The most common answer one receives when astonishment is shown at such conduct is: "Well, you see, we have not forgotten the Mutiny of 1857. We must impress the natives that we are the rulers."

Mr. Landor gives, as illustrative of this, a case witnessed by him where a native of rank and character, who had come to welcome a certain Deputy Commissioner, was told to "get out of my way, you dirty nigger," and forthwith seized by the Sahib's servants and knocked out of his road. Mr. Landor says that this kind of treatment is far too common, and that in consequence there are very few magistrates in India who are really respected.

* * *

It is a pity that so many Americans coming to England try to be more English than the English and out-Jingo the Jingo!

Let Bishop Hartzell and other men who praise the British treatment of natives read the concluding remarks of Mr. H. R. Fox Bourne, *Secretary of the Aborigines Protection Society* which they will find on page 72 of his book "**Black and Whites in South Africa. An account of the Past Treatment and present condition of South African Natives under British and Boer Control.**"

"The foregoing sketch of the past and present condition of natives under British and Boer treatment in South Africa will it is hoped, suffice to show that, unless it is accompanied by very great and comprehensive changes in British policy towards natives, the contemplated overthrow of Boer rule can bring them no benefit. From such a result only further evils and injuries must be expected unless prompt and effective measures are adopted

to prevent them. Whatever wrongs South African natives may have incurred in the past from Boer encroachments and persecutions, and however desirable it may be that continuance or revival of those wrongs should be rendered impossible in the Transvaal and the Orange Free State, there is manifest danger of the mischief being merely aggravated, and much widened in area, if the policy to which the British Government has been incited and is now committed is persisted in."

Let European powers never use „the native question” as a reason for war against each other.

There is not one who can speak of it without a *mea culpa*.

One of my dear old friends in Ireland once answered me, when I had spoken of the treatment of natives by all the colonising powers:

“*Let us pray!*”


The Character of the Boers.

"If by your art," says Miranda in "The Tempest," "you have put the wild waters in this roar, allay them."

That is what we are convinced a statesmen so honorable as Lord Salisbury and the Duke of Devonshire would beyond anything like to do, for the wild waters are in an angry turmoil round their island, and the wrecks of many reputations encumber the rocks.

Yet one thing can be done to prepare England's return to the old principles of right.

It is to abandon the mad attempt to maintain a race supremacy at the point of the bayonet and to find means of healing the terrible discord between the two white races which the war has brought about, by not refusing to listen to any proposal from the Boers short of unconditional surrender.

 It has been said by English papers, that after a more complete beating, when more of their boys and women have been killed, the Boers will acquiesce with a good grace and like the English all the better for killing so many of them. But this was said by the same imperialistic and Rhodesian prophets, who predicted that the Boers would not fight, and that the first defeat would scatter them for good! It is a more probable view, held by those who know the Boer character better, that the

military occupation, once begun, will perpetuate itself in the Republics and Cape Colony.

Could there be a greater shame for England than ending the war undertaken, according to Mr. Balfour, "for the sake of political freedom for *all* white men," by the complete political subjugation of one race of white men?

* * *

"Those who know the Boer character better," I said.

We, Hollanders, understand their language, and have along the Zuydersea, the Northsea and between our rivers, pinewoods, and moors lots of villages and communities, where protestant farmers live, as like the Boers, as two drops of water resemble each other. We intimately know and understand that character, ignorance of which is the stumbling block of British statesmen, who at one moment describe the Boers as a torpid, reactionary, and anti-progressive body, which every South African Liberal must wish to destroy . . . at another, as an oligarchy of aggressive Dutch Imperialists, which every British loyalist must wish to destroy!

But Englishmen, who, after the experience of the last months, believe British South-African estimates of Boer character, are childlike innocents, too good for this world!

"The most hopeless form of human credulity," said the "Times" on one occasion, "is that which unhesitatingly believes official denials."

"J'ai trouvé un comble," as the French would say, I indicate a more hopeless form of credulity!

* * *

May I give a truer estimate of the Boer character to the friends of small, independent nationalities in the Great Republic?

Here they are, the pioneers and farmers!

Good humored looking on the whole, but at the same time stern and implacable, when you try to deceive them, men with strong features and great composure of manner; evidently men of great resolution!

They are kindhearted and slow in their talk, as strong and sturdy farmers mostly are... their perseverance is as great as their courage.

The Boers have shown themselves chivalrous and brave in their terrible war for existence.

