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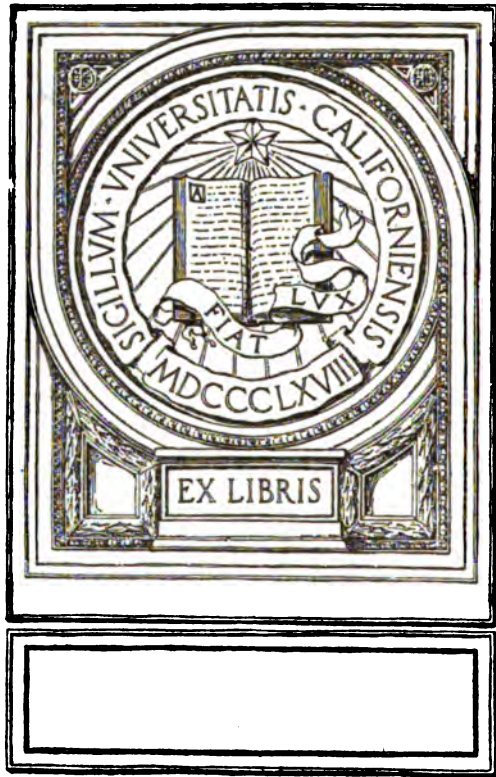
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**The Staff Work of
The Anglo-Boer War
1899-1901**

Medium 8vo, cloth, 21s.

Naval Administrations
1827-1892

The Experience of 65 Years

BY THE LATE
SIR JOHN HENRY BRIGGS

EDITED BY
LADY BRIGGS

With 8 Illustrations in Photogravure

LONDON
SAMPSON LOW, MARSTON AND CO.

Lansdowne



Portrait Engraving by J. Wall Lamb

The Marquess of Lansdowne K.G.



The Staff Work of.
The Anglo-Boer War

1899-1901

Embodying some of the War Letters sent
to the 'Morning Post' from
South Africa

By

Lady Briggs

Illustrated

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1901

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TO THE
AMERICAN

Printed by BALLANTYNE, HANSON & Co
At the Ballantyne Press

TO
THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE
LATE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR
AND TO
THE STAFF OFFICERS OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE DEPARTMENTS
CONNECTED WITH THE ANGLO-BOER WAR OF 1899-1901

This Work is Dedicated

AS A RECORD OF THEIR UNCEASING LABOURS

253104

PREFACE

TO MY READERS,

I feel that it is a little presumptuous of me to offer the public a volume on the "Staff Work of the War," and I am all too conscious of its shortcomings. But if my friends and critics come to the conclusion that in spite of its defects, it serves a useful purpose in setting forth the work done by the non-combatant branches of the army, then I shall feel my efforts will not have been quite in vain.

I was induced to take up public writing in connection with the Anglo-Boer War of 1899-1901, for the *Morning Post*, by a mis-statement that appeared in the *Cape Times* as to my duties whilst nursing sick prisoners of war on board the *Manila* in Simons Bay. My letter to the Editor correcting this error led me to give a short description of the medical work then being done amongst the prisoners, both in the transports and in the hospitals. At that time there were many deaths amongst them from enteric fever, and a feeling of uneasiness was abroad that all was not being done by the authorities for their relief and to combat the disease. My testimony had a decidedly reassuring effect on public opinion, as is proved by many letters that I received from both English and Dutch in the Colony.

Since the last Soudan campaign my journalistic propensities had found no outlet, neither had I sought one in South Africa. At the commencement of the war my heart

PREFACE

was set on nursing the sick and wounded, but this was not to be. My health soon suffered from the strain, and the conditions under which the work had to be carried on. An attack of fever incapacitated me for several weeks, but luckily was not fatal, as was unhappily the case with my friend and fellow-worker, Miss Mary Kingsley. During my convalescence I wrote two letters giving an account of the prisoners of war, which appeared in the *Morning Post* on the 4th and 10th of May, 1900, and from then until the end of the year I was a contributor to that journal, and most of my letters are embodied in this volume.

I am well aware that many excellent works by "First Class Men" have already been published, that there are many more to follow; and it must not be supposed that I am vying with the "Favourite Sex" in offering to the public my humble endeavours.

In describing the staff work of the war, and other administrative departments that have not been strictly military, but have yet contributed in no small degree to the maintenance of British supremacy in South Africa, I only contribute the proverbial "widow's mite."

Several of the subjects I deal with have as yet hardly been touched. Some of the problems referred to must await readjustment until after the war has ceased and the era of peace has begun, and others, again, can only be properly treated in an official work, with all the resources of the War Office, such as reports and minutes, at the disposal of the author.

ELIZABETH CHARLOTTE BRIGGS.

CARLTON HOTEL.

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CHAPTER I

CAPE TOWN

THE military interest of the whole of the civilised world, which has been chiefly centred during the last year in South Africa, was never more intensely felt than during the first few months of the Anglo-Boer campaign. Cape Town has never been so important in all its history.

It is the great base for everything connected with the war, and from whence all news is distributed to every quarter of the globe. The orders from the castle, the headquarters of the general commanding the lines of communication, cause many a flutter of satisfaction at the realisation of fervent wishes or pangs of regret at hope deferred.

Everybody seemed in a state of uncertainty, and there was a bewildering vagueness as to all plans, quite a new experience for methodical Englishmen straight from home. In view of the military exigencies the greatest care was exercised that profound ignorance of all operations in the Free State and elsewhere should prevail, and those troops that were daily entrained to proceed somewhere "up country" should not be informed of their ultimate destination until they were within the zone of the press censor, which so effectually prevented the news of Lord Roberts' (and later Lord Kitchener's) plans of conducting their operations from filtering through until such times as the information could do no harm, whether possessed by zealous friends or secret enemies.

Since the commencement of the war Cape Town has excelled itself. The civil population has strained every nerve to meet the sudden emergencies, and willingly placed at the disposal of the military every convenience in their possession, and ungrudgingly accorded priority of attendance in hotels, in conveyances, and on every conceivable occasion to their martial brothers.

At times one could not help comparing the city to imperial Rome in the days when Nero marched his all-conquering legions through her city gates. For weeks there was, and is still, one continual stream through the streets of soldiers and war material: batteries of artillery, squadrons of cavalry, regiments of infantry, all converging to the railway station from the docks, from the camps that surround the town, and from those more distant, such as Stellenbosch; together with long trains of heavy transport waggons, with supplies and stores drawn by noisy traction engines, teams of oxen and mules ten to fourteen in length; which, all combined, form a procession that requires very skilful handling to prevent the civil element being totally unable to carry on the regular business of the town. The earnest endeavours of every individual to contribute his mite to the great object in view greatly facilitates the municipal authorities in their management of the general traffic, and reflects the greatest credit on all concerned.

Cape Town and its environments afford ample scope for the study of human nature in its manifold phases. Social life is well represented at Mount Nelson Hotel, which is second only in the luxuriance of its appointments to the Ghézérich Palace in Cairo, the summer palace of the late Ismail Pasha of Egypt, whose extravagance in erecting places of residence nearly made his country bankrupt. Military life on active service may be studied in the camps, hospital life may be seen under many aspects, and the instances of public benevolence

and private philanthropy were never more numerous in every direction than are observable at this present moment in South Africa, but for the very enumeration of which there is no space available.

In addition to his arduous administrative duties as general of the lines of communication that Sir F. Forestier Walker has to perform he is constantly inspecting some newly arrived regiment or battery, or is in command of the forces that have been mustered in the various camps to take part in specified exercises to test the knowledge and training of both officers and men in strategy and tactics. The importance of the information thus required is obvious, especially when he has under consideration general orders, which are made out daily.

To give an instance :—On Tuesday, May 8, all the available troops at Green Point and Maitland Camps were exercised in time-marching—that is to say, a point of concentration is named in base orders, and the hour when each unit should arrive at that point. The officers in command of the several units make their own calculations, and on the correctness of these their troops arrive in time or they do not.

I am unable to give the exact strength of the force that took part in this exercise, or the names of the commanders of the mounted troops that came from Maitland Camp; but as regards those that come from Green Point I can give more detailed information. Two forces moved off at 8.30 and 9 A.M. respectively. The first consisted of about 150 rank and file of the 4th North Staffordshires and about 350 rank and file of the 4th West Yorkshire regiment, under the command of Colonel Mirehouse, 4th North Staffordshire, marching over the Kloof to Camp's Bay, while the force that left at 9 A.M., was composed of 350 rank and file of the 6th Royal Warwicks, three Maxims, detachments of Cape Garrison Artillery, and 370 of Strathcona's Horse, the whole

under the command of Colonel Price, 4th West Yorkshire regiment, and Cape commandant, and took the road by the Queen's Hotel, Sea Point. When within a quarter of a mile of Camp's Bay, the mounted units from Maitland Camp were seen winding down the hill, and on arrival the whole force was drawn up as follows, with the right resting on the road: Lord Strathcona's Horse and Yeomanry in front in squadron columns, and echeloned in rear the three Maxim detachments of Cape Garrison Artillery on the right, and the three militia battalions in order of precedence in line of half-battalion quarter columns, at twelve paces interval between the regiments and six paces between the half-battalions.

The concentration was fairly accurate with the exception of Paget's Horse, which arrived a little after the hour named (11 A.M.) and formed up, echeloned in rear of the left flank of the infantry, the whole force being under the command of Colonel Cooper, base commandant, until the arrival of Sir F. Forestier Walker, who made his inspection and watched the execution of a small scheme to repulse an invasion from the sea for the supposed purpose of marching on Cape Town.

The experience of actual warfare that is being gained day by day at no great distance from the spot where this exercise took place gives a reality to the lessons that the commanding officers wish to inculcate, especially on the grave importance of taking advantage of everything that affords cover from the enemy's fire. I have heard it said that the Boers can hide even behind a daisy! They are never to be seen. Certainly they can give us many points in this.

The general having expressed himself as satisfied with the strategy and disposition of the troops, orders were given for the respective forces to march back to their camps, which ended a very interesting and instructive field-day for those engaged, and to lookers on like myself much real gratification.

It must not however be assumed that this description refers to an occasional assembly of the troops at the base. Practice in various exercises are of daily occurrence, and no effort is spared to train the men and give their officers the opportunity to handle their commands with the assurance bred of practical knowledge, so that they may be equal to the more arduous work required of them when they take their places in the line of battle, wherever the Commander-in-Chief may, in his discretion, deem best to station them, so as to bring to an end a guerilla warfare that is still causing great uneasiness as to the fate of dear ones engaged, and the sad consequences it will have on the prosperity of the country, though none on the ultimate result of the war.

A year's campaigning has had a modifying influence on the martial spirit of the nation, which at one time ran to fever height, and affected every man and woman in the empire; an enthusiasm that caused much anxiety to officials at the War Office, whose business it was to select from such abundance of material.

Ever since the war began the greatest difficulty that officers commanding the various bases have experienced has been to restrain the eagerness that the troops have all shown in their desire to get up to the fighting lines, or to return thither after having been in hospital, before they have sufficiently recovered their health.

Nothing has been so gratifying as to see the good fellowship between the officers and men of the Imperial forces and volunteer corps, and it may be taken as the strongest evidence that the unity of England with her colonies is built on the rock of brotherly love, without which no political federation could endure the strain of a severe test.

The social conditions existing now in the army in South Africa will do much to bring about the total disappearance of

the "classes against the masses" sentiment that was rife a few decades ago.

Men from the highest stations of life have hastened to enrol themselves as privates, or have shown themselves ready to serve in any capacity, even as mule driver, so as to prove their patriotism and help the Government.

An instance of this :—A mother had her first-born son, a distinguished officer, in the 1st Life Guards, her husband was a major in the Yeomanry, and her younger son was a private in the C.I.V.s. When she went to see the last-mentioned member of her family she was kept waiting about the camp for hours, until he was released from duty, and then he was not permitted to introduce her to his most junior commissioned officer. A curious contrast to the reception accorded her when she visited her husband and eldest son in the same camp!

Discipline must be maintained, and one private must be treated exactly like another; but this wholesale volunteering obviously required great tact if difficulties were to be avoided, and, to the credit of both officers and men be it said, that discretion was an attribute seldom conspicuous by its absence.

In regard to the men, whatever their social status, and however unaccustomed to subordinate positions, they readily submit to army discipline and regulations. They treat them as their part of the game in which they were anxious to join—the true spirit of volunteering, which naturally reduces friction to a minimum.

Maitland Camp is situated about six miles from Cape Town, and one and a half from Observatory Road Station, a charming walk on a day when there is not too much wind, which however is seldom the case, and consequently it is very often dusty. It is the place where most of the mounted troops are sent on arrival in Table Bay. It has been used as a rest

camp since the war began in October 1899, and in every way it is admirably suited for the purpose. Being on a plateau, slightly elevated above the surrounding country, it is well drained and, after rain, dries up in a very short time, a great advantage when horses have to stand for long periods in the open. Add to this, that at the bottom of the slope, within easy reach of the camp, runs a stream of good water, and one realises what an excellent site it is for the purpose for which it has been selected.

After the long sea voyages the horses have had coming from the British Isles or from other distant parts of the world, they naturally require a certain period of rest to recover from their cramped positions, close quarters, and other trials animals as well as men have to endure on board a crowded transport, in varying climates and weather conditions for weeks at a stretch, and this time of rest they almost invariably had.

Maitland Camp commands another view of Table Mountain not less fascinating to the beholder than that seen from the sea. It is flanked on the left by the picturesque "Devil's Peak," and on the right by the "Lion's Head," which slopes away to the round backed hill known as the "Rump," or "Signal Station," where, as the latter name indicates, ships are signalled to the busy transport offices in the docks.

Maitland Camp, owing to its natural position, is very healthy; but when it is borne in mind that many thousands of animals have been picketed on the ground during the war, it is not surprising if there are occasions when the men are decidedly of opinion that a change to a new spot would not be a bad move.

To give an idea of what has been recently through this camp, here are some details:—Household Cavalry, Carabineers, 7th Dragoon Guards (the Old Black Horse), the Scots Greys, Inniskillens, 8th Hussars, the Prince of Wales' 10th, the 12th Lancers, 17th Lancers (Death or Glory Boys), some twenty

batteries of Royal Horse Artillery and Royal Field Artillery, with ammunition columns, Imperial Yeomanry, Colonial Mounted Infantry, Rifles, and Volunteers, besides large drafts of remount horses and mules, making up something like 30,000 to 35,000 animals.

At times there have been as many as 3000 troops in this camp, though the number varies from day to day just as ships arrive with fresh contingents to replace those that have left for the front.

When I was at Maitland Camp, on May 9, 1900, I saw a squadron of Strathcona's Horse, of which I give an account in another chapter, a detachment of Lovat's Scouts, both detained by an attack of influenza amongst the horses, and the Donegal Militia Artillery that had just returned from St. Helena, where they had been sent for guard duty on the s.s. *Bavaria* that conveyed some of the Boer prisoners to their island place of exile. In another part of the camp was the Elswick battery of six naval guns. And last, but not least, there was the Army Veterinary Hospital.

The success of the war largely depends on the supply and management of the animals, but, as yet, the public do not seem to have fully realised the great importance of this obvious fact; at least they have not given the same proof of it as they have to other branches of the services.

The hospital arrangements for sick and wounded horses are only second in importance to the care of the human being.

In Maitland Camp, the army veterinary officers organised a hospital for animals that in every respect corresponds to a well regulated hospital for soldiers. The principal veterinary officer explained to me that there were two field veterinary hospitals in South Africa, each divided into two fully equipped sections: one at Maitland Camp, one at Orange River, another at Naauport, and a fourth at Bloemfontein or were moving from place to place as required. A third

hospital had to be cabled for from India, as, with shame be it confessed, that no such organisation exists in England. These sections are all mobile, and the whole equipment adapted for mule pack transport, so that the hospital can be pushed on with an advancing force, relieving it of its serious cases of wounds, lameness, and disease, which so often hamper the movements of cavalry, artillery, and other mounted troops in the field. The *personnel* of these hospitals is composed of Europeans and Indians, and comprises, in addition to the veterinary officer in charge, a subordinate staff, consisting of a sergeant farrier, line orderlies, shoeing smiths, and clerks, who are European soldiers; and a native establishment which includes a veterinary assistant, water-carriers, sweepers, grooms, &c. The necessary drugs, instruments, and surgical appliances are all carried in neat chests marked with a horse's head, each weighing 80lb., so that a pair just make up a mule load, 160lb. India has taught the lesson that an establishment of trained men is necessary to care for, and nurse, our noblest animal when he is wounded in battle or sick from the privations which are the inevitable portion of man and beast taking part in long marches and deadly engagements during a period of warlike operations. In the lines devoted to sick horses—which are generally a short distance apart from those in the remount camp—I have seen invalids looking very sorry for themselves, with their heads and legs bandaged up as carefully as if they were human beings. Some had been shot in three or four places, and when they heard the voice of the veterinary surgeon they looked round for sympathy in a manner which showed they were accustomed to receive it.

The Army Veterinary Department has had to augment their staff in the same way as the Royal Army Medical Corps, by engaging civilians. In all their appointments, however, only fully qualified veterinary surgeons have been accepted,

and it is due to the patriotism of those who volunteered, to say that many left large practices at home to join the South African Field Force.

Whilst Veterinary-Colonel I. Matthews was shut up in the besieged town of Ladysmith, Veterinary-Lieutenant-Colonel Raymont was in sole charge of the department in South Africa. With the relief of that town the former took up his duties as principal veterinary officer, and the latter carried on the work on the lines of communication. Lord Roberts, in his despatch of April 16, 1901, says :

ARMY VETERINARY DEPARTMENT.—This department, under Veterinary-Colonel I. Matthews, has performed good work. The peace establishment being too small for the requirements of a large war, necessitated the employment of 123 civil veterinary surgeons, who, however, soon adapted themselves to the conditions of active service, and did much good work. Great assistance was afforded by the excellently-organised field veterinary hospitals so kindly lent by the Government of India. These hospitals leave nothing to be desired as regards supplies and equipment, and the *personnel* of native N.C. officers, shoeing smiths and trained attendants rendered most valuable service. There has been a notable immunity from contagious and ordinary diseases, except glanders, of which there have been 500 cases, all of which the department was fortunately able to quickly suppress. There has also been an exceptional freedom from horse sickness; under 200 deaths out of more than 210,000 horses and mules.

Should my readers consider that I have been too prolix in my description of a veterinary field hospital I must plead in excuse the extreme importance of my subject, and can, I know, call upon any cavalry or artillery friends to bear me out.

CHAPTER II

CLAREMONT SANITARIUM

THE suburbs around Cape Town are, by description and illustration, well known, especially those lying between the vineyards of Constantia and Sea Point. The military hospitals, no less than the camps, tended to bring them prominently into public notice, and make all connected with them interesting to friends at home who had some member of their family temporarily located in either hospital or camp at this great base.

I am not going into any description of those suburbs beyond saying they are very beautiful, nor into the questions of the management of the three general hospitals, two of which were stationed at Wynberg and one at Rondebosch, with the Portland hospital attached for a time to No. 3 at the last-mentioned place. Too many have done this already, and I could not give such graphic accounts of the work done in them, however much I tried, though I will endeavour to say a word or two about the Claremont sanitarium, which has not come in for quite so much attention from the able pens of authors and correspondents as the Wynberg establishments—a circumstance on which the institution doubtless is rather pleased than otherwise. When volumes have been written that are yet unthought of, much of the good work that contributed to the well-being of our troops in South Africa will never be heard of, and especially that done for those who have suffered in health or limb from

the effects of the war; but it may not be out of place to mention the help rendered to our convalescent officers by this institution, which, in its main characteristics, is unique, and run on purely American methods. It is a branch of the Medical Missionary and Benevolent Association, and has its headquarters at Battle Creek, Michigan, U.S. There are altogether about fifteen branches in different parts of the world. These are known as "sanitariums," and they devote their earnings to the relief of the sick poor. It was only in 1866 that this particular philanthropic impulse first found expression, and since then it has spread from Michigan, where it has raised a perfect corps of physicians and nurses a thousand strong; to Chicago, Illinois; St. Helena, California; Lincoln, Nebraska; Portland, Oregon, in the United States; Basel, in Switzerland; Calcutta, Australia, and London, where the branches are all well equipped.

English people are always interested in the philanthropic schemes and institutions of our American cousins, and at this moment are especially grateful to them for helping and cheering them with their purses and sympathy in this hour of national stress.

The Claremont "sanitarium" is a large building of considerable architectural merit, is situated on a slight eminence in a beautiful valley, and commands a magnificent view of Table Mountain, of which the eye never tires. It is only six miles away from Cape Town, and is easily accessible by either train or electric tram, so that this haven of rest and quiet does not labour under the disadvantage of being "such a long distance from Cape Town," which was the reason given by the authorities for the non-acceptance of some beautiful private residences for the free use of officers as "sanitariums," which caused soreness of heart to the proposers.

The Board of Managers of the Claremont "sanitarium" have proved themselves to be a liberal-minded set of gentle-

men. They divided off a large portion of their beautiful building for the exclusive use of convalescent military officers, who are drafted there to regain their health and strength after a period of suffering from sickness or wounds from Wynberg base hospital. There is accommodation for about forty officers. The rooms and corridors are all lofty, large, well lighted, and excellently furnished. They have their own army doctors and their own *chef*. Each officer has also his own servant.

The treatment for the regular patients in the "sanitarium" is strict to the last degree. On his arrival a new patient is subjected to a microscopic examination, the resources of the physiological laboratory are brought to bear on his case, a splendid Röntgen rays apparatus is turned on him, and no stone is left unturned to ascertain the causes of his malady. The diagnosis being determined, the patient enters on a thorough and systematic course of treatment, and every rational measure known to modern science is at hand ready for use as the doctors shall determine. All the habits of a patient's life must conform to the rules and principles laid down for him by his physicians, which are rigidly upheld by the nurses of the institution. The main thought of all the nursing staff is that it is the patient rather than the disease they have to cure. A patient is under doctor's orders continually—in diet, exercise, and rest. Before a nurse can take her place and be put in charge of a case she must be a well-educated woman, have had a long training in ordinary nursing, and a special one in hydro-therapeutic treatment. She must have an intelligent knowledge of Russian, Turkish, electric, sun, and electric light baths. She must be able to instruct in gymnastic, calisthenic, and Swedish exercises, and a multitude of other things, to enumerate which would fill a volume.

The Board of Managers states in its circular that the

menu of the "sanitarium" is not that of a fashionable hotel. They are quite right. Until lately only two meals a day were allowed to the patients: now there are three. Very light food, and little of it, is the motto for the dining table. Fruit is the chief item—every meal begins with it and ends with it. The doctors maintain that the diet-sheet prescribes quite enough for any one not hopelessly devoted to gourmandising. Speaking personally, if I, as a convalescent patient, had to spend any considerable time there, I should certainly beg for something to eat from the officers' table. A rational system in diet generally means a list of fads and fancies, strenuously objected to by all true Britons, and most of all by army officers. I have a great regard for a first-class *chef*, and until I had tasted his culinary products I should leave for future consideration disturbing questions of the relative dietetic properties of his compounds and their compatibility. When nursing help is transferred to the military side of the building, and complaints of a dyspeptic nature are made, such expressions may often be heard as: "Well, if you will mix fruit and milk, oysters and vinegar, and eat a heavy dinner in the evening, what else can you expect but the derangement of the digestive organs?"

The sister in charge of the Claremont "sanitarium" is, of course, an American—genial and hospitable. After a short conversation as to the methods and scientific principles which obtain with all rational people, she inquired whether I, as a nurse, wore corsets? I laughingly replied that I did. "Well, I am sure! I am surprised!" she rejoined. I mildly inquired whether such an article of dress violated all principles of scientific and rational ladies' dress. "Why, yes!" Has no one ever told you that before?" said the sister, with a look of pity.

In going over the institution I had noticed some very pretty sisters in their clear blue dresses and hemstitched

collars and cuffs. Their waist measurements were in all cases much larger than is usual even among nurses, who, as a rule, are not in the habit of tight-lacing. Indeed, they could not carry on their professional duties in a busy hospital if they were.

In my innocence I had ascribed this disregard for the usual conventionalities in dress to a desire on the part of the authorities to meet the wishes of those members of Parliament at Westminster, who show by their questions in the House of Commons that they are fearful lest the ladies, who go out from England to help to nurse sick friends and foes, are directing their skill to corrupting the doctors' ideas of duty and discipline rather than to the realisation of their avowed mission and the intelligent carrying out of the doctors' orders for the alleviation of pain and suffering.

If our solicitous representatives in Parliament could realise the enormous amount of work that is done in our military hospitals, and under what trying conditions it is accomplished, they would see what little time and inclination were left for any such "tommy-rot," as a distinguished officer elegantly described the insinuation contained in the questions of hon. members. Greater advantage would accrue to the public service if their attacks were made on the administrative rather than on the executive branch of the Royal Army Medical Corps.

The absence of thoroughly worked out plans, and the consequent haphazard system, are the chief causes of the waste of labour and material, but in this the Medical Department is not alone—it sins in company with a few other sections of the army.

But in justice to both the administrative and executive branches of the army they are not altogether to blame for the defects that have appeared in the conduct of the war. Much of it is due to the House of Commons, and a liberal

share can be placed to the account of the nation itself for not insisting on having an army sufficient for its needs.

When Mr. Kruger's ultimatum was published to the world, the German Emperor said, "Great Britain would require a hundred millions sterling, 200,000 men, and a year to finish the work that the action of the South African Republics had brought about." His Majesty's estimate has already been exceeded in men and time, and the money voted by Parliament has reached the figure of eighty-six millions, which includes, of course, the twenty-one millions in the regular annual vote for the army.

In the state of public feeling existing at the beginning of the war, what would the country have thought of the Secretary of State for War if he had presented proposals on the lines considered necessary by the Emperor of Germany?

It must be remembered that the whole nation ridiculed the force that the Boers could bring up against us, and were perfectly satisfied that in three months all would be over and the British expeditionary force would be eating their Christmas dinner in Pretoria. A year has gone by since that time, and in its course has revealed weakness where strength was expected, and stubborn resistance where least anticipated.

When events do not follow the order laid down in our preconceived opinions it is usual to fix the blame on some one, and as due consideration is not given to ascertain the real cause of the mistakes, it often happens that it falls to the lot of one who least deserves it; indeed, to the one that has battled against great opposition to avert the very consequences that he could not induce others to anticipate.

What would have been the fate of the Government if Lord Lansdowne had asked for fifty millions to prosecute the war in South Africa, and had declared the necessity of

calling out the militia, the volunteers, and requested the aid of the colonies fifteen months ago ?

Even sober-minded members of Parliament, who foresaw that the war would be no child's play, would have thought he had gone stark staring mad. A vote of censure would have been passed in the House, and the consequences are not difficult to imagine.

CHAPTER III

PRISONERS OF WAR

IN all former wars, after the formal declaration of peace, it has followed that the prisoners of war have been restored to the Governments to which they respectively belong. But in this conflict only one side has prisoners, and there is no question of formally announcing peace.

We were, indeed, told by Lord Roberts in the December of 1900, before he embarked for England, that the war in South Africa was practically over, but he has since had to admit that he was a little premature in his statement. Indeed, the words were hardly uttered before the condition of affairs proved the very reverse to be the case. Before he arrived at the end of the voyage a period of graver anxiety for Cape Colony had set in, especially for Cape Town, than had characterised the operations during any period of the campaign. Capturing of convoys, taking of prisoners, unexpected conflicts amongst the hills, simultaneous attacks on five garrisons, raids into the vicinity of Cape Town itself, are incidents which followed each other in quick succession, and produced a feeling of anxiety that had never previously been felt in the capital of Cape Colony.

A general rising of the Dutch colonists never appeared so imminent as during the first week after Lord Roberts' return. Indeed, so disappointed was he at the turn affairs had taken, that he wrote to the Mayor of Portsmouth the following letter, which in its simplicity is full of pathos :

My gratitude on being thought worthy of the high honour proposed to be conferred upon me by the borough of Portsmouth is so very great that it led me to acquiesce in naming an early date to visit the town. I did so, however, contrary to the very strong feeling that it would be more suitable to postpone all public entertainments until affairs in South Africa are more settled, and we can see the end of the war which is still being carried on in that unhappy country—a war resulting in daily loss of life to our soldiers and fresh bereavements to their families at home. It is most distasteful to me to be honoured, *fêted*, and called upon to rejoice while so many people are in bitter grief; and before we can properly return thanks for the cloud being rolled away, which has for more than a year darkened homes and crushed the hearts of so many people in this country. Portsmouth was the first to offer me by cable any honour, and that town shall be, I trust, the first I shall visit.

The transporting of troops, especially mounted men, was never more actively carried on. The raising of 8000 Yeomanry, many of whom are re-enlisting, demonstrates the fact that the old failings of underrating the power of the enemy, and of being over sanguine, have reappeared. It is with the character of the Boers we have to reckon as well as with them numerically, not forgetting the extent and nature of the country.

The discovery of guns and ammunition at Rondebosch and places round Cape Town was a rude awakening to the authorities, and, in consequence of the knowledge they possess that 12,000 rifles were secreted about the city before the war began, they have been obliged to set about taking defensive measures, such as entrenchments, the landing of men and naval guns from the ships of war on the station, and adopting the precaution of sending to sea of the prisoners of war on the transports and from the various camps just as everybody thought the war was over. The 2000 men in Green Point Camp, even without arms,

might under excitement overpower their guards, more particularly if aided a little from the outside. At times there are some 5000 prisoners in Cape Town and Simonstown. In all about 18,000 Boers are imprisoned; about 5000 are vegetating in St. Helena and 5000 more in Ceylon; there are about 500 on parole; several hundreds confined in camps in the Transvaal, in the Orange River Colony, and in Natal. The only comforting reflection in connection with these figures is, that the war must soon come to an end through attrition alone.

The responsibility connected with the guarding and maintenance of so many prisoners of war is a very heavy one, not only as far as the present is concerned, but their fate in the future gives ample scope for serious reflection. If they resolve to accept the inevitable and live in peace under British rule the difficulty is not great, but if on the contrary a spirit of resentment and desire for revenge is encouraged, then the prudence of bringing back so many men to carry on spasmodic guerilla warfare, which would necessitate a large military force being kept permanently in the country to repress sudden outbreaks, has to be considered.

If a little story of the "Highland Laddies" is true that comes from different parts of the Orange River Colony, and is typical of Tommy's powers of attraction, then the chief obstacle to friendly relations between the English and Dutch will soon be overcome.

It appears that when some of the Highlanders were sick and wounded, and were attended to by the Dutch women of the neighbourhood, they showed so much sympathy for them that their own men folk were quite jealous. And in excuse they said, "Only think, they are so poor they cannot afford to buy trousers!"