Mr. Bolton, an Englishman who had lived for many years in Cape colony and also in the Transvaal and Free State, told a reporter, he had made many fast friends among the burghers of both, friends who were now engaged in war with England at various parts of the battlefield. The Boer was the most hospitable man he knew, but he was generally cautious when the English people were about, because he had good reason to be on the alert. "Why?" queried the reporter. "Because our people take a delight in swindling the Boer at every turn." When once you make the Boer feel that you are friendly, continued Mr. Bolton, he will make you as comfortable as he can. He will expect you, if you are travelling, to spend a night with him and his family, and after feeding you well and placing the best bed in the house at your disposal, he will absolutely refuse payment."

To understand the Boer, Englishmen, who see the rural population flock to the towns, have to go back to their past to the England of the old yeomen.

"The land still draws the Boer," as Mr. Massingham,

rightly observed, "with a magic that our nervous, restless race is ceasing to feel. Europe is nothing to him. His Bible tells him, in those great accents wherein speaks the heart of the world, of just such wanderings and struggles as he has endured; his psalms and hymns glorify his conflicts with Britisher and Bantu, and celebrate the rest he gained beyond the waters of the Orange and the Vaal rivers. Hard, slow, and rude, not light or mean is his character—albeit sullied, here or there, by contact with the world of capitalist adventure."

The Boer is the pioneer, the man who has made South Africa possible for civilisation.

* * *

A most noteworthy tribute to the Boers I find in an official report by the Rev. R. F. Collins, a chaplain with General Warren's brigade. He spent three days with the Boers on Spion Kop after their victory.

"I venture to think it a matter of considerable importance to draw attention to the attitude of the Boers whom we met during the carrying out of our duties on these three days. For my part, I confess that the deepest impression has been made on me by these conversations, and by the manly bearing and straightforward, outspoken way in which we were met. There were two things I particularly noted. As there was no effort made to impress us by what was said (they spoke with transparent honesty and natural simplicity, and in nearly all cases the conversations were begun by us), so there was a total absence of anything like exultation over what they must consider a military success. Not a word, not a look, not a gesture or sign, that could by the most sensitive of persons be construed as a display of their superiority.

"Far from exultation, there was a sadness, almost anguish, in the way in which they referred to our fallen soldiers. I can best convey the truth of this statement and show that there is no attempt at exaggeration in using the word "anguish", by repeating

expressions used, not once, but again and again by great numbers of them as they inspected the ghastly piles of our dead. "My God! What a sight!" "I wish politicians could see their handiwork." „What can God in heaven think of this sight?"

We Hollanders, will always be grateful to Mr. John Morley for his noble vindication of the Dutch, for his protest against the vehemence of the English poets, warlike speakers, and journalists, who let their noble rage carry them to the point of saying things that are not true about those with whom they do not agree.

Mr. Morley said:

"Really, one would suppose from many of the things one listens to in the train and in the omnibus and in the newspapers that people did not know what a Dutchman was, and even President Kruger is now spoken of in almost exactly the same language which the Khalifa was spoken of a year ago. A more monstrous absurdity, a more discrediting and dishonourable absurdity, could not be committed. You are told that these Dutchmen are sour, and stubborn, and proud. I do not say that may not be so. I have never been there, but I know this, that it was the stubbornness and sourness and pride of the forefathers of these men against whom you are now sharpening your swords and getting your dum-dums ready — it was the forefathers of these men who, by their valiant and stubborn resistance, drove out the Spanish tyrant from the Netherlands and set up in Holland there that Government from which the cause of freedom—freedom of life, freedom of thought, freedom of belief—in all Europe, and England especially included, has derived priceless blessings."

The Boers will emerge from the mist of abuse, and take their permanent sunny place in the imagination of all free men, the world over, as noble patriots, who fought in a great cause with an elevation of earnestness and an exultation of valour that make the end of the century a new heroic age in the history of the Dutch race.

President Kruger will stand in the world's Pantheon between Cromwell and Lincoln.

* * *

When Sir Wilfrid Lawson heard throughout the streets of London the shouts of delirious delight at victories over a small nation of farmers, he could not help thinking of some words that John Bright used nearly half a century ago, some of the most noble words ever used in the House of Commons in reference to war. He said "the angel of death has been abroad in the land. You may almost hear the beating of his wings."

But what are the losses of a few thousands of mostly professional soldiers to a World-Empire, in comparison to the losses such a murderous war causes to a small people in arms! Think of these elderly farmers, of these young boys, who sacrifice life and limb to their fatherland's independence.

The glorious self-sacrifice of the men, women, and children of the Republics places their devotion to their country and its future above censure and above panegyric.

When the war was declared in twenty-four hours the "burghers" were armed, called up, and transported!

Touching scenes took place.

An old Boer finds his son of fifteen years or thereabouts has stolen away, and has asked for a rifle from the veldkornet to join the troops. The old man in the end approves his son's desire "Behave as a man," is his word of leave taking.