That the women of all nationalities love soldiers and sailors better than their civilian brothers is a generally

admitted fact; and that Dutch women—not to say children—were not altogether free from this weakness in spite of their protestations to the contrary, has been proved to demonstration over and over again.

When the Dutch women and children who had congregated in Barberton in such numbers as to make it uncomfortably full, thought, on Mr. Kruger's birthday, they would make themselves as obnoxious as possible to the British garrison by marching through the streets in procession waving the flags of the two late Republics, they cursed every "Khaki" they met, using the most filthy language and throwing sticks and stones at them as they passed. A certain officer thought such proceedings ought to be stopped by force and went to the governor about it. His reply, however, was that of a true Englishman. "Oh, let them alone, they are not doing much harm, and it amuses them; besides, I want to play cricket."

The women soon got tired of their games, and were ready to respond first to the blandishments of rollicking Jack o' the Sea, and then to Mr. Thomas Atkins. So complete was their downfall that they combined to give the "Khakis" a dance, which would have been a great success but for one or two spiteful ones, who insisted on making a note of the names of their faithless sisters for the information of their husbands and brothers on commando or at St. Helena. When these good ladies had performed their task they marched off, leaving the unpatriotic ones to enjoy the company of our soldiers and sailors, who made good use of their time.

If we can only get hold of the women there would be no trouble with the men. The rising generation would never hear of the sorrows of the present, and in a decade or so the Dutch would be as good citizens as any that can be found in our vast colonial empire.

Foreign nations have very freely abused us for our severity to the Boers fighting against us, to the prisoners we have taken, and to their families left on the farms in the affected districts. Even members in the House of Commons have often accused the Commander-in-Chief of the Forces with wanton cruelty in regard to his orders for farm burning, and the conduct of our soldiers to women and children has been subjected to unfair criticism.

When the besieged in Ladysmith were reduced to starvation rations, the pickets, on more than one occasion, brought in a couple of hungry men as prisoners of war to further diminish the scanty stock of provisions.

This was a striking contrast to the order Marshal Bazaine issued to the troops under his command in Mexico, dated October 15, 1865, which ran thus:—

Je vous invite a faire savoir aux troupes sous vos ordres que j'admets pas qu'on fusse des prisonniers. Tout individu quel qu'il soit qui sera pris les armes à la main sera mis à mort. Aucun exchange de prisonniers ne se fera.

BAZAINE.

A prisoner killed in action was found to have in his pockets seven passes from seven different generals! A declaration that he had surrendered his arms was also on his person.

By the words of the Boer prisoners themselves, and the Dutch ladies that helped to nurse them, I will show how their captors have treated them.

Just at the beginning of the war a few prisoners were kept at Durban, and in the later stages a camp had been prepared for them at Ladysmith. But in Simonstown and Cape Town the great majority have been detained, and sent from thence to St. Helena or Ceylon.

On April 10 there were about 5000 prisoners of war

divided between these two places, some in transports, some in camps, and some in hospital.

It was my fortune to see the arrival of General Cronje, with his wife, grandson, and secretary, at Salt River, which is a railway junction not far from Cape Town. Though the hour was as early as 6 A.M., General Sir F. Forestier Walker with his staff was there to receive the Boer leader, to accompany him to Simonstown, and to safely conduct him and his followers to her Majesty's ship *Doris*, the flag-ship of Admiral Sir Robert Harris, Commander-in-Chief of the Cape of Good Hope and West Coast of Africa station. The admiral's quarters were placed at the disposal of General and Mrs. Cronje.

Later in the day trains bringing heavy freights of prisoners passed through Cape Town station on the way to the docks, where about 3000 Transvaalers and Free Staters were transferred to the transports *Orient*, *Mongolian*, *City of Cambridge*, and the *Manila*. The last-named had then been employed as a prison-ship for the last five months.

In Christmas week I accompanied the staff officer in charge of the prisoners to the *Manila* to see those on board, visitors at that date being permitted to go over the transports with a pass. I was naturally anxious to meet the men who had caused such reverses to British arms in Natal and in Cape Colony.

Imagine my surprise, however, when Colonel Schiel, Captain de Wet Hamer, Adjutant Waldeck, and the millionaires Julius Jeppe, Carl Russic, and De Villiers, chief of the detectives, and other prominent Boers, insisted on shaking hands with me. They had mistaken me for a sympathiser, there being three or four on board at the time.

Since then I have learnt that it is the custom of the Dutch to shake hands on all occasions and with everybody.

Little had I thought that, after safely depositing at Netley officers and men of the Highland Brigade who had been wounded at Magersfontein, I should return to South Africa to superintend the nursing of Boer prisoners on the very same ship within three months. But inscrutable are the laws of fate.

I had been called to the telephone at the Mount Nelson Hotel by the secretary to the principal medical officer of the base at Cape Town to request me "to go to the Woodstock Military Hospital to receive instructions to proceed to Simonstown to take charge of sick Boer prisoners." These I soon found were principally suffering from enteric fever, contracted in the trenches at Paardeberg when living and dead men and horses were herded for days together. My appointment was the reverse of what I had desired. I had wished to bring comfort and consolation to the sick and dying who had been fighting in support of our Queen and her beneficent rule, and I thought it was too great a strain on my patriotism to do the same for her enemies who were prisoners in our hands. With all the eloquence I could command I entreated that I might be appointed to a more congenial post, and even tried all my powers of persuasion on the general himself; but military discipline must be maintained, and I was only comforted by the assurance that I should not be kept long at such a duty.

"I think it will be very interesting work, and it is clear that the Boer prisoners in our charge must be nursed and cared for," said the tactful general. So I had to go to Simonstown, where epidemics of enteric and measles were raging. There can be no doubt that the want of space on the transports for from 800 to 1200 men, who by habit are not cleanly in their persons and whose clothes are terribly dirty, does not tend to stamp out a contagious disease when once it has been started. On April 4 the 800 prisoners

on board the *Manila* were landed and put in the new camp that had been prepared for their reception, and on the following day they were joined by their compatriots on board the *City of Cambridge*, except the sick who were in hospital on both ships. There were sixty cases of measles on board the *Manila* on the previous day, but fearing to be left on the ship all except ten marched off with the other prisoners, covered up in their blankets of many colours. It is a custom of the Boers to bandage their heads and put on all the clothes they can possibly find when they are ill. When measles first showed itself an effort was made to isolate the cases, but as the number rapidly increased the attempt had to be given up for want of space on ships so crowded with human beings.

When these prisoners were first put on board they suffered such mental agony as could be compared to nothing in their lives.

The greater number of them had never seen the sea, and had no idea what a ship was. When they saw their comrades go up the gangway and then disappear they felt perfectly satisfied that the "Rooineks" were taking their revenge for Mafeking, Ladysmith, and Kimberley. They thought the ship was some infernal machine, with a hole in the bottom that let them into the sea.

The wheels of the military coach move very slowly until there is a panic, and then the arrangements that should have been made in anticipation are found to have been barely commenced, and, consequently, when the exigencies of the moment are imperative there is a rush and an unpreparedness that creates confusion, discomfort, and irritation. So when the prisoners were finally ordered to be put ashore neither the camp nor the hospital were ready for their reception. The contingency of Boer prisoners, and the sick among them, should have been anticipated at the very

commencement of the war. Now, however, the state of affairs is being improved every day. Stores of all kinds are being sent for use, doctors and nurses are being increased in number to cope with the work, and thorough measures are being taken to remedy those evils which a little energy in the first instance might have averted altogether.

Simonstown is not at this time, and is not likely to be again, the slow little naval station it was prior to the outbreak of the war. In the bay, which is the best in South Africa, there is a fine display of ships, all of which fly either the white ensign of her Majesty's ships of war or the blue ensign with the yellow anchor that notes the hired transports. At this time there was a fleet of hired transports plying between England and South Africa that no other nation could put on the face of the waters, even if they employed every vessel that could steam. There were over a hundred numbered transports, and nearly as many hired freight ships for the conveyance of armaments and stores.

Simon's Bay has been able to take a prominent part in showing the power and strength of Great Britain during this eventful epoch, especially in her naval aspect. Such ships as the *Monarch*, *Powerful*, *Terrible*, *Niobe*, *Doris*, *Forte*, *Philomel*, and *Pelorus* have anchored in the bay under the shelter of the mountains that protect the harbour from the fierce south-easters which rise so suddenly and are so prevalent on this coast.

Then, again, Simon's Bay is brilliantly illuminated during the whole night by the many searchlights that are kept constantly turned on the transports employed as prison ships and on the camps of the prisoners of war. A picket-boat supplied by the flagship also patrols the harbour. Yet, in spite of all these precautions, one or two prisoners have escaped from the ships, though there is less risk of their leaving prisons afloat—as they know nothing of swimming,

and simply detest water—than of escaping from places of confinement ashore, for the Boers are well accustomed to barbed wire, high walls, and mountain climbing.

Simonstown was quite excited on April 6 over a desperate effort made by the prisoners in the old camp to escape, in which about thirty of them were successful. It seems very odd, after attempts at tunnelling had once been discovered that further efforts of the same nature could have taken place in the same camp. On the first occasion the prisoners kept back a couple of spades that had been given them to dig trenches round their tents. On the second they had nothing better than their pannikins with which to excavate. To escape detection they evenly spread the mould over the floor of their tents. If the truth be told, the guard and those who are in charge of them are altogether too lax in their supervision and too kind in their treatment of the prisoners.

At about half-past seven in the evening the officers of the army and navy, the doctors and nurses, who make the British Hotel their headquarters, were surprised in the middle of dinner to see the military officers suddenly leave their places and the hotel. Everybody made for the balcony to seek for the explanation. Mr. Hilhouse, a naval officer of his Majesty's ship *Doris*, read the signal from the flashlight of his ship. "Desperate efforts to escape from Camp No. 1," and with Dr. Houseman went off at once. They were rewarded for their trouble by seeing the prisoners making for the mountains, followed by the guard, who were to fire at or bayonet them if they refused to return. Soon afterwards we saw some brought back between sentries. One poor Kaffir boy was killed because, when challenged, he did not reply, for the simple reason that he did not understand and could not speak English. Some of the prisoners were bayoneted in their recapture, and were taken in a critical condition to the new

Palace hospital. All but seven were recaptured. When Colonel M'Calmont and Colonel Evans visited them and addressed them by name, the wounded prisoners were much ashamed of the part they had taken in the plan to escape; but it would have been a different story if their efforts had been entirely successful, for then several hundreds of them would have got safely away.

Some of the prisoners who had been in hiding among the recesses of the hill, walked straight into the arms of our soldiers, who had been lying down behind bushes, where they had been concealed for hours. To get really away would be difficult, for the mountains are well guarded by troops, and every movement at night is plainly made visible by the searchlights from the ships of war. At Cape Town many caustic remarks are made as to the inability of the guards at Simonstown to keep prisoners of war from making tunnels and escaping. I will not try to make excuses, for our want of watchfulness is only too apparent, though due rather to the fact that the guards were insufficient than to neglect of duty.

The despatch on Tuesday, April 3, of 500 of the most troublesome of the prisoners of war, among them being General Cronje and his wife, grandson, and secretary, on the *Milwaukee* to St. Helena was a great relief to the naval and military authorities who were entrusted with their custody.

When General Cronje was transferred from the admiral's quarters on her Majesty's ship *Doris* to the *Milwaukee*, which does not favourably compare with the spick-and-span flagship, he was heard to remark that his quarters were not so comfortable as those he had occupied during the past month, though they were all right. The presence of General Cronje was a great restraint on the officers of the *Doris*, as no visitors of any kind were allowed on board. The safeguarding of

such an important prisoner was a great responsibility, and required the exercise of the strictest vigilance, and it was with expressions of joy that the *Milwaukee* with her freight of prisoners was seen to steam slowly out of the bay, convoyed by his Majesty's ship *Niobe*, to the island that is rendered famous in history as being the place of banishment of the great Napoleon.

After the discharge of Boer prisoners, be it from men-of-war or transports, the first duty undertaken is that of thoroughly disinfecting and cleansing the quarters they have occupied, for it must be borne in mind that Transvaalers and Free Staters, taken as a whole, have a deep-seated dislike to baths and clean clothes. As can be readily imagined, this constitutes a great trial to those who, like myself, have had to give them personal attendance.

When I drove from Mafeking to Potchefstroom I was brought water to wash in the morning in a breakfast-cup by the mother of ten children, the mistress of the farmhouse where I had been accommodated for the night. When I realised what it was meant for, I surprised the family not a little by going to the clear running stream, five steps from the door, to fetch a bucketful. These good people usually put in a corner of a cloth into a cup full of water, smear it over their faces, and pass the towel round the family.

The arrival in the bay of the transport *Columbia* bringing the naval brigade belonging to his Majesty's ship *Powerful*, with the gallant Captain, the Hon. Hedworth Lambton, was the occasion of a great demonstration, and showed beyond a doubt that it requires a sailor to give a true, ringing, lusty cheer! The bluejackets hurrah with a will, and the result is such that neither soldiers nor a civilian crowd can compare with them in the heartiness of their vocal welcome. The ringing cheers for our returning naval heroes from Ladysmith was first taken up by the transport *City of*

Cambridge, then by the *Manila*, followed by the other prisoners as they passed, to be further augmented by the men who manned the rigging of the *Doris*, the *Monarch*, the *Niobe*, the *Penelope*, the *Rambler*, and, last but not least, by their comrades on board the *Powerful*. It was a grand sight, and one that impressed every beholder.

I am told that at no distant date naval works on a grand scale, with dry docks and store houses, are to be undertaken here, and that in a few years Simon's Bay will be the headquarters of a naval station more in accordance with the vast interests of the empire in this part of the world which it is the business of the navy to protect.

After the escape of these thirty Boer prisoners from the camp nearest to Simonstown, or Noah's Ark camp as it is called—from the rock and the fort which bear that name, and near which it is pitched—the remaining prisoners were all removed from thence to Green Point camp, Cape Town, to be ready for embarkation to St. Helena.

President Kruger need not have contemplated taking reprisals on his prisoners of war at Pretoria for this action on our part, for the greater number of those who were destined for temporary banishment were pleased to go. As a matter of fact, the captain of the deck on the transport *Manila*, a Boer prisoner, came to Major Usher, the commandant, to request permission for several prisoners on board (the names of whom he gave) to be allowed to join the *Milwaukee*, which was taking General Cronje to St. Helena. The request could not be entertained, however, as it was only preferred two hours before the time of starting. On the hills the climate in St. Helena is almost perfect; from April to October it is very fine.

Seeing the look of disappointment on the countenance of the captain I inquired why the men were so anxious to go. He replied that, as the petitioners could not return to their

country, their wives, and their families, they would rather be in a place where they could move about a little more freely than on board a ship. "Besides," he added, "the summer is coming on there and winter here, and so it would be much nicer and be an agreeable change."

When the *Milwaukee* arrived with my friends the Boer prisoners, Commandant Schiel tried his luck again at the game of escaping, but his missive, asking for assistance fell into the wrong hands. It was delivered to the captain of a British war-ship instead of the commander of one belonging to the kingdom of Holland. Since then his chagrin has had time to modify, and he is said to have declared that the next time he was caught fighting it would be on the side of the British he would be found.

The *St. Helena Guardian* is of opinion that the Boer prisoners on the island cannot complain of harsh treatment. In honour of the birthday of Mr. Kruger sports were held at the camp, with General and Mrs. Cronje as patrons, and Commandant Eloff as President. The first item on the programme was the despatch of a congratulatory message to the ex-President, and then the sports, which included orthodox contests and also a "stock trek," "Inskie Gooi," and a race for fours-in-hand, were successfully carried out, the events taking up two days. At the close, Commandant Eloff distributed the prizes, and the Transvaal and Orange Free State Volkslieds were sung.

Accommodation for 5000 prisoners of war was made at St. Helena, but that was quickly filled up. Similar arrangements were also made at Ceylon with the same results.

One or two attempts to escape were made in Colombo Harbour. But the advantage of having islands as places of imprisonment for prisoners of war is obvious. To get away without a ship is impossible, and no master of trading vessels can be found to run the risk of taking them on board, and no

officer on a man-o'-war of any nationality would dream of such a thing.

To escape and wander about an island has no charm, as a couple of Frenchmen found out, when, after aimlessly walking for miles they were discovered in a Buddhist temple by the rural police, and brought back to camp.

In consequence of the unfavourable conditions existing in Simonstown for safeguarding large numbers of prisoners of war, where they have many sympathisers among the residents, it was decided to send them all to St. Helena as fast as arrangements can be completed; and, in the meanwhile, some of the military authorities were urging that martial law shall be proclaimed in Simonstown. But unless there is a grave necessity for it, and one that cannot otherwise be overcome, it will not be done, for such a measure is a great restraint on the liberty of the whole community, grievously disorganises commerce, and adds greatly to the labours of the military and railway officials, which, however, after a whole year of fighting and coaxing has had to be adopted. The difficulty of guarding the prisoners at this time was considerably lessened by the addition of two companies of the Western Division of artillery, and two troops of cavalry, made up of details of the 7th Dragoon Guards and 16th Lancers, which marched into camp to martial strains.

If the presence of soldiers and sailors tends to make a place gay then Simonstown is a very lively spot, especially in the evening, when Jack Tar fraternises with his brother Tommy Atkins over a "glass of sommat."

Colonel M'Calmont, of the 6th battalion of the Royal Warwicks, the then commandant of Simonstown, was relieved to a certain extent of the tension of his responsible position by this increase of force, though it was not sent to his assistance until there was proof positive of the necessity by the escape of the prisoners and the difficulty of providing search

parties to find and bring back those who had run the gauntlet to regain their liberty. Colonel M'Calmont is a good soldier, fond of his men, and is ever to be found near at hand when duty calls.

If I were Commander-in-chief I should recommend that a special medal should be given to those who had anything to do with prisoners of war.

In regard to the hospital that is set apart for the sick amongst them, a perfect transformation scene had taken place there in a fortnight. The old Cape Garrison Artillery Barracks, which has been converted into the Palace hospital, has undergone such a course of cleansing and purifying as it has never known before. An army of whitewashers and scrubbers, with a plentiful supply of disinfectants, has produced an odour very different in character from that which greeted me when first I visited the new hospital. Its present efficient and highly-organised condition reflects the highest credit on Dr. Carré, the principal medical officer for Simons-town, especially considering the initial obstacles he had to overcome. He now has a staff of medical men and nurses adequate to cope with the severity of the epidemic of enteric fever among the prisoners, the seeds of which they unfortunately brought with them from the trenches of Paardeberg. At last, thanks to Dr. Carré's direction, and the skilful exertions of his staff, it is abating, and another threatened danger has been happily averted.

Dr. Carré has had a very extensive experience in hospital organisation in Africa, for, in addition to his present position, he was principal medical officer to the Uganda Railway, medical officer to the Uganda Relief Expedition, and principal medical officer to Colonel Martyr's Equatorial Province Expedition for the reoccupation of the old Egyptian stations on the Upper Nile down to the Victoria Nyanza. Likewise Dr. G. O. Hall, on the staff, knows a good deal of Africa, for he

was for ten years in private practice in Jacobsdal, and during the time the place was occupied by the Boers he volunteered for ambulance work among them, and attended to those that were wounded at the battle of Magersfontein, of which engagement he was an eye-witness. He was in Jacobsdal until Lord Roberts relieved the town and set him free. Dr. Hall appears to have been specially destined by Providence to bring comfort and consolation to the enemy in sickness, for on his arrival in Cape Town he was at once put in medical charge of the sick prisoners of war on the transport *Mongolian*, and after they had been placed ashore at the Palace hospital. Another medical officer on the staff is Dr. Houseman, of St. George's. From the very commencement of the war he offered his services to the Government, and before being posted to Simonstown he spent five months at Wynberg base hospital, where he had ample opportunities of studying the various phases of enteric fever peculiar to South Africa, of which he is making a special study.

As for the nurses at the Palace hospital, they are an exceptional set of interesting and clever women. Sister Morris has had the experience of going through the siege of Kimberley. She gives graphic accounts of how the shells from the Boer guns came whizzing through the air and through the hospital buildings, bursting near, but never, by God's providence, within the walls dedicated to the sick and suffering. She knows but too well how men, women, and children were carried in to be treated or to die—the result of shells exploding in various parts of the town. She can speak from her own personal experience of the intensity of the feelings of relief that was felt throughout Kimberley when the siege was raised. Surely, it will be readily admitted that it is a great test of patriotism and of Christian virtue to come to Simonstown to nurse the Boers who wrought such havoc and caused such misery to the people in Kimberley. Another lady who

was helping in the good cause at the Palace hospital at this time, and who was responsible for much of the organisation, was Miss Mary Kingsley, whose name, quite apart from her connection with the famous Charles Kingsley, is well known as an authoress, a traveller, and a student of life and its conditions in West Africa, and as a collector of fresh-water fish.

But the irony of fate is more particularly striking in the case of Mrs. von Wielligh, who was also helping to nurse sick prisoners. She is the wife of the commissioner for prisoners of war at Waterval, near Pretoria. Her husband is better known as the surveyor-general who erected the beacons that were to define the territories of the Portuguese and Swazis according to the MacMahon award.

Mrs. von Wielligh told me that her husband took care that all the money and other things sent to the British prisoners came safely to hand, and that the best of everything purchasable was allowed free access to them. As regards foodstuffs and stores of a like nature there was no scarcity, for they came freely through Delagoa Bay, and the country itself is productive of farm produce, as the women of the Transvaal, with the assistance of the Kaffirs, carry on the work just the same as if their men-folk were not otherwise engaged. But all this hardly coincides with Lord Roberts' request to President Kruger that the prisoners he captured shall be treated as prisoners of war and not as ordinary criminals. Mrs. von Wielligh is a well-educated woman, a thorough politician, and upholds, before all things, the sentiments and traditions of the country of her adoption. She makes no secret of the fact that she came to nurse at the hospital just to see how we treat her people when they are sick; and the evidence of such an one is all the more valuable. She says, "The doctors and nurses do all that is possible for them, and they are exceedingly well off."

During the last fortnight in March and the first fortnight

in April (1900) two of the great characteristics of the English people could not have been better exemplified than here in Simonstown—the determination not to see a danger until the last moment, then to take thorough measures to overcome it and to “see the thing through.” For that period there were only one doctor and three nurses to start the Palace hospital and look after the sick. Now there are three medical men, twelve nurses, and twenty orderlies. During the month two hundred patients were treated, and chiefly owing to the virulence of the epidemic of enteric there were thirty deaths. This high rate of mortality has at last been brought to a far lower ratio, though not without the sacrifice of a most valuable life—Miss Mary Kingsley died in Simonstown, and was, by her own express desire, buried at sea. In the performance of this ceremony both the naval and military took part.

The other two ladies who were nursing at the commencement had their health undermined, and the doctor was also so seriously ill that his life for a time was despaired of.

About this time Dr. Treves said, “The two things to be avoided in South Africa were women and flies.”

The flies are in millions. They blacken every place. They get into everything prepared to eat, and into the food that is put on the tables (when there are any), while the cups and glasses have to be kept covered to prevent these winged pests from floating in their contents!

I spent one interesting afternoon at the naval hospital in Simonstown. Like everything belonging to the navy it was spotlessly clean. I was shown over the wards by Dr. Richardson, who has been singularly successful with the wounded of the Naval Brigade. Captain Prothero, of his Majesty's ship *Doris*, told me later that in every case the doctor had been able to save the injured limb from amputation. To have done so is marvellous, considering the shattered

condition of various gunshot fractures as seen by means of radiographs, which were shown to me by Dr. Richardson in such an interesting manner that I could readily understand the grave nature of the damage done by the shells and bullets. I should never have guessed from his modest and retiring demeanour how wonderful had been some of his cures had not Captain Prothero told me of them. The flag-captain spoke of the naval doctor's ability from his own practical experience, as he had himself been successfully treated after having been severely wounded at the battle of Graspan.

On Monday, April 16, her Majesty's ship *Doris* went to Cape Town to be dry-docked, prior to the admiral going round to Durban to see what his officers and men of the Naval Brigade were doing; of one thing he was sure—good work. It is reported from Ladysmith that a young naval cadet, and very small for his age, was seen riding about in close vicinity to the enemy. He was asked by a staff officer, decorated with the ribbons of many orders, "What are you doing here, youngster?" "I am naval adviser to the Commander-in-chief, sir," was the reply, with a respectful salute. If this story be true—and he is always as ready to meet an unexpected contingency—it may be safely predicted that this bright little naval officer bids fair some day to become a Commander-in-chief himself in our first line of defence, unless some untoward circumstance occurs to blight his promising career.

CHAPTER IV

STELLENBOSCH—THE CENTRE OF SEDITION

THE Dutch in South Africa think nothing of going twenty miles on horseback or in ox waggons to see a friend, and, indeed, the English colonists trouble as little after a short residence in the country.

There is not half the fuss made about it as there is about going from the West-End in London to Highgate or Hampstead. This being so, one may almost say that Stellenbosch is a suburb of Cape Town.

Most people in England have now heard of this town, both on account of its unenviable reputation and on account of having relations and friends in the artillery and mounted troops, who have been stationed in this remount camp from time to time.

Then there is a military colloquialism that has an unpleasant sound for those to whom it is applied. To be "Stellenbosched" is a term often used to describe some one who has blundered or is not wanted on account of inefficiency.

In one way or another everybody has heard of Stellenbosch, and all loyal subjects of the King regard the place as the centre of sedition, where it is rumoured bonfires were lighted on the hills to celebrate reverses to British arms. Whether that be so or not, true it is that the use of the Victoria College was refused for a concert in aid of sick soldiers in the remount camp at the beginning of the war, though it is freely lent in

less stormy times for charitable purposes of a like description. This circumstance gave rise to much unfavourable comment in political circles in Cape Town, especially as the college receives a Government grant.

Since I have been in South Africa I have taken the greatest interest in the animals for the mounted troops, as so much in this war depends on their numbers and on their condition for active service. The opportunity, therefore, of visiting this remount camp was not to be neglected, more especially as it was my last chance, for I was on the eve of starting for Beira (this was written on the voyage between Cape Town and Delagoa Bay, where it was posted), to go thence into Rhodesia to join, if possible, General Sir F. Carrington's force. Further, I thought it would enable me to see one of the oldest European settlements in South Africa, and ascertain at the same time the cause of its unenviable reputation. My excursion to the camp, and the drive to Mr. Herold's farm, which the principal veterinary officer thought of purchasing for the Government as a convalescent hospital for sick horses, concluded the first half of my programme.

A visit to Stellenbosch is always recommended to strangers as being a good example of an old Dutch town. It is situated in a beautiful valley on the north bank of the Eerst River, in the centre of an amphitheatre of picturesque mountains. The highest and most perfect in outline is called "Stellenbosch Mountain," and another, further to the left, is known as "Simon's Mountain." The houses are regularly built, and are surrounded by gardens full of lovely flowers of every hue; the streets are spacious, with venerable oaks on each side, forming long avenues of trees in all directions, such as are seldom seen in any town in Europe. Streams of swift-running water flow on both sides of the streets all through the year, making

a murmuring sound agreeable to hear, and refreshing the air as they speed on their rapid course. Stellenbosch is thirty-six miles distant from Cape Town, and is bounded on the north by the Paarl Division, on the east by the Division of Worcester and Caledon, on the south by the sea, and on the west by the Cape Division. Since the date of its foundation Stellenbosch has always taken a leading part in politics, in religion, in society, and in education.

Before the front entrance of the Theological Seminary, which stands on the site of the house where the first governor lived—Simon van der Stell—rises a stately oak, planted there some 200 years ago by his wife, whose maiden name was Bosch, which, united, gave the place its name and originated the compound word of Stellenbosch.

The landdrost, or magistrate, in oldest Dutch days, ruled over a district that practically had no northern limit, except the power, for the time being, of the Governor and Council in Cape Town, which they exercised merely to make themselves felt by native tribes. Later on, however, districts were cut off north and west. Stellenbosch is the second oldest parish of the Dutch Reformed Church, and was established in 1685. In Roman Catholic or Church of England ecclesiastical language and meaning it would be called the second oldest diocese in South Africa—a very extensive and a very important bishopric of the Church.

Formerly the ministers of the Dutch Reformed Church often completed their studies in Holland or some other European country, but now every student receives his theological instruction at the seminary in Stellenbosch, which is a separate establishment altogether from the Victoria College. With such unlimited means of forming public opinion, it is easily seen how Stellenbosch exercises such a powerful influence on all political questions throughout South Africa.

Religion, in all ages, has ever been an important factor in determining the politics of a State.

After the occupation of the Cape by the British in 1815, which was ceded with other Dutch possessions by a formal treaty to the British Government by the Kingdom of Holland for the sum of £15,000,000, and not by conquest as is thought by some, Stellenbosch became one of the places where British officers on furlough from India stayed for their health or for hunting; and while there they entered freely into the pleasures and participated into the home life of the Dutch residents. It was at this time a settled and wealthy community, depending on its chief industry—wine making—the same as it does to-day, with the addition of cattle rearing and sheep runs.

A strong Dutch feeling has always been a dominant feature in the place, but in those days it did not as now mean anti-British. When the route to India was shortened by the opening of the Suez Canal, which made it possible for British officers to return home on short leave, they ceased coming to Stellenbosch, and shortly after the good feeling was replaced by one antagonistic to British rule. This is attributable in a great measure to a long series of mistakes of Imperial policy. By sad experience we are now reaping the error of our ways, and are more disposed to treat with respect and consideration than we formerly were the opinions of our public men on the spot; who, if they are worthy of the confidence placed in them, are surely in a better position to gauge public opinion in the Colony and the requirements of the country than stay-at-home politicians, however well-intentioned they may be. The best security of all for a steady and consistent method of government, however, will be to place the affairs of the Colonies, like our foreign policy and the navy, outside the arena of party discussion.

Stellenbosch, being the chief educational centre, attracts

students from all parts of South Africa. Sir John Herschell's system of local government schools first obtained there, many of the masters being Scottish; then came Government schools, superseded by a system of Government-aided schools in 1865, under the superintendent-generalship of Sir Langham Dale. In 1874 the Higher Education Act was passed to enable the Government to found, at suitable centres, colleges for professional education, and such as was required by aspirants for university degrees, and the outcome has been that five have been established: the South African College, Cape Town; the Victoria College, Stellenbosch; the Diocesan College, Rondebosch; St. Andrew's College, Grahamstown; and Gill College, Somerset East.

Nearly all the students of Stellenbosch are of Dutch or Huguenot descent, coming from homes in the colony, and not a few from the Transvaal and the Free State, owing to the constant and close intercourse in business, intermarriages, and much travelling with the late Republics in times of peace. They are of excellent physique, good ability, though lacking the indirect means of education enjoyed by youths of the same social standing in older civilised countries. They are good riders, good shots, good football players, and are in every respect like college boys in England. Their occupations and amusements are also much the same; there is the College Volunteer Corps, the Victorian Athletic Club, the Mountain Club, tennis clubs, and debating societies.