Men of 80 and children of 14 stand up side by side against the forces of an immense Empire and the most terrible fire, that has ever swept a field of battle.

In the *Leek Times* I read a beautiful description of this nation in arms:

"The old man, the youth and the stripling, are offering their heart's blood as a sacrifice; nor do they think the sacrifice too great, strengthened and urged on by all they believe to be the highest and holiest in religion and principle. The Boer will fight on, giving his last drop of blood and his last breath for this freedom. And the women-folk of his land are bearing their share of this task; they do not shrink; they are helping their fathers, brothers and sons in this fight. They think no distance too great to travel, no burden too heavy to carry. The wife, with her little children round her knees, bids her husband a tearful but brave Godspeed. The mother as she gazes with a full heart on the boy who is as the apple of her eye, bids him go forth and fight in Freedom's Holy War. The lass bids her lover take his stand for all that she thinks worth having, esteeming him something less than a coward if he fails to the fight. Woe betide the oppressors when the women of a nation take up the quarrel!"

* * *

Sometimes I hear sneers at "the retrograde civilisation" of these heroic farmers, who ought to welcome the superior civilisation of Johannesburg. People who say this have in their wisdom adopted a fixed standard of human progress. The Boer is not up to his standard, so he has to be bayoneted towards it!

But what do they know of the capabilities of this nation in South Africa, which has the best blood of Europe in its veins, and has its ancestors as well in France as in our wonderful Low Countries, where art is the inheritance even of peasant boys! Luxury and imperialism and mental decay go hand in hand! Who can foretell, what a young and not enervated nation of Dutch and French descent may do on every field of science and art, when once it finds time for leisure, and has no longer to fight for existence against wild animals and enemies more ferocious than these?

What has been the salvation of many a race? Has it not been the strengthening of the upper classes by inter-marriage with the peasantry?

It was well said by Mr. A. Maurice Low: „Races die at the top and need to be fed from the bottom, from men and women, who actually spring from the soil.”

The human race can no more live without contact with Mother Earth than can trees and flowers.

Is not the Dutch race a virile and strong race, great in navigation, commerce, science and art, unconquerable in its fight for existence against sea and rivers?

Is their country not „the home of spiritual and political freedom, an asylum wherein were nurtured seeds of priceless value to the civilisation, policy and thought of Europe?”

Why should men of that heroic race be prevented by brutal force to make a new home, where hardy, energetic men perpetuate among the new empires of the future on the boundless veldt, the tradition of a nation of martyrs and heroes for conscience sake?

The Dutch did not want and do not want a South Africa all their own, but they passionately wish for the preservation of an independent Dutch republic there, under its own laws and custom, its own language.

What wicked sophism it is to say that *either* the Dutch must be masters in Africa *or* the English, thus forcing by a false dilemma the man in the street, who is poisoned with crooked principles and heated advice, to take a part in encroaching on the feeble.

There is place in Africa for two high-spirited Christian nations, and for more than two!

There is no settled maxim of honour, that forces England to assimilate the whole gigantic continent of Africa.

In a great speech Sir William Harcourt once described patriotism as "the ideal of a race that nourishes the most indestructible of all passions."

I thank him for that definition! The Dutch farmers in Africa are fighting for "the ideal of a race"! That is why they are martyrs and heroes in the eyes of us, Hollanders.

These descendants of two great races represent a great capacity not yet completely put into action. With God's help the day is not far off, when they will feed upon the fruits of art and science after a long hunger in the desert, where they were surrounded by lions, Zulus, and Britons.

The genius of the Irish nation, which is affection, will blossom out when Ireland once again is free, so the genius of the Dutch, with its instinct for art, will make in Africa a highland glorious and resplendent with colour as the Dutch and Flemish lowlands have been for many centuries.

* * *

Some speak of them as if they defended feudalism in some ancient stronghold of mediaeval life, while in the vast epic of human civilisation theirs is the noble endeavour to preserve the glorious principles of the XVIth century, to which the modern world owes its birth.

"They are men of the XVIth century!" some ignorant English say, and, wanting to curse, they bless!

No greater motive force than that for which Holland fought for eighty years, ever acted as ferment in a multitude, weakened by want of will and too much "civilisation".

For English literature I desire the redeeming and strengthening influence, which America is bringing, which New Holland and New Zealand are promising.

So we, Hollanders, have great hopes for the future of our race, whenever we think of the strong men of our blood and language in South Africa.

Their "taal" is growing more and more together again with the language of Holland, of which it is an offshoot... with the language, in which they know by heart their Bible... with the printed words with which they saturate their minds... with our strong and august language, which we are never tired of admiring with renewed passion the power, the richness and the tender softness, each time that we have been forced, as I am now, to write in a foreign tongue, much less expressive, less resounding than our own.... thus fighting with our strongest arm manacled to our side!