The buildings of the Victoria College are very imposing, in the Greek order of architecture. When they were opened in 1881, on the two hundredth anniversary of the founding of Stellenbosch, our late Queen graciously permitted them to bear her name, which shows that a better state of feeling existed at that date than is unhappily now the case.

The youths who go to the Victoria College for their education in the majority of cases have had their young minds saturated with disrespect for their British fellow colonists before they arrive, and in spite of the efforts made by Professor Walker and Professor Macdonald to stimulate a better feeling, their best endeavours are nullified by other influences, especially by those of the Dutch Reformed Church. When a circumstance occurs, such as a refusal by the Rev. F. H. Neethling of the hall for a concert for sick soldiers, the students all go against the professors and stand by their minister. Since it is destined that the British and Dutch are to live together in South Africa, and that all will soon be united once again under the Union Jack, let us hope that old animosities will soon die away, and that the Dutch will, in the near future, be as loyal and true to the Throne and Empire as are the French Canadians to-day. It is the natural and the best thing that could happen, for in every phase of political and home life the interests of Cape Colony and Natal are intimately connected with the Transvaal and Free State, the latter being branches of the Colonies that were only severed within living memory.

In support of the foregoing statements, especially as regards the propaganda of disloyalty to the British Empire, circulated through the medium of Dutch Ministers in Cape Colony, I feel I cannot bring stronger corroborative evidence than the following extract taken from a pamphlet published by the Imperial South African Association, which has the honour of having Lord Windsor as its President and Mr. George Wyndham, late Under Secretary of State for War, as its chief original starter :—

“The Rev. A. Morrees is the clergyman of the Dutch church at the Paarl. After the news of the battle of Magersfontein he held a special service of thanksgiving in his church, for which the opening hymn was, ‘Rejoice, the Lord is King.’ The other

hymns and prayers were full of thanks and rejoicing. Mr. Morrees himself preached the sermon, taking for his special subject 'The Empire of Babylon.' He drew out a very clever parallel between the downfall of that empire and of another, which might have been taken to mean either the British Empire or a spiritual Babylon, but there was no doubt on the part of any of his hearers as to which was meant. He also has a son who left the Cape Colony before the outbreak of the war to join the Boer forces. The Rev. Professor de Vos is a professor in the theological seminary at Stellenbosch, which is the Dutch educational centre of Cape Colony, and has been used to promote in every way the growth of Afrikaner ideals among the students, and the spread of the 'Taal' as opposed to the English language. Two of the professor's sons left the colony shortly before the war broke out, avowedly to join the forces of the Republic. It is customary for the Cape Colonial Government to give railway tickets at reduced fares to students returning home from the college upon the certificate from one of the professors certifying that they are *bona fide* students returning home on vacation. When the Transvaal students, who were studying at Stellenbosch were commandeered before the outbreak of the war to join the Transvaal forces, the professor furnished them with certificates that they were actually going home on vacation, and they did obtain their railway tickets at reduced rates in consequence, so that the Transvaal forces were actually recruited, through the professor's action, at the expense of the Cape Colony. One of the professor's sons, who joined the Transvaal forces before the war broke out, wrote back that he had gone to fight for his nation. The professor, with others of the Stellenbosch College, has been most active in advocating, organising, and extending the boycott of the British loyalists, in order to make it impossible for British and Dutch people ever to live side by side again in South Africa. Mr. D. J. De Wet is a field cornet in the division of Prince Albert in the Cape Colony. He made a fiery and most disloyal speech at the Graaf Reinet meeting, and has before attempted to do very much harm by propagating in his district the inventions of the Boer Press regarding abominable and unprintable atrocities and barbarities said to have been perpetrated by British soldiers and volunteers. The other two members of this delegation—viz., Mr. Botha, of

Richmond, and Mr. Du Plessis, a farmer, of Cradock, are unknown men, or, at any rate, have not been able to be identified, as both names are very common among the Franco-Dutch families of the Cape Colony. These are the men who claim to represent the majority of the people of the Cape Colony, who preach the gospel of peace and who profess loyalty."

CHAPTER V

THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT

THE brilliant management of the arrangements of the Transport Department of the Admiralty, as is evidenced by the conveyance of troops, guns, ammunition, and stores, has been as conspicuous during the present war as it was when called upon to make similar efforts to meet the exigencies caused by the Crimean War and the Indian Mutiny, when a high encomium was passed upon it by both the Home and Indian Governments. The way the Transport Department has responded to the herculean labours thrust upon it since our troubles began in South Africa in October 1899, has been as gratifying to the Admiralty as it has been the envy and admiration of our foreign friends and rivals.

Lord Charles Beresford in his celebrated memorandum, which, as a Lord of the Admiralty, he presented to the Board for consideration, says :—

“ The Transport Department appears to be in a thoroughly well-regulated condition, looking at what occurred in the Suakim campaign, when in a short time this department was enabled to place as many as 116 vessels of various tonnage at the disposal of the Government.”

What a small figure is this as compared with the 400 ships it has chartered during this war, and which are constantly running to and fro round the coast, conveying troops and stores, guns and horses, 6000 miles at least, from the shores of England, to say nothing of those ships

bringing contingents from Australia, India, and Canada, together with freights of all sorts from the Argentines, or from anywhere that can contribute horses or any war material that is required by a large army in the field. It is an achievement the world has never seen before! Such a display of magnificent Atlantic liners has never before assembled in one place at one time in the history of nations! The ships in Table Bay are a sight to see! If our rulers really wished to impress the world with the boundless wealth and great strength of England, it would only be necessary to bring together all our merchant steamers that have been employed by Government for this campaign, and with the vessels belonging to the Royal Navy on the station, form a cordon round them. This after all would only show to the observers a section of the ships in the mercantile service which carry our vast commerce all over the world, and would but represent the men-o'-war that form the ordinary naval establishment of the Cape of Good Hope and west coast of Africa station.

A day or two ago, after leaving Simon's Bay, where there were five imposing ships of war, and six magnificent vessels belonging to the Peninsular and Oriental Company, the *Orient*, the "City" Companies with two of the "Donald Currie" Company, the three beautiful yachts owned by Lord Brassey, Colonel Harry McCalmont, and Mr. Bibby, I counted in Table Bay 130 ships, ranging from between 12,000 to 5000 tons each, with a large number of smaller craft, almost all chartered by the Government for transport purposes in connection with this war. Even this large number did not include the vessels actually alongside discharging their freight of men and war material of every description, nor those that were preparing to return to England with sick and wounded, making a total of about six vessels a day for the Transport Department officers to see coaled and safely in or out of port.

In spite of the great demands made by the Government on the Royal Mail steamers, our network of postal and passenger traffic has in no way had to suffer, so great are the resources of the merchant service.

At the South Arm, and, indeed, at every wharf in the docks that has anything to do with the Government stores, Sir Edward Chichester, principal transport officer, is the man at the helm. He is generally said to be the hardest worked man in Cape Town. In fact, nothing can exceed the zeal and energy, the tact and temper, of every officer engaged in the embarkation and transport of 250,000 persons, and more, with their baggage and all the impedimenta of war that has passed through their hands since hostilities began, to say nothing of the horses and mules for 40,000 mounted troops and road transport which have been gathered from the four quarters of the globe, and been landed in Table Bay or coast ports, and in due course sent up country by train. The coaling of so many ships, providing stores, and repairing damages incidental to vessels on long and trying sea voyages, heavily tax the resources of the responsible officials.

The officers of the Royal Navy in the Transport Department have had the hearty support of the captains and officers of the vessels that have been chartered for War Office requirements, and the Government cannot feel too grateful to them for their co-operation, especially as there is no hope-of-reward spirit in their cheerful and ready service. Without their aid the enormous army now in South Africa could not have been transported across 6000 miles of sea without friction, and with no greater losses than two vessels, the *Lismore Castle* and the *Denton Grange*, and one collision, the *Wingfield* with the ill-fated mail steamer *Mexican*.

After the disembarking the naval officers have completed their task, and the military staff officers take on the work which, for them, means plenty of hard labour and late hours.

Their work is not such a straightforward affair. They have to separate and sort out the cargoes that have been deposited in the sheds to suit the requirements of various departments of the Army and their sub-divisions, as well as for individuals. Everything being wanted at once, everything very important, but which orders and unavoidable counter orders from headquarters often reduce their energies to a state of "love's labour lost."

It would be almost impossible adequately to describe the great service that the Transport Department of the Admiralty has rendered to the country in the course of the war in South Africa.

By the aid of a few facts and figures concerning the hundred odd vessels that have been chartered as transports since the month of October 1899 some idea may be conveyed to the British taxpayer, who so cheerfully bears the increase of expenditure which has been imposed by the Government to meet the consequent heavy expenses.

But for the aid that the mercantile marine was able and ready to give, the gigantic task of transporting 250,000 troops from England, India, Australia, and Canada, and landing them and their horses, stores, and munitions of war in various parts of Africa could not have been accomplished. Nearly every company has contributed its quota, and it is not that the Leyland Line has done better than any other that I have selected one of their vessels, the *Armenian*, as an example to enlighten the public and to show them how their money is being spent. It is merely a chance circumstance. When this vessel pursues her usual avocations she carries cattle and cargo between Boston and Liverpool, and has accommodation for about sixty passengers. She is admirably adapted for the purpose of carrying cavalry, and for steadiness and cuisine she is as good a ship as I ever wish to travel in. She is a large boat—8885 gross tonnage, 525 ft. long,

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and averages fourteen knots an hour in her transatlantic voyages.

On October 1 she arrived in Liverpool from Boston with 700 head of cattle and no passengers. Shortly afterwards Captain Pitt, R.N., surveyed her on behalf of the Admiralty, and she was taken over as a transport. The vessel was then put into the hands of naval contractors, and fitted up for the accommodation of troops and horses—an undertaking that costs a few thousands of pounds. On October 17 she sailed for Tilbury Dock and arrived on the 20th, embarked there the 66th, 14th, and 7th batteries of Royal Field Artillery and an ammunition column, making altogether 26 officers, 730 men, and 651 horses, under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Hunt. For two days after embarkation the ship was detained by a dense fog, but got off on the 24th at four o'clock in the afternoon, together with the transports *Orient*, *City of Vienna*, *Mohawk*, and the *Nomadia*. Good weather prevailed throughout the voyage, though going through the tropics it was very hot, a loss being entailed of fifteen horses.

On November 13 Transport No. 25 arrived in Cape Town at 1 P.M., but was ordered to proceed with all speed to Durban, and accordingly sailed from Table Bay at four o'clock, sighting as she left the *Orient*, the second to come in out of the five ships that left the Tilbury Dock at the same time. Durban was reached on the 16th, but before the bar could be crossed the ship's draught had to be lightened to 20 ft. by pumping out her ballast tanks, after which the *Armenian* was made fast to the quay at 4 P.M. By five o'clock the first train with guns left for Estcourt, and by five the next morning all the men and horses, guns, ammunition, and stores were disembarked, entrained, and were *en route* to the front. Thus was the whole business of covering 7000 miles of sea completed without casualties in twenty-four days and one hour.

The officer who superintended the disembarkation was Captain Holland, of the Royal Indian Marine. The *Armenian* arrived at Durban, landed her troops, and was anchored in the "roads" awaiting fresh orders before some of the transports that had sailed with her had reached Cape Town. The subsequent fate of the 66th and 7th batteries is a sad story, and there is no need for me to describe how badly they were cut up, how eleven of their guns were captured and taken to Pretoria. It is also well known that Lord Roberts' only son was killed in trying to save them, and that Captain Reed, of the 66th battery, got a V.C. in a similar attempt. Nor need I enumerate the names of the brave soldiers of the King who lost their lives, were wounded, or were taken prisoners on this occasion. Many of them were of the *Armenian's* first freight. The names will readily occur to many of my readers, whose losses they still mourn.

On November 21 the *Armenian* once again set sail southwards, and having observed an economical speed arrived on the 24th in Table Bay. The captain immediately reported himself to Sir Edward Chichester, at the clock tower, the principal transport officer, who is so well known and so greatly admired for his untiring devotion to duty.

The capture of our guns and other features in the battle of Colenso occasioned a feeling of great depression in England, and the Government was straining every nerve to retrieve the loss. The *Armenian* had done so exceedingly well that the Director of Transports was anxious to secure the s.s. *Victorian*, sister ship, which had just returned from Boston, as a transport, but the directors of the Leyland Line could not see their way to this unless the *Armenian* was released at Cape Town to carry on their great transatlantic trade. The times were pressing, the *Victorian* in England was better than the *Armenian* in South Africa, so the fittings for troops and horses were landed in Cape Town, and Transport

No. 25 sailed on December 5 for Boston, U.S., going *via* St. Vincent for coal, and arriving on the 28th, there to resume her ordinary commercial duties. On January 5, 1900, she left again, having filled up with passengers, cargo, and cattle, and steamed into the River Mersey on the 15th.

The *Armenian* was then again put into the hands of the contractors, fitted up once more to convey cavalry, and sailed to Southampton on February 4. On the 7th 500 men of the 7th Dragoon Guards were embarked, 200 men, drafts for other regiments, and Bearer Company No. 20, 476 horses, and 35 officers, all under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Lowe, 7th Dragoon Guards.

The 7th Dragoon Guards has always been a popular regiment, and in spite of the chagrin felt throughout the country consequent on the reverses to our arms that had marked up to that date the course of the war, they had a hearty send off. By this time not only had the Government, but every "man in the street," fully realised that the Boers were not like the Dervishes. By sad experience the nation had learnt that a "safe return" to all the fine fellows who had left for the Cape was not by any means assured. Her Royal Highness Princess Beatrice intended to wish them "God speed," but was unable to do so. At nine o'clock in the morning the embarking of the troops began, and at two o'clock they were all on board, and the *Armenian*, as Transport No. 25, was again under weigh.

The captain told me, he on one occasion shipped 800 head of cattle in forty-five minutes in order to catch the tide.

The sickness among the troops on this voyage out was extraordinarily severe, nine men died before reaching Cape Town. When the *Armenian* conveyed the artillerymen to Durban the health of the troops was excellent.

Shortly after leaving England both the men and horses of the 7th Dragoon Guards began to develop influenza, and the

first man to die had complications of pneumonia added, and was buried at sea just before the ship arrived at St. Vincent ; another died while coaling there. The weather was beautiful—warm, with nice dry breezes. The origin of the sickness could only be accounted for by the fact that the weather was very bleak on the day of embarkation, which had thoroughly chilled the men and animals before starting. The horses were suffering from the same complaint, though only six out of 475 died on the voyage, whilst nine men succumbed to the disease. Whatever started the epidemic, it certainly was very severe among both officers and men. In most cases the symptoms varied considerably from those that usually characterise “*la grippe*.”

When the regular hospital on board was full, the sick were comfortably accommodated on the starboard side of the saloon deck ; one officer was nursed in the chart room and another in the captain’s cabin. At one time or another nearly every person on the ship was attacked, there being forty or fifty cases a day, many of which were complicated with pneumonia. No effort was spared to combat the disease. There was no scarcity of skilled advice or trained attendance, for, in addition to the medical men attached to the 7th Dragoon Guards, there was the 20th Bearer Company, with the full complement of doctors and trained orderlies. Yet in spite of every care and attention each day claimed its victims.

A funeral at sea is always an impressive sight, particularly if it is a military one, attended by volley-firing. If, in addition, this melancholy office has to be performed twice a day, a great gloom soon settles over the unhappy ship, and forcibly re-acts on those who are sick and who recognise the meaning of the firing. They naturally inquire which of their comrades has gone, and wonder if it will be their own turn next.