I see a young Dutch literature looming up on the horizon of the African "veldt", convincing the reason while touching the conscience, giving effective guidance and glowing consolation. It will bring back the smell of the earth and the soft breath of the cattle in a literature which is now too much a hothouse for hybrids of psychological analysis, only fit for modish houses.

Till now our brothers in South Africa have had to think more of the useful than of the beautiful. But liberty and ease of fears and apprehensions are the great cherishers of knowledge "where these abound, learning and all the liberal arts will immediately lift up their heads and flourish" as Addison said. Their advance will be great when their strong common sense, their knowledge, gained on the "veldt" by experience and observation, grows up to systematic knowledge.

Poets need no modern libraries, they may be awakened by the psalms, their heart being touched by lyrics in which spirit speaks to spirit, by "the old songs chanted forth

in the sunrise of human imagination"... their insight being trained by the prophesies full of mystery and hope in the Bible, that mighty inciter to great things.

What may not be the effects of the originality and fervour of those who see everything new, who have learnt from their Bible that phrases have no value apart from thoughts and feelings!

And how much may England herself have contributed to the rise of this young literature!

For the mighty drama of their heroic struggle with a multitude, overpowering as that of Persia once was, will raise transports of great emotion in poetic souls... and so honey will again come from the carcass of Simson's lion!

If "poets learn in suffering, what they teach in song," what an educator of poets England is the world over!

Conclusion.

I am "cradling myself" -- according to the expressive French phrase — in the hope of seeing the great American people show sympathy, friendship, admiration — all great spiritual forces — to the free farmers of the Dutch republics in South Africa, now struggling to preserve their independence.

How nobly senator Teller expressed these feelings in the resolution which he brought up for consideration in the *U. S.* senate:

"With a full determination to maintain proper neutrality in the matter of the South African war, we cannot withhold our sympathy from the struggling people of the Republics, and it is our earnest desire that the Government of the United States by its friendly offices offered to both Powers may assist in bringing the war to a speedy conclusion in a manner honorable both to Great Britain and the African Republics."

So many American ladies have done me the honour to write to me after reading my "Open Letter to the Duke of Devonshire", that I venture to draw their attention to the work which is being done in England by the women members of the South African Conciliation Committee. They are forming themselves into groups in the various centres of London to arrange meetings in many directions and amongst all classes, and also to disseminate literature as widely as possible.

A committee has been formed consisting of Mrs. Leonard Courtney, Mrs. James Bryce, the Marchioness of Ripon, Mrs. Mackarness, and others

Their object is to enable all women who are so minded to protest against:

1. The policy which led to the present war in South Africa.
2. The attempt to silence by disorder and violence all freedom of speech about, or criticism of, the Government policy.
3. To oppose any settlement which involves the extinction by force of two Republics whose inhabitants, allied to us in blood and religion, cling as passionately to their separate nationality and flag as we in this country do to ours.

This is a very noble work, worthy of the moral assistance of the women of America; who would give a bright example of true Christianity by enrolling themselves as workers.

I appeal to them and to every one who respects the principle of nationality, to protest against the crime of killing a free people.

From the Great Trek to the present war the history of South Africa is the record of the resolution of the Dutch to preserve their independence.

* * *

They will not be forced under an alien flag!

I laugh at the man who can suppose that a nation of old Dutch descent will, after the deathwound given to her freedom, fall on her knees before the strong usurper . . . She will only daily bend her knees to beseech the Al-

mighty to give her an occasion in which a cruelly subjugated people may by the deed of valiant men recover all her rights. Her enemies may be a host, she will never lose the power, as long as there are horses and rifles in Africa, to enforce her rights, and the hour of English danger would even after a hundred years be her occasion. Every day of subjection and humiliation will be the cause of new discontent, and as Grattan, the Irish patriot, said so beautifully of his people: „*it will create a pride to feel the indignity of bondage.*”

Ireland is England's vulnerable part. Why? Because she has united it to her by force and fraud and has misgoverned it.

Did this vulnerable part contribute so much to England's happiness and strength, that she is anxious to create, again by force and fraud, a new Ireland in South Africa, inhabited by a stronger race?

The English ministers are finding out already now, that to deprive a struggling nation of free men of all hope, is not the best method to prevent her becoming desperate.

* * *

I claim the sympathy of all free nations for the Boers.

What the farmers of the Dutch republics are doing for the small nationalities — who, as an English clergyman of great distinction wrote to me, are to him “the salt of the earth” — has been once for all expressed by him, who with Frederic Harrison is the greatest writer of English prose now living, by Professor Goldwin Smith.