Everything that skill and kindness could suggest was done

for the sick by Colonel Lowe, Major Reilly, and Captain P. Jones, R.A.M.C., and whatever was good for them was given without stint. To prevent the depression caused by the funerals, the volley-firing was commenced a little before and continued after the three regulation shots, so that the sick men were misled as to the meaning of the firing.

Though stern in discipline nothing could exceed the kindness of Colonel Lowe to the sick and dying troopers of his regiment, sitting beside their cots, speaking words of comfort to the poor fellows, no matter what hour of the night they might pass away or wish to see him. So utterly depressed were his men becoming that at last he organised tournaments, boxing matches, and smoking-concerts in the evening. A few of the brass instruments were also brought out to make up a band. Thus by order the men were obliged to amuse themselves, the example being set by the colonel himself. The effect was soon perceived on the spirits and general health of the troops.

At noon, March 1, the *Armenian* steamed into Table Bay. The next day she was berthed in the South Arm Dock; all night was spent in discharging stores and baggage; and on the morning of the 3rd she disembarked troops and horses, and retired to anchor in the roadstead to await orders. The 7th Dragoon Guards proceeded to Maitland Camp, where health and vigour soon returned to them.

After transporting 475 horses it can readily be understood that a ship requires to be thoroughly cleaned, and the *Armenian's* crew set about doing this with a will, so as to be ready to execute the next commission as soon as the Government's orders were received.

Every week thousands of troops were landed in Cape Town, together with tons of stores of every description, from an old shoe for the "Absent-minded Beggar" fund to a siege gun of fifteen tons weight. What to do with all the

things, and where to find storage room, was a problem that taxed to the utmost all Sir E. Chichester's inventive genius and powers of organisation. Then the ships that bring them have to be dealt with. To coal them is a big business, and was in the charge of Lieutenant Lingham, R.N. The victualing of them is very important, though the feeding arrangements are generally undertaken by the various companies to which the ships belong. It appeared to many to be a great waste of public money to have had so many ships idling at Cape Town and Simonstown, but how to utilise them, and yet have sufficient at hand in case of a sudden emergency, was a matter that required grave consideration.

For instance, this transport costs the Government £13,000 a month, whether she is employed or lying idle in Table Bay or Simon's Bay. Sir Edward Chichester is a conscientious public servant, and though many transports were apparently doing nothing in those waters, yet he had his eye on them, and, in the circumstances, did the best with them in the country's interest.

Mr. Chamberlain having asked for 2000 additional Bushmen from Australia it was decided that the *Armenian* should go to Sydney to fetch the New South Wales contingent. So after filling up with coal she proceeded eastward on March 19, and in twenty days entered the harbour, averaging on the run thirteen and a half knots on seventy tons of coal per day. The contingent consisted of forty officers, two non-commissioned officers, 717 men, and 749 horses. For the extra 241 horses that were taken on above the number shipped for the 7th Dragoon Guards more fittings had to be put into the ship at Sydney, and, of course, the animals were more cramped in consequence. Still, only thirteen died, and there were no cases of illness on board. These 717 horses were embarked and placed in their stalls in two hours less ten minutes!

The day of the departure of the Imperial Bushmen was proclaimed a public holiday, which enabled the colonists to display their enthusiasm and loyalty. It was regarded as a great compliment to the colony that the Imperial Government had actually asked for the troops.

Previously contingents had been offered, and the Colonial Office had accepted. The population was simply wild with excitement, and hundreds longed to join, but had to be refused as the numbers had been made up. There is no end to the legions that might still be mobilised if his Majesty's Government were but to hold up a little finger.

So eager were some men to go that, in spite of the greatest vigilance, there were twenty-seven stowaways on Transport No. 25, and it was the same in the case of the *Victorian* that went to Melbourne, the *Manhattan* at Hobart Town, and the *Port of Manchester* at Brisbane.

When the *Armenian* embarked the troops at Sydney, after having taken in 4000 tons of coal, thousands came to witness the operation, and it being St. George's Day, the patron saint of England came in for more recognition and honour than usually falls to his lot.

In a weak moment permission was given to the friends of troops to come on board, as the ship had to wait for twenty-four hours for the men to settle down to prepare their messes, &c., as some of them had never seen the sea before. In a few minutes every possible place was crowded with people, and when the whistle was blown to clear not a stir was made; every effort to induce them to return to the shore was foiled. They were deaf alike to threats and persuasion. At last, in desperation, the troops were ordered below, and then gentle pressure was brought to bear on their friends. Such enthusiasm has rarely been witnessed in the Colonies before, and has fairly outdone the Mother Country in her most excited moments. Colonel Mackay was in command, and a

finer set of officers and men for physique has never been brought together. Hardly a man was under 5 ft. 9 in., and many of them were 6 ft. 3 in.

The War Office having received the intelligence that certain Boer commandos were laying in stores and ammunition in the Zoutspansberg district, the Government determined to send the Bushmen into Rhodesia, *via* Beira, to meet them; so the *Armenian* sailed away from Australian waters and brought them all safely into the muddy waters of the Pungwe River on May 17. On arrival the captain thought they were going to leave him in the same hurry as the artillerymen and 7th Dragoon Guards had done, but he was vastly mistaken.

The military authorities, with the concurrence of the senior naval officer, thought the troops were far better off on board the *Armenian* than they could be in camp at Beira. The chances of their being moved up by the railway were very remote, as its incapacities for the military requirements were only too well known to the man on the spot; so for twelve days longer they had to be kept on board, and at the end of that time the captain discovered what excellent appetites those Australians had!

He certainly fed them well; every man per day had 1½ lb. of fresh baked bread, 2 lb. of fresh meat, Irish stew or curried meat for breakfast, soup, beef, and potatoes for dinner, and (pudding on Sunday) tea, bread, and butter, cold meat and pickles for supper. No salt food was used. The 7th Dragoon Guards were fed in the same way, but the artillerymen, on the first voyage, were on Government rations. The captain laid in a stock before he left Sydney that he thought would be ample. He began with 1400 tons of fresh water, 65,000 lb. of beef, tons of flour and potatoes, 12,000 bottles of mineral water, 2000 bottles of beer, boxes of tea, cases of concentrated milk, and innumerable other stores in

similar quantities; but when he left Beira for Cape Town very little was left. The number of men fed on board from Sydney to the disembarkation of the Bushmen was equal to 1426 officers and 23,592 men for one day, independently of the ship's crew of 86 men. The *Armenian* started as a transport in October, and has up to date at Cape Town—June 6—steamed 40,504 nautical miles, and has never stopped at sea for repairs or packing glands of engines. She has maintained a speed for that long distance of thirteen knots an hour, and at a coal consumption of seventy tons per day, which speaks well for the architect of the ship, for the engineers, and for all the officers.

The *Armenian* is still employed as a Government transport, and continues to give the same excellent results, which is typical of all the ships of the company to which she belongs.

Sir Edward Chichester is a naval officer such as one's fancy pictures, and his departure from Cape Town is sorely regretted by everybody, especially by captains of transports, for with all his peculiarities, which struck terror to the lax and inefficient, he was very popular down in the docks, being no respecter of persons. Like most naval officers he is a great autocrat, but is so nice about it that the majority of people prefer his manner to that of a perfect democrat.

I arrived in Cape Town in the Christmas week of 1899 on board the s.s. *Tantallon Castle*, which on that voyage had brought out the siege train—15th Southern and 15th Western Garrison Artillery. The holidays made the state of the docks more unsatisfactory than usual. The wharfs could not be cleared because the natives were away or would not work. The howitzer guns that composed the train were heavy material to move about more than was necessary.

The military wanted the *Tantallon Castle* to go round to the South Arm, so that the guns might be grounded near the railway that would take them to wherever they might be

ordered to operate against the enemy, but the South Arm was reserved for transports, and the interests of the company clashed. The question was finally settled by the siege train being dumped down on the wharf where the ship had anchored, but in spite of all obstacles it was in a few hours entrained for the Free State.

My education in the transport of troops and war material made creditable progress in the two days I spent in Cape Town docks.

I often bethought me of the experience gained by Sir Henry Ward, High Commissioner of the Ionian Islands, when he arrived in Marseilles just as the French army was embarking for Italy, and I wondered whether he would have considered we embarked and disembarked our batteries of artillery, regiments of cavalry, and battalions of infantry and all the impedimenta of war with greater facility and rapidity than our French neighbours did on the occasion—feats in military transport that so fired his enthusiasm as to make him appreciate the advantages, and do all in his power to promote organisation for war, instead of regarding such preparations as useless trouble and waste of public money.*

When I thought I saw a suitable opportunity I asked Sir Edward Chichester where I might see the Commander-in-chief of the station. I told him I had a letter of introduction to him from Lord Walter Kerr. I did not know it then, but I have since learnt that Sir Edward, beneath a rough exterior, hides a kind and friendly heart.

His reply to my inquiry was: "In Simonstown, I suppose," and this brief answer was said in such a gruff tone that I was frightened and said no more. Two months elapsed before I saw him again, and as I had been told by the late admiral, the Hon. William Ward, that I have a special claim on the good will of all naval officers, I thought I

* See "Naval Administrations," by Sir John Briggs.

must screw up my courage to say something to make Sir Edward a little more friendly towards me.

With a good deal of perturbability I went to him after dinner and nervously asked if he remembered me. His smile reassured me, and when he answered, "Of course I do," I felt it was all right. "But why have you never been to see me?" he inquired. "Because I was too much afraid to come without sufficient excuse," I answered.

"No wonder! you *could* want me to do anything for you when you had a ticket for the Commander-in-chief. Where is mine?"

"I have one for you too, but you scared me so that I have never been brave enough to present it; I would sooner have given it to an angry bear at the end of a long pole!"

This so amused the captain that from that hour we have been the best of friends. Everybody likes Sir Edward Chichester. He was the most popular man in Cape Town. He certainly was kinder to me in essentials than anybody in South Africa, which is saying a great deal when every one was so good.

I must give my readers an American's opinion of the principal transport officer. Two men were shown into his office in the clock tower one morning dressed in mufti—one wearing a bright green tie. Their names had been sent up, but Sir Edward chose to ignore the fact.

When they entered one sat in a chair and the other occupied the corner of the writing-table. Turning to his secretary Sir Edward said: "Who is that fellow in a green tie?" (Secretaries to naval officers soon learn that silence is golden, and to answer with a smile.) The wearer replied, I am Mr. So and So, veterinary officer on such a ship that has arrived in the bay from America. But he did not say sir, nor did he change his position on the writing-table—and turning to the other visitor Sir Edward said, "And who are you, sir?" "I am Major ——— of the so and so ship, sir."

“Then why are you not in uniform?” “Because we are not on duty, sir.” “What are you doing in my office then?” “We come to report our arrival, sir.”

“Don’t you call that being on duty, you d—— fool?” and turning to the veterinary surgeon, Sir Edward said, “Get off my table and dress yourself in uniform before you come to see me.”

Whilst this duologue had been going on between Sir Edward and the major, the American vet. sat on the corner of the table dangling his left leg and appearing much amused. When ordered to get off the table he stood up and leisurely eyed Sir Edward from head to foot, and back again, and said: “Well, I guess you are a rum joker! I wish I had brought my camera with me. I should like a ‘snapshot’ of you.”

This piece of impertinence brought forth a whole broadside of strong language, which sent the major and the wearer of the green tie hurriedly down the corkscrew staircase, but in his exit the undaunted Yankee was heard to say, “I will not be done out of my snapshot. I will wait about until I see you come out. I want to show my friends in America what a specimen you are!”

Sir Edward often refers to this episode, and repeats the story with a heartiness and gusto that can only be found when sailors “spin a yarn.”

A visitor going to the clock tower for the first time comes to the conclusion that it must be the office of a martinet.

On the right-hand doorpost is a board on which in flaming red letters the following words are painted: “This is the Principal Transport Office and not a general inquiry office.” Upstairs in the office itself is another board which gives the agreeable information that there is “No red tape here.”

Lord Roberts, in his despatch of April 16, 1901, gives great praise to Sir Edward and his staff for the work done at the docks. See the end of this volume.

CHAPTER VI

THE ARMY FIELD TRANSPORT

THE following remarks on this most important branch of the army must of necessity be very inadequate to the subject, but I feel that incompetent though I am to deal at all with the work done by the Army Service Corps in South Africa during this great war, the leading facts that I have collected may possibly be read by those who would not venture on a more comprehensive treatment of the subject. Except for occasional letters to the daily press, the public are but ill-informed on the duties and responsibilities devolving on the non-combatant branches of the army.

Graphic accounts are constantly given of the fighting and deeds of valour in this or that battle, or the conspicuous bravery of this or that outpost, but little is heard of the arduous labours of those who are entrusted with the transport, with the feeding, the clothing, and the regular supply of ammunition to the fighting men, upon which success depends.

The following lines appeared in *Lloyd's Weekly* on April 8, 1900, and were copied into the *Beira Post* in which journal I read them, and as they give such an amusing description of the life and work of the Army Service Corps, I reproduce them.

"THE ARMY SERVICE MAN.

"Tearin' onward thro' the land, marchin' day an' night,
A-flankin' 'ere, attackin' there, till the last big finishin' fight,
'Is country's proud of Tommy, the man as carries the gun,
But what of the Army Service Man and what of the work
'e's done ?

It's 'waggon's' up, an' 'clothin'' 'ere, and grub for
 everywhere,
 An' the non-combatant 'A.S.M.' 'as got to get it there.
 So 'e 'as to get up with the bloomin' sun an' stay up
 with the bloomin' moon
 A shovin' on stores of every kind from boots to a war
 balloon.

"There's Bobs a-sittin' in Bloemfontein, an' Buller in Natal,
 Methuen up at Kimberley, Clements near Aliwal,
 All of 'em openin' 'ungry mouths for everything under the
 sun,
 Without the Army Service Man—Oh, what price 'im with
 the gun ?

It's 'girders' 'ere, an' ' pontoons' there, an' 'stores for
 the 'ospital base,'
 Odds an' ends for the gen'ral staff, and rice for the
 bloomin' sayce,
 An' the further they go the more they want, an' the
 'arder it is to send ;
 But the 'A.S.M.' 'as to get it there if it cost 'is life in
 the end.

"There's them that looks down on the 'A.S.M.' cause 'e ain't
 at work with a gun,
 But 'e's daily sweatin' his level best at work which 'as got to
 be done,
 For a gun's no good nor the man be'ind without both powder
 and grub ;

When the army wheel's a movin' round, the 'A.S.M.'s' the 'ub.
 Oh, it's 'forage' 'ere, an' 'sleepers' there, all sorts by
 the 'underd ton,
 An' the 'A.S.M.' 'as to 'andle the lot, an' get none of
 the fightin' fun ;
 'E gets scanty sleep an' curses free, an' 'e ain't much
 time to dine,
 But 'e's doin' 'is dooty for Country and Queen when 'e's
 feedin' the fightin' line."

E. HALLEWELL.

The words of Colonel Sir Howard Vincent, M.P., are, however, more in accordance with the character and work done by the Army Service Corps, and will be read with a seriousness that could not be given to the views of the Army Service man.

In a speech dealing with the army in South Africa in April 1901 he said in the section devoted to the feeding of the troops :

“It has been said that ‘an army fights on its belly.’ This is more true of the British army than of any other. The officers are accustomed to every luxury, the men to more ample fare. Unless well fed it can do nothing. It is, moreover, a voluntary army.

“To every British soldier in the field has to be conveyed every day for necessaries no less than 6½lb. avoirdupois, of which 1½lb. are for cases, tins, &c., leaving 5lb. net. For every native follower, 3lb. For every horse, 12lb. has to be brought up, and for every mule, 8lb.

“You may take it that, in round numbers, the field force in South Africa numbers 220,000 British troops, with 50,000 camp followers. That is a quarter of a million persons, with 70,000 horses and 30,000 mules, who have to be provided for upon this scale. The total is absolutely appalling. It means the daily conveyance of over 800 tons of necessaries for the troops, for camp followers, and for animals. The forethought necessary for the purchase of these enormous stores is great. The calculations must be made months ahead. But it is small compared to the difficulties of sea and land transport. Yet so smoothly have things worked, so admirable have been the arrangements, that not only have supplies never been short, but there has been scarcely a difficulty about a single meal, save on the loss of a convoy. I do not hesitate to say that no great army in the field has ever been so well fed, and with such extraordinary regularity.

“Honour to whom honour. The credit for this state of things rests in part with the authorities at home, in part with the Transport Department of the Admiralty, but most of all with the Army Service Corps and the organisers of army transport. It is a duty to pay homage to this service, whose labour is greatest,

whose opportunity for distinction is least, but upon whom depends the fighting efficiency of the soldier, more than upon armament, and more than upon leadership, for if it fail both guns and generals are valueless.

The troops in South Africa have received as a daily ration per man: 1lb. of fresh or preserved meat (increased to 1½lb. when the supply of cattle has been abundant), 1¼lb. of fresh bread or 1lb. of biscuit, flour, or meal, ½lb. of potatoes or other fresh vegetables, or ¼lb. of onions, or 1 tin of pea-soup, 1oz. of chocolate, or ¾oz. of coffee, or ½oz. of tea, with 3oz. of sugar, ½oz. of salt, and ⅓oz. of pepper; and 12oz. of jam or marmalade a week.

In addition to this, spirits and lime juice have to be carried for issue as the Commander-in-chief may direct, and hospital diets of arrowroot, bovril, brandy, calf's foot jelly, champagne, cocoa paste, corn flour, roast fowls, condensed milk, extracts of meat, port wine, &c., besides a large quantity of disinfectants.

These stores, independently of tents, clothing, arms, and ammunition, have had to be conveyed not alone by sea, but also along a single line of railway, both in Cape Colony and Natal, and then by ox-waggon and mule transport.

It will thus be seen that the force Great Britain, aided by her colonies, has put in the field in South Africa is the largest military expedition that has ever been landed in a country beyond the seas.

Being a great naval and over-sea commercial Power, the mere transport in ships of 250,000 men, with all their impedimenta of war, was a far easier accomplishment than would have been possible for any other nation. But to have found this vast number of men volunteering for military service in a distant country is no mean achievement for a non-military people.

The experience gained in the Zulu and other native wars in regard to cross-country transport has, naturally, been of the greatest use in making arrangements of the same nature for this campaign in South Africa. Officers with practical

knowledge have been appointed to fulfil specific duties, and have been brought from India or elsewhere for the express purpose.

Ox-waggon transport is the most useful and reliable for general stores when they cannot be conveyed by railway, if it were only possible to treat the animals with the consideration their nature requires. But alas! in time of war this is often out of the question when convoys have to keep together in the face of the enemy.

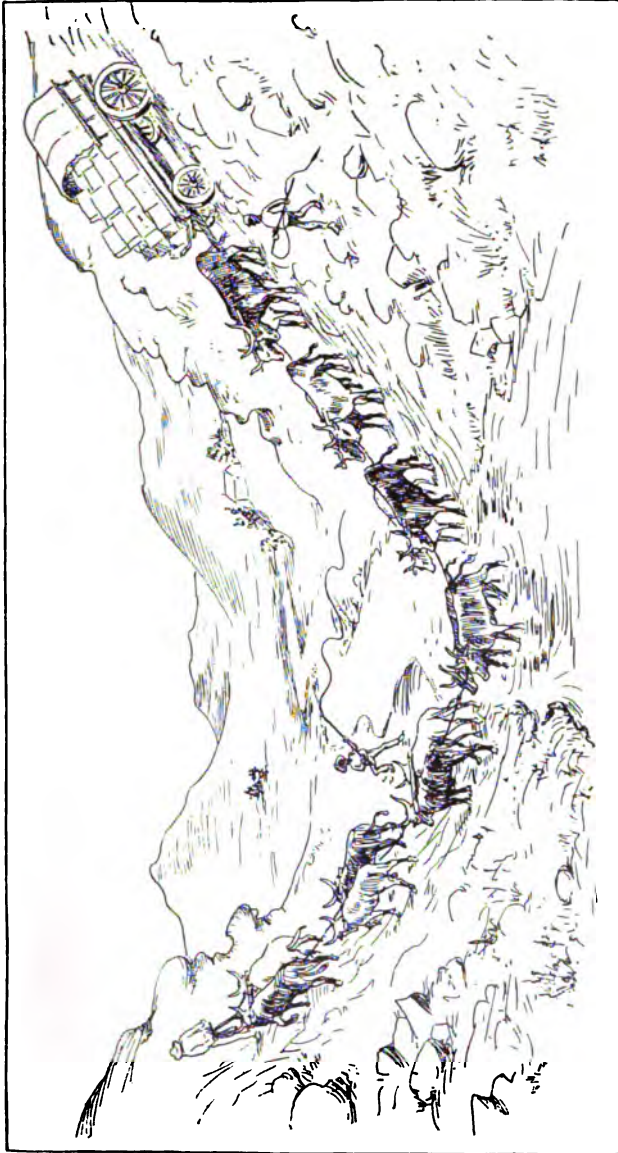
Oxen can with great endurance drag heavy loads over bad roads that would be impracticable for draught horses, and through drifts that are perfectly appalling.

With the transport great difficulties have arisen owing to these drifts, which have with great frequency to be crossed in Africa.

The real significance of the word "drift" is a river-bed running right across the road, which is caused by the heavy downpour of rain that falls at certain seasons of the year. Little by little the bottoms and sides of these water-courses become so worn away, that some of the drifts are fully fifty feet deep, and the incline of either bank is at an angle of forty-five degrees, and very rugged, with deep holes and big stones.

The sketch on the opposite page will give a better idea of one than any words of mine could convey to the mind, and show the efforts the animals make to reach the summit of the bank at the other side of the water-course.

Sometimes the bed of the river is dry, but at others it has a stream that flows at a rate of six miles an hour, through which the animals have to nearly swim across, having the whole weight of the waggons on their necks. All the energy of the drivers is required to urge them forward, both the use of the voice and whip being indispensably necessary to accomplish that end. The Naval Brigade had some severe



A DRIFT

30. 1911
ANNALS

struggling with their big guns in crossing drifts; they have often been entirely submerged. I shall never forget going through some terrible ones in a Cape cart, when I drove from Mafeking to Potchefstroom. They were agonising moments to me; but I am told that the worst drifts are the ones over the Rhenoster River and Rorke's Drift through the Buffalo River.

My experiences of drifts were made in fine weather. Not a shower of rain added to the trials inseparable to cross-country travelling over bad roads—I might say no roads, during a period of active hostilities.

The storms arise very suddenly and a small stream is quickly converted into an impassable mountain torrent. In a couple of hours the water will rise ten or fourteen feet, carrying all before it. This occurred in Ladysmith, and drowned a large number of Boers who were taking cover from our guns in the bed of the river.

In the wet seasons many of these fords are impassable for days, and in the case of rivers for weeks together.

After a heavy storm convoys are compelled to wait until repairs are made or a bridge can be thrown across, before the passage can be attempted.

Working parties under a Royal Engineer usually go on in advance to remove big stones, fill up the bottom a little and make the sides of the incline less slippery, by laying down matting or sugar canes, which they carry with them for the purpose.

The waggons have often to have double teams of oxen (32) harnessed to them, and the troops assist with long ropes, knee-deep in water. For heavy guns as many as twenty pairs of oxen were employed. When a waggon gets into serious difficulties it has to be off-loaded, and, at the opposite bank, loaded up again; in the meanwhile the long line of transport has to halt till the operation is finished.

Another difficulty in regard to all cross-country travelling in South Africa is the ever-changing condition of the tracks. What is six inches of dust will in an hour become a thick, greasy mud, that is even worse to contend with. Few who have not seen the effect of wet weather can realise the complete breakdown and block which takes place at the passage of even a single donga or ravine.

On the night of July 23, General Cunningham's brigade when at Bronkhors-spruit, a place thirty-five miles from Pretoria, suffered severely from the weather. There was a heavy thunderstorm, and the wind was bitterly cold—it generally is after rain in South Africa—and the troops had to sleep out in the open veld without their blankets, on account of the transport waggons having stuck in a bog and could not be released. On that night, one poor young officer in the Argyle and Sutherland Highlanders, Lieutenant McLaren, died of exposure, as did also five men and 500 oxen.

Without the much-enduring oxen the transport of such tons of food stuffs, clothing and ordnance stores could not have been accomplished, or had rinderpest been as severe during the past two seasons as has unhappily been the case in preceding years.

Another great thing in favour of oxen is that they require fewer hands to look after them than horses and mules; no rations need be carried for them, as their natural food is grass, which is nearly always to be found on the road. Their rate of progress, however, is slow. A single waggon can go three miles an hour, and can manage to cover fifteen or twenty miles a day, but with large convoys eight or ten is the most that is expected of them. Oxen should never be hurried, they should never be worked in the daytime. Night is the best time of all for oxen to trek, as it gives them the whole day to graze.

Generally the convoys start at 4 A.M. and march till 8; and then the cattle are outspanned until 6 o'clock in the evening, but, of course, in war-time many exceptions have to be made. When in the near presence of the enemy and the likelihood of capture, all consideration for the animals has to give way to the safety of the convoy. They have even been yoked twenty to thirty-six hours at a stretch.

Owing to the enormous extent of country over which the operations have taken place, the necessity of providing a field transport of such dimensions was never contemplated before the war began, nor was it fully realised for the first couple of months of actual hostilities. That such a provision was immediately possible was mainly due to the almost unlimited resources of money and sea transport which we as a nation possess, and to the readiness of the people in all parts of the empire to lend a helping hand to the authorities in Pall Mall.

In accordance with all the arrangements made by the War Office, the field transport was on the basis of one army corps, and to that extent there was material available, but the course of events has indisputably proved that a great continent cannot be conquered and held by such an insignificant force. At the same time, it would be unreasonable to suggest that such transport material as has been required for this campaign should have been already on hand in Government depôts in ordinary times of peace. The outlay and upkeep would not have been commensurate with the advantages gained.

With such a predisposition existing to unfavourably criticise and find fault with what has been done, it must be taken as exceptional praise that the field transport has not as yet been prominently brought to public notice, as was the fate of the Royal Army Medical Corps.

In the words of the distinguished writer on "Army

Reform" in his XIIIth article in the *Pall Mall Gazette*, he says :—

The corps (Army Service), though still in its infancy, has had to face the strain of a great war in South Africa, and has stood the test far better than many older organisations. There has been a remarkable absence of complaint regarding the feeding and transportation of our soldiers during the campaign, and it is one of the bright spots in the history of the war that the supply and transport services, which before the inauguration of the Army Service Corps have always been considered the weakest parts of our military machinery, should, in the light of the latest and severest test, have proved one of the strongest.

This well-merited eulogy applies equally to those who organised, collected, and transported the materials required from the English side of the water, as to those who received and employed them advantageously on the South African shores.

Great difficulty was experienced when the pressure of landing troops and stores was at its height owing to the smallness of Cape Town harbour and dock accommodation.

The continual arrival of vessels of all descriptions loaded to their fullest capacity and every description of man and materials rendered it impossible to immediately berth them, and find wharf space for their cargoes. Then, again, the stress of circumstances was so severe in these early days, that decisions arrived at one day had to be revised to suit the sudden exigencies that seemed of paramount importance at the moment. Orders to disembark ships in Cape Town were frequently countermanded in favour of Durban, or held in abeyance for a time; and so, with one thing and another, vessels had to wait for days and sometimes for weeks in the harbour before they discharged their cargoes.

When ships were berthed and unloaded the great work of supplying the fighting lines with stores came into play.

For those who have never been in South Africa, it is an impossibility for them to form any idea of the difficulties encountered by every branch of the army in this campaign. Even men on the spot who are in charge of sections of the field force cannot realise the magnitude of the undertaking of their own particular corps, as it is distributed over the whole affected area; and this is especially the case with the transport branch of the Army Service Corps, with their thousands of vehicles and tens of thousands of animals and their hourly difficulties which have to be contended against—difficulties caused by the action of the enemy, by the nature of the country, by the temper and vagaries of the human element, the consequences of the weather, and the ravages of disease amongst man and beast. It is simply marvellous to reflect on these trials, and note how they have been surmounted. Compare the transport arrangements of the army in South Africa with those that characterised the management of the commissariat department in the Crimean war! The satisfactory working of this branch of the army is undoubtedly due to the able guidance of Sir William Nicholson, who came from India to take up the duties of director of transport, and to his efforts being so capably supplemented at Cape Town by Colonel Bridge, and by Colonel Banbury in Pretoria. But for the loyalty and discipline of all the officers and men connected with the corps, not forgetting those in Pall Mall who anticipated requirements, such results would have been impossible.

In the opening days of the campaign the organisation of the transport of the British Army was in accordance with the principles on which the army establishments were based, viz., the *decentralisation* of the transport and subsequent distribution amongst units themselves. This is commonly known as the *Regimental Transport System*, each regiment or unit being responsible for its own vehicles, and so being

self-contained to a limited extent. Then came the connecting links to the main sources of supply to the unit. The first of these links was the brigade or divisional troops supply and ammunition columns, from which the unit re-filled, and finally came the supply and ammunition "parks," which connected the supply columns with the main or advanced depôts on the railway lines of communication.

This system had been developed during the last twenty years, and all calculations for equipment, stores, food, and ammunition had been worked out so as to conform to it. But the sudden increase in the number of troops from one army corps to five necessitated some re-arrangements of the existing organisation, and soon after the arrival in Cape Town of the chief of the staff (Lord Kitchener) he issued, in the name of the Field Marshal, the orders for reorganisation on the basis of the *centralisation* of the field transport, as opposed to the existing *decentralisation* of the same. Thus everything was gathered in and issued as needed. The effects of this change were, perhaps, more far-reaching than was anticipated or desired. All calculations were upset, and it was impossible to foresee requirements and supply them. This re-arrangement of the transport did not apply to the army in Natal, where the War Office system worked satisfactorily throughout the campaign, under the direction of Colonel Morgan, A.S.C.

Colonel Sir Howard Vincent says :

The Field Army Order of January 24, 1900, abolished the carefully matured War Office scale of transport by a stroke of the pen ; it made it all general. Every company of the Army Service Corps was divided into two. New officers on a liberal scale of allowance were imported. It was a risky experiment in mid-stream. But Lord Kitchener is great in reorganisation. His energy, enthusiasm, decision, and ubiquity command the greatest admiration. His object was that the transport should always be

working as required for the whole army, although a marching unit might be resting.

The military correspondent on Army Reform, whose article in the *Pall Mall Gazette* I have already referred to, thinks otherwise ; and as his criticisms are, in the opinion of the service, based on common sense, I give them. He says :

In Cape Colony, where the transport was reorganised, regimental transport withdrawn, and the whole formed into companies of equal strength, regardless of the work each was called upon to perform, the result was chaos. No system could be more vicious.