“The burghers of the Transvaal have by their heroic defence of their country, entered a protest which will ever be memorable, and may even prove to be a turning point in the course of events

in favor of the rights of small nationalities and against the assumption that the earth is the destined dominion of a few great military Powers. What protest against a universal reign of power can be so eloquent as the blood of the Boer boy of sixteen who dies facing the murderous artillery of the Empire in defence of his home? Whether Canada has reason to be entirely proud of the part which she has played in crushing the little commonwealths of South Africa is a question which will be more freely and profitably debated ten years hence than it can be now."

* * *

Nothing can equal the dismay with which the small nationalities look at the England of 1900!

In Holland there is no vulgar rant against England, there is nothing but respect and admiration for the Queen, who by her sweet womanly words and deeds full of courage and kindness even in her old age has touched the hearts of the enemy her soldiers kill. But there is intense sorrow and dread as we see constitutional England, which with Holland was always a bulwark of liberty and self-government, crumbling down in aggression and predatory Imperialism.

I write without any prejudice at all against the English nation. My English bias has even often been imputed to me by my critics among my brother journalists in Holland. Many of us, Hollanders, understand the British character, we admire the manly and friendly qualities and characteristics of the nation, in whose midst we feel at home, as we both have the same love of national and individual freedom bred in our bones.

So nothing can equal our dismay at seeing the spirit of intolerant violence and blind vengeance that has come over our old friends, the spirit which produced the African war.

England worked for selfgovernment by force of example . . . freedom was justified by its children . . . and now, now it leaves the world much baser than it was at Gladstone's death, for now we see its press and its leaders deliberately poisoning the mind of the country, withholding and misrepresenting facts, and so perverting that spirit which I still believe to be the spirit of England.

* * *

The English, beginning a war of conquest and dismissing honest criticism from all parts of Europe and America as merely jealous and unfounded, are in a position which by no possibility can be defended on any principles either of private or international morality.

The English have as a people always professed to respect the sentiment of nationality, and small and struggling States have ever looked to England as their powerful friend. And now?

Now the small nations feel nothing but repulsion for Mr. Chamberlain's England, which has ceased to be symbolic of great principles of right and freedom as in Gladstone's time.

There was a day, when even *the Times*, Ireland's enemy, fulminated against the attack of aggressive Pan-slavism on the sacred right of a small nationality like Finland. But now England has its own Finland in South Africa!

England was the home of freedom and the champion of freedom. It was that which attracted to her the love not only of her own sons but of the lovers of freedom throughout Europe, as was still the case when Mommsen was young.

But now English writers mention appeals to "moral law", to "righteousness", "magnanimity" only in inverted commas, as something ludicrous and quaint! "Manners, virtue, freedom, power"—these were that "ancient English dower" in Milton's time, which have been lost again.

* * *

Oh, how I wish that the words of W. E. Channing, might be engraved in the assembly hall of all Parliaments:

"War, it is said, kindles patriotism; by fighting for our country, we learn to love it. But the patriotism which is cherished by war is ordinarily false and spurious, a vice and not a virtue, a scourge to the world, a narrow, unjust passion, which aims to exalt a particular State on the humiliation and destruction of other nations. A genuine enlightened patriot discerns that the welfare of his own country is involved in the general progress of society: and in the character of a patriot . . . he rejoices in the liberty and prosperity of other communities, and is anxious to maintain with them the relations of peace and amity."

British blood and treasure are being wasted as completely in South Africa as they were in the Crimea.

The war party shrieks for wholesale proscription, for the jerrymandering of electoral boundaries, for treating each Afrikander as an enemy, for confiscating his property and looting his farm and his cattle.

And the colonial English are not even satisfied with this.

I give as a sample out of many the following extract from the „*Indian Planters Gazette*”:

"Not only should the Boer be slain, but slain with the same ruthlessness that they slay a plague infected rat. Exeter Hall may shriek, but blood there will be and plenty of it, and the more the better. The Boer resistance will further this plan, and enable us to find the excuse that Imperial Great Britain is

fiercely anxious for—the excuse to blot the Boërs out as a nation, to turn their land into a vast shambles, and remove their name from the muster roll of South Africa.”

* * *

One of our statesmen in Holland once gave this advise to a pugnacious party man :

“Believe me, always treat your opponents as though perhaps they will one day be your firm friends!”

But in South Africa there is not even a “perhaps.”

British and Dutch will have to live through the ages at each other's side, together in the black continent.

Any general with overpowering force can govern — for a time — by martial law.

But the problem is how to leave after the war a condition of affairs, which has not in it the seeds of endless future strife.

There never was such a blunder as this war! England's business in South Africa was not to suppress Afrikanderdom, but to understand and work with it, perseveringly, and in good faith.

The Tsar is the absolute monarch of a mediaeval empire and governs with the sword, but the goodwill, confidence and voluntary adherence of the races which it unites, are indispensable for an Empire, governed by a parliament.

The English government made a war with independent farmers “to extend free institutions” in their country, and managed it all so cleverly, that it cannot preserve free institutions, political and personal freedom, in its own colonies!

It is now busy establishing a racial kind of despotism in South Africa, neglecting the wise saying of T. H. Green :

“*Will, not Force, is the basis of the State.*”

The consequences of treating all the Dutch in South Africa as a conquered people will be very much what they would be were, English treated in the same way by Germans in their own country, which the conquered people knows it has the most perfect right to!

* * *

But every day that the war lasts more and more splendid men, and noble women are killed and maimed by Englishmen, Canadians, and Australians, because they try to defend the country that belongs to them... and there are none to replace them, while the small remnant defends in sleepless wakefulness their home against the deadly bullet, the cruel bayonet, the transfixing lance, the cleaving sabre, lyddite shells, and the treacherous mine.

They are farmers, they are undisciplined, and have no trained officers, no regular formation and cohesion... their country is cut off from the sea, and Portugal, while it refuses to let food be sent to them, breaks the law of nations by giving powerful England the use of a railway and a harbour. These peasants, without new troops to replace the killed ones, without fresh supplies of weapons, ammunition, medicines and food, have to struggle for dear life against a quarter of a million of soldiers of the richest Empire of this world, provided with every comfort and luxury which sympathising wealth can devise, well paid, trained, taken care of, sure of rewards and honors and pension when wounded.

Really the contest is too unequal, the war too cruel!

"In spite of defeat, massacre, and horrible sufferings, the Dutch wore down the armies of Spain; and ultimately, by endurance of agony rather than by military success, achieved the independence of the Northern provinces."

So in his powerful biography of *William the silent*, writes Frederic Harrison, whom we Hollanders are happy to see among those who are just to the Boers... and it is again by endurance of agony, that strong men of the same race try to save their country.

But the sufferings of these few thousands who have to fight 250.000 English troops are getting too atrocious.

That is why the president of the Orange Free State and of the South African Republic telegraphed to the Marquess of Salisbury on the 5th of March from Bloemfontein:

"The blood and the tears of the thousands who have suffered by this War, and the prospect of all the moral and economic ruin with which South Africa is now threatened, make it necessary for both belligerents to ask themselves dispassionately and as in the sight of the Triune God, for what they are fighting, and whether the aim of each justifies all this appalling misery and devastation."

But the only answer they got was, that the English were going to annex their countries!

Still hoping to avert total destruction from their country the presidents sent three delegates to Europe and America. Their message to the British people is deeply affecting by its simplicity.

"We ask only for a fair trial before an impartial tribunal, and we accept in advance whatever such court may decide. If you really wished to stop the war it would not be difficult to agree upon a tribunal from which foreigners would be excluded, but which both parties would recognise as impartial.... We are earnestly desirous of terminating the effusion of blood by making any concessions which will leave us the continued enjoyment of our independence. We cannot, we dare not, we will not consent to surrender our national existence. We will gladly consent to submit

all questions as to guarantees, indemnity, &c., to the decision of any impartial tribunal. Grant us that, and we would lay down our arms to-morrow. But if you insist upon destroying our independence, and refuse all terms of peace except the extinction of our national existence, then the war will go on as long as we have a man or a cartridge left. Upon that point there must be no mistake."

Can American women read these words without a strong wish to help the delegates of the men who fight the English as their forefathers fought the Spaniards?

What can be more convincing than what the Hon. John F. Shafroth of Colorado, said the 7th February in your House of Representatives:

"A close examination of the causes of this war, shows conclusively, that it is a war of oppression and greed on the part of Great Britain, and a war for the maintenance of liberty and independence, for the defence of homes from foreign invasion, on the part of the South African Republic.

"Where mediation is extended, it is simply a request that the parties submit their differences to arbitration, not to be followed by force if refused, but simply relying upon the moral effect which would surely follow, namely, that the sympathy of all the nations, parties to the Hague treaty, would be upon the side of the one, offering to arbitrate and against the one, refusing so to do. No nation, that is a party to that treaty, could equitably refuse to comply with such offer of mediation.

"Mr. Chairman, although the Boers have been successful so far in this conflict, I feel that the British arms will triumph in the end. They can not withstand the unlimited resources and innumerable men, which Great Britain can use in this war. And unless some of the powers, bound by the provisions of the treaty of The Hague, come to the rescue, you will find that in the end there will be a total annihilation, of the brave, honest people of that little Republic.

“Should not the Administration, at least, use this power to establish peace between these nations, and thereby prevent the further destructive results of a bloody war?”

While I write this the delegates are on the sea on their way to the Great Republic, where they will make an appeal to people and government, in order to try and secure the restoration of peace.

„We are going,” said Mr. Fischer, „to a sister Republic, the people of which a century ago fought the same fight as our people are now fighting. We are going to a great free people pre-eminent for their sentiments of liberty and justice. We go to rectify erroneous opinions, and to make known the truth. Our enemies have said much that they cannot prove, and have thus misled many. We are certain that once the truth is known no civilised nation will refuse us support.

„Our aim is to put an end to this cruel bloodshed on both sides, but especially the destruction of our own fellow citizens who are indispensable to our continued existence as a people. We hope this appeal to the Government and people of America will not be in vain, and that our manner of conducting the war will have shown that we have the right to demand the independent existence of our people as an independent State in South Africa.”

* * *

But Mr Chamberlain first and now Lord Salisbury after him say no!

There is for the moment no justice to be found in England!

Lord Salisbury, true leader of a government, that picked up a policy and reasons for the war as it went along...

Lord Salisbury, the same premier, who last autumn, long

after the beginning of the war, explicitly repudiated any territorial aggrandisement, suddenly on the 9th of May 1900, declares this aggrandisement to be the express object of the war!

He declared that „our army is now engaged in reducing to the obedience of the Queen the territories, which ought never to have been released from it”... he shows how perfectly right Europe and America were, when they charged the British government that, whatever its professed object was declared to be, its real determination was by one means or another to take their country from the Dutch farmers.

And Mr Chamberlain repeated a few days after Lord Salisbury his declaration that the declared object of the Government is to suppress two independent States... that it will not even preserve their internal independence... that it proposes to reduce them to complete subjugation and put them under the control of a Department situated several thousand miles away.

It is “the desire and intention” of the English ministers to establish a despotic government in Dutch South-Africa and to be the destroyer of two free nations.

And Mr Chamberlain — a gentleman governing English gentlemen! — had the moral courage to justify this tyrannical act by the astounding statement: “that President Kruger had refused even the most moderate reforms.”

This says the politician who declared in the House of Commons:

“we accepted at least nine-tenths of the whole of the Transvaal’s *proposal*.”

This he says to English men of honour, who can not have forgotten how the Transvaal accepted one of Mr

Chamberlain's offers outright... but how he withdrew it at once on their acceptance.

How do you call in America a politician who distinguishes himself by this sort of talk in face of undeniable facts?

* * *

And so the ministers want annexation! While I admit the enormity of the attempt, I acknowledge the impracticability of the execution of it!

For to the American people I solemnly declare: these two republics are not digestible, their national vitality, their organic unity prevent their ever being assimilated as weaker races are.

I shall for the sake of argument, waive all past settlements, and allow the English whatever they like to say about one or two conventions and about suzerainty. But a people's existence can not thus be reasoned away! The annexation of their countries would be a breach of faith and honour of which every Dutch patriot in Africa can judge.... without resorting to lawyers! The farmers, their sons, their grandsons will always be ready to rise, not on a point of law but of fact, discomposing the harmony of the Empire at each occasion, always looking on in rooted animosity and silent war.

The English government wanted them to anticipate murder by previous suicide... but the Dutch farmers preferred to be murdered.

Now that the English Imperialists feel certain that really ten mailed men can overpower one man in his shirt, they make vindictive plans to make the financiers and English Outlanders masters in the country of the Boers, thus committing the honour of the lady to the care of the ravisher.

The extermination of a few thousand farmers may in the end not prove too great an exertion to the United forces of European, Asiatic, American, Australian, and African Great Britain.

But when the great Empire has destroyed, in what, with dangerous self-deception, it calls "a great war," a tiny nation of shepherds and peasants, the revolted conscience of the nations of America and Europe will force the boasting British fire-eaters to turn their eyes from the magnitude of their Empire to the magnitude of its danger, a danger they continually increase by their gentle art of making enemies, by which all nations are ranged in battalions against them.

The case of the Republics is the case of all the small, independent nationalities of Europe.

They ought with one voice to protest against the remorseless abuse by England of its paramountcy in money and bayonets, if by brute force a condition is created for the Dutch in South-Africa, in which they cannot acquiesce with contentment and self-respect, a full autonomy, the right to govern themselves after their own fashion, by their own citizens, on their own soil, in accordance with their own view of their own interests.

And I am certain the American people will join in that protest of the free nations.

* * *

I know that a foreigner's agreement or non-agreement with the annexation-policy of the English makes really the utmost difference in the conceptions of these same English of his morality, religion, standing and knowledge! But yet it remains a fact that

Professor Mommsen, who speaks in Germany's name, has some historical insight, and that the nation of Holland, that its provinces, cities, associations, churches, Protestants and Catholics, who speak up with one soul and one mind and one heart for the sacred rights of the two Republics, does not consist entirely of bribed, venal, ignorant men and women.

Will Englishmen not listen to the voice of Holland before they commit a crime against a small nation?

I cannot give up the English people, I still believe in it. The Rev. J. Page Hopps, said at the great meeting of the friends of peace: "This great nation that has been made use of by God to be the benefactor of the universe, is drunk." (Great applause, the audience rising and cheering again and again.)

I agree... the British nation is hypnotised or chloroformed, but though it is lying helpless and motionless and uttering cruel words, strange to its character when it was full of life, it is not dead!

The spell of the wizard, the artificial drunkenness will pass, when an appeal will be possible from John Bull drunk on John Bull sober.

Oh, English nation of free men! we Hollanders exclaim: be true to yourself!

The British poet and prophet, who should want to raise his people to a great act of faith in their own principles, needs not recur to an other nation's history... he could, as the Bards of old, recite some noble acts of former warriors and legislators and set the English people in emulation with themselves.

The only honourable victory you can gain over an enemy so small, is by gaining a conquest over yourselves! he could say, agreeing with Addison," that magna-

nimity and courage are inseparable.... that courage without regard to justice and humanity, is no other than the fierceness of a wild beast, dragging its prey to its lair."

The English have already lost by their war with 36,000 farmers the prestige of their army and in dead, sick, prisoners and wounded more British soldiers than the duke of Wellington brought into line at Waterloo!

But a greater price yet has to be paid for this vindictive war of conquest.

By force and fear the English are going to govern free men of a race as great and beneficent as their own.

And in trying this they forfeit their own ancient freedom for the imperialistic liberty... which allows every Englishman to shout with the largest crowd!

Not the diamonds of Kimberley, nor the fine gold of the Rand, can make up to the Mother of free parliaments the loss of those first principles of liberty, which, as Sir William Harcourt wrote, are worth "more than any colony."

The English people loses command over its own destinies by this war of conquest, which dissipates the energy so much wanted for social reform in all old countries.

* * *

"Silent seems the Great Avenger," sang your noble poet Lowell in his poem on "The Present Crisis", and the apparent triumph of wrong in this world has been the puzzle of many a religious mind.

But such triumph is generally only apparent. The great Avenger is with us now and ever, and I know no greater punishment for all this terrible wrong-doing of a people so noble as the English as the earnest condemnation by the free nation of the United States of the

false Imperialism, which makes that British people untrue to itself and wrong to itself.

Then the old British love of fair play, freedom and justice may rise again, awakened from under a nightmare of iniquity.

Sometimes already now that love of justice, for which we of old have honoured England, has for a moment brightened in this war.

When General Joubert died, General Sir George White, who is to me the most knightly fighter for England in this war, said of him, that he was "a soldier and a gentleman, and a brave and honorable opponent."

Well this benevolent man, this moderate statesman, this man scrupulous of his honor has written last year a letter to her Majesty, the Queen of England. It is printed again in "the Story of the Boers" narrated by their own Leaders and edited by Mr. C. W. van der Hoogt. (New-York and London, Harper and Brothers).

It is impossible for me to read this letter without tears rising in my eyes. It is so simple, so convincing. He ends his letter thus:

"Will your Majesty permit a small, weak state, that has time after time relinquished its rights, and has ever tried to live in peace and harmony with your Majesty's people and government, to be oppressed and overthrown by the world-renowned power and might of Great Britain, simply owing to the misrepresentations of the persons I have already mentioned?"

May this letter of General Joubert move many Americans to show their sympathy, as senator Teller proposed, "to the struggling people of the Republic."

It was the Dutch who in South Africa took up "the white man's burden".

The English cannot mask by rhetoric and heroics the evil deed of killing them to force them in subjection.

The European conscience has passed judgment on their dealings with the Boers, and however English Imperialists may wriggle, it will soon be embodied in the stock of historical knowledge common to all civilised people.

The lies will perish with the occasion that gave them being, but by annexing two free countries the British government will breed perpetual warfare and an everlasting appeal to Heaven.

And when Englishmen again and again dare to ask the Dutch Republicans by what right they defend their country, their language, their traditions and independence against a benevolent Empire, the farmers of the South Africa will answer with the words of Ireland's noble son immortal Grattan:

"When the minister asks us: "by what right?" we refer him to our Maker.

"We sought our privileges by the right which we have to defend our property against a robber, our life against a murderer, our country against an invader, whether coming with civil or military force—a foreign army or a foreign legislature!"

May God preserve the right!

I am dear Madam,

yours very sincerely

CHARLES BOISSEVAIN.

Amsterdam, May 1900.

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