After a few weeks of confusion, automatically there was a gradual tendency to revert to the old ways, but the links in the chain had been broken, and it was impossible entirely to return to the system originally in working order, and one that was quite capable of expansion so as to meet the great pressure occasioned by the continual arrival of large numbers of troops and stores from England and all parts of the world.

It is extraordinary what a tendency there is to reform a system or initiate a new one when there is a temporary difficulty or block, instead of adding to the strength and efficiency of the existing one, especially as in the present case it was not a question of inefficiency, but insufficiency of the corps to carry on the ever-increasing duties caused by this unprecedented war.

At a dinner in Sheffield in November 1899, Lord Charles Beresford said that 30,000 men should be sent to Natal to recover our losses, instead of the 3000 proposed, but his words found no favour at that time.

Want of appreciation of the enemy's forces and organisation, especially the skill with which the Boers could handle

modern artillery, was at the beginning of hostilities the real causes of the bad management of the war, if it can be so described.

No military Power had had an opportunity of forming an opinion on the value of the Krupp gun, the Creusot gun, and long-ranged and heavy ordnance in a country with a climate like South Africa.

In order to give some idea of the magnitude of the transport which has been used, no less than 5000 mule-waggon have passed through the hands of the transport department, and about the same number of ox-waggon. Taking the load of a mule-waggon at one and a half tons, and of an ox-waggon at two and a half tons, this means a carrying capacity of 20,000 tons of food, forage, equipment, and ammunition reserve. This is, of course, exclusive of the more or less technical vehicles accompanying the fighting troops, in the way of water-carts, guns, ammunition-waggon, ambulances, together with a variety of other carts, such as post-carts, conveyances for the army pay officers, Cape carts, Scotch carts, and things on wheels of every description, even to traction engines, motor cars, and bicycles, which in the total number of vehicles would probably be nearer 3000 than 2000 more to be dealt with.

Now for some figures as to the animals employed to move these vehicles from place to place.

Since our army in South Africa has reached the respectable number of 250,000 men, I believe I am correct in stating that the greatest number of mules *employed* with the field transport at any one time (exclusive of those newly arrived, sick, or in remount camps, and of course not counting those with mounted fighting troops) were about 45,000 and about 70,000 oxen.

During the campaign the whole field transport has been entirely remounted once, and sections of it two or three

times, so that it will easily be seen what becomes of the mules and oxen when the wear and tear of the war plays such havoc with the animal life of one section of the army in South Africa.

For the efficient direction of this enormous transport equipment, it is necessary that there should be a *personnel* commensurate in efficiency and numbers to cope with the duties and responsibilities involved.

Of Imperial officers and men there were somewhat over 3000, who were occupied chiefly as a directing and supervising staff; the actual drivers both of mule and ox-waggons were natives of the country, of whom there were some 14,000 always employed. In addition, there was a large proportion of civilian overseers or conductors who could speak English, Dutch, and Kaffir. These were mostly British subjects belonging to South Africa.

Before leaving this subject it is interesting to note the remarkable aptitude of the South African natives for driving long teams of animals. Cape boys who have hardly ever seen a mule will, in a remarkably short time, become efficient drivers. The help rendered to the military by the local people and by the natives is beyond all praise, and the good understanding that exists between the Imperial officers and men with the European inhabitants and natives may be taken as a good omen of a peaceful and speedy settlement of this vast sub-continent after the cessation of actual hostilities.

In dealing with the work done during the campaign by the army field transport, it would be impossible to omit the mention of the invaluable services rendered to the Government by the firm of Julius Weil & Co., whose name is well known to all in connection with the provisioning of Mafeking, during the nine months it was besieged, and the assistance the firm rendered in every way to General Baden Powell during that trying time. As far back as

1887, Julius Weil was called "the man that moves the army."

In the ordinary way, this firm of contractors carry on a business something like "Carter, Paterson," with this vast difference: that their carrying or transporting work has to be done over large tracts of thinly populated country, instead of conveying goods to teeming multitudes in a circumference of a few square miles as in London and the suburbs.

The firm of Julius Weil & Co., Government contractors, were merged into "The Imperial Transport Service," their officers being given temporary army rank. To distinguish them they wore the initials of I. T. S. on their shoulders, and of course they were clad in khaki.

It was quite a study to work out all the distinguishing initials and badges, tabs and stars, ribbons straight and ribbons askew, with bits of tartan here and a patch there, together with feathers and tufts of all descriptions; but by degrees one remembered them all.

What England would have done in the South African crisis without the loyalty and help of such firms as Julius Weil, both at home and in the affected districts, it is hard to say.

The tract of country between Mafeking and Pretoria was largely served by the Imperial transport service, and, indeed, the advance convoys were sent as far as Machado-dorp, if not actually as far as to Pilgrims' Rest. The firm employed over 2000 waggons, which required about 40,000 oxen to work; and as large quantities were from time to time captured by the enemy, numbers of oxen killed through one cause and another, it needed no less than from 85,000 to 100,000 oxen to keep up the efficiency of the service. The firm employed in drivers and leaders nearly 7000 men (natives), in overseers, conductors, and inspectors (who had all to be mounted), about 500. The clerical staff alone

exceeded 200 men. The number of miles travelled backwards and forwards by the oxen was considerably over 25,000; and this enormous distance was covered by these slow-going beasts under the most trying circumstances, such as forced marching and within range of the enemy's fire.

The difficulties to be overcome by the contractors can be better appreciated when I explain that as many as 200 waggons, with their teams of sixteen oxen each, have been captured at one time; the loss being made good immediately, and the work of transport proceeding without delay. Captured convoys (Government) of 400 waggons have several times been reported in the papers, and what a loss each entails may be gathered from the fact that the purchases of waggons and teams have been made at almost full original value; the actual work of buying animals and waggons being also done at great risk.

The officers employed had to obtain waggons and teams by voluntary sale from various farmers, in small lots and at great distances; they then had to collect them at given points and get them away in safety—a feat that was not always successfully accomplished, as De Wet or some other Boer general would be first at the given points and swoop away the lot!

The oxen used in the Imperial transport service were all South African bred, and those purchased to fill up casualties had to go on foot to the chief centres of the firm, as the rolling-stock of the railway was all required for the movement of troops.

Convoys have to carry, in addition to military stores, a large amount of baggage for their own use on the road, as well as for the troops that escort them. They take with them such uninteresting things (which are also very heavy) as buck-sails, iron pails, pots and pans, waggon grease, lifting jacks, picks, shovels, extra reims, bolts, screws, shackles, and

a variety of tools that appear to me to belong to a forge or a blacksmith's shop.

As the Boers made a point of burning up the grass behind them, extra weight had to be carried in fodder for the oxen, which at other times grazed on the veld; and, as a matter of fact, they thrive better on the stumpy grass, however scanty, than on the best forage that could be given to them.

Convoys are often the medium of communication between different forces, as was the case at Elands River, where a telegraphic connection was maintained with General Baden-Powell at Rustenberg, by Colonel Hore; and, when the wires were cut, and it was clear enough, it was maintained then by heliograph.

In out-of-the-way places like Beira, and thence to Bamboo Creek, the transport was carried on with even greater difficulties. There was nothing but a two-foot-gauge railway to convey the troops, horses, and stores between these places.

The sixty-three miles that separate these towns usually required twenty-four hours for the journey, during which time excitement was provided by various parts of the train derailing, from the engine down to the last carriage.

When the first contingent of Australian Bushmen took this journey the train ran off the rails sixteen times.

The country between Beira and Bamboo Creek is perhaps the most malarious in Africa. It is known as the "Fly Country," and certainly the mosquitoes are too terrible for words to describe. The mortality amongst the horses was very great, and most of the men suffered from fever, though in the majority of cases they happily did not succumb to it. Both men and animals were kept on the ships instead of being landed for as long a period as possible, as the lesser evil.

The difficulties of transport and the loss of life have been something stupendous in this war, and if in future campaigns traction engines can be so perfected and rendered reliable, a

great saving will be effected, but so far as they have been employed, except in Cape Town and on fairly good roads, they have not answered satisfactorily in South Africa, and much the same may be said of the motor-cars. One day they will do well, getting over the ground with great speed, but the next there are breakdowns that take hours to repair, with the result that everything is thrown into confusion by the irregularity of their behaviour. It is better to be slow and sure in times of war, if celerity and punctuality cannot be combined.

To keep an army of over a quarter of a million of men fed and mobile over a whole continent, 6000 miles from the main base, is a feat that any army and its organisers may feel proud ; and in spite of all that may be said to the disparagement of the War Office, the Admiralty, and the Treasury, the nation has every reason to be satisfied with the achievements of all the public departments, and with the contractors employed by Government.

As for the work done on the spot by the soldiers, sailors, and civilians that make up the South African field force, nothing but praise is due to them from their fellow countrymen for their loyalty and devotion to duty.

Lord Roberts in his despatch of April 16, 1901, gives a detailed description of the Field Transport, which is given *in extenso* at the end of this volume.

CHAPTER VII

THE REMOUNT DEPARTMENT

THE first line describing any one of the non-combatant branches of the army now in South Africa might begin: "This is perhaps the most important department of the field force now on active service in that country"; and, as the efficient management of each and all is most necessary to the success of British arms and the final settlement of the area affected, the remark would not be so far wrong. No unprejudiced person can be found to deny that it is most applicable to the Remount Department.

For months the cry has come from South Africa "Send us men who can ride and shoot, and serviceable horses on which to mount them."

In the next few pages I will endeavour to show that this demand from the seat of war was not made to the home authorities in vain.

During the past year 200,000 horses and mules have been landed at the different ports in South Africa—exclusive of those sent to Beira for the Australian contingents, collected together in all parts of the world wherever there were any to be purchased.

In addition to the horses belonging to the regiments and batteries, a monthly supply, at the rate of 6000 or 7000 animals more, as remounts, has been maintained from over the sea, which has been further augmented by those that were obtained in the country itself.

With these figures—which at times have been greatly exceeded—it will be seen that the Government has fully recognised the necessity of providing remounts for the troops.

To meet this great demand, officers have been despatched to buy horses in thousands. They have gone through the length and breadth of the British Isles in search of them, and have travelled as far afield as to Australia, Canada, the United States, to Argentina, to Austria, to Hungary, and to any place where suitable horses could be bought. Officers have, likewise, been hurried off to Italy and Spain for mules, and between September 20, 1899, and October 30, 1900, no fewer than 26,000 horses passed through the port of Durban.

The generally received opinion in regard to the animals purchased is that they are not the best that could be bought, and that a large percentage of them is altogether unfit for active service in South Africa.

To what extent this may be true, I am not prepared to say, though I am to maintain that they are the best obtainable. When they are seen in “mobs” or “tied in knots,” looking thin and ungroomed, they certainly do not present a smart appearance, yet, despite these unfavourable impressions, the horses and mules are carefully selected, and that by men who understand the points of a horse.

The general public is also under the impression that the Admiralty charter vessels that are to be used exclusively as horse-ships; this is not so. The remount department charter their own freight-ships, which have throughout the war given the best results.

As regards the percentage of loss in carrying horses and mules, the mortality has not been attributable to any fault of the steamers selected, or to their fittings, but to natural causes, such as pneumonia, influenza, and other diseases common among animals. The great difference of temperature

and high winds have also told on the health of the animals. Those that came from Canada were still wearing their winter coats on arrival in a hot African summer. This applies to all horses except Australian.

The steamship *Prah*, Elder, Dempster & Co., 2520 tons, which cannot be called a large boat, took two loads of horses from the Plate.

The first time she had 555 horses on board and lost none; the second time she had 581, and the mortality was only one horse.

As regards the size of the ships, some of the smaller boats have results to record equally as good as the bigger vessels. Indeed, the advantages are difficult to estimate, as on one voyage a ship may lose a hundred horses and in the next none at all, irrespective of the size of the vessel or length of the voyage.

The life of officers on board horse-ships that convey the animals from shore to shore has occasionally had some very dramatic incidents to mark the time, and to break the monotony of the journey.

The cattlemen employed to look after the horses and mules are picked up in the various countries visited by the remount officers, and some of them are very desperate characters—the “riff-raff” of the world.

A major, in charge of a freight of mules which he had bought in South America, once found himself in a “tight place.”

Before the ship had been two days at sea, the cattlemen began to quarrel; they refused to do their work, and a mutiny with serious consequences seemed imminent. The major held a council of war with his veterinary surgeon, and included in it the captain of the ship, as part of the crew had taken sides with the cattlemen. That some means would have to be adopted to re-establish discipline and compel the men to return to their duty was certain. The armoury of

the ship comprised only a few obsolete guns, for which there was no ammunition.

The major's own revolver was the only weapon that could have been used effectively. The position, however, was desperate. An order was given for the cattlemen to come on deck, and then those of the crew who were loyal appeared, each armed with his gun, and stood before them.

The major spoke very earnestly to the cattlemen, and told them that if they did not perform their duty and put a stop to their present course of conduct he would be obliged to shoot them; and whilst uttering the words he meaningly touched his revolver.

The cattlemen were not prepared to be shot just then, and fully believing that the major, the captain, and the veterinary officer were quite capable of carrying out this threat on the instant, with the guns in their hands, they promised to obey orders in future; and when they were dismissed to their own quarters they forthwith set about attending to the animals, thoroughly cowed in spirit.

Thus happily ended an incident that for a time presented an ugly aspect. But for this bold display of armed strength, which was brought to bear on the situation not an hour too soon, there is no doubt that the murder of the major and those who supported him would have been the result of the cattlemen's mutiny. A desperado, as these men were, actually murdered the British consul, Mr. McMasters, at Beira, for no other reason than that he could not get what he wanted at once.

The real work of the remount departments in South Africa begins when the animals are landed.

From the beginning of the war receiving-camps were formed at Durban, Port Elizabeth, Cape Town and Stellenbosch, to which the horses and mules have been taken from the ships as they arrived, to rest and recover from their long

and trying voyages. Throughout the whole campaign this has been the rule, though there have been instances when there has been some extraordinary pressure, or when the horses have borne the voyage exceptionally well. This period of rest is usually two or three weeks, though sometimes the condition of the animals necessitates a longer time before they are in a fit state to enter on the hard work of the campaign.

Many unfavourable criticisms have appeared in the press on the work done by this department as regards the kind of horses purchased, and the want of care of the animal both before and after they are employed, as well as the neglect they have been subjected to whilst on active service.

I have also heard many observations on the delinquencies of the remount officers which I have listened to with amazement, as setting forth the ignorance of the critics as to the real facts of the case.

That these criticisms are founded on fact, that is to say on isolated instances of want of thought or want of knowledge, there is no doubt : but is a public department to be judged by a few acts of omission, or by the bulk of the work performed ?

I could myself mention one or two oversights that, if properly worked up in big type, well garnished from a vivid imagination, might read rather like a serious indictment and cause a succession of public shudders.

There is no question connected with South Africa that presents so many difficulties as that of animals ; both equine and bovine. Reams are written on it annually, and this year has been specially productive in valuable suggestions. Every person one meets has opinions on the subject, and letters from correspondents to the *Times* have recently appeared giving some excellent hints ; but they should be brought again to notice when the mind of those charged with dealing

with such matters is not so fully engrossed with present requirements that are so urgent that only the best under the circumstances can at the present be attempted.

Some recommend that the Government should undertake the breeding of horses for the army, and they bring forward excellent schemes to that end; but my late husband, who took the deepest interest in all Government transactions, was utterly opposed to the principle of the Government becoming a great commercial company. Let them encourage trade by purchasing from respectable firms whatever the requirements of the State demand, but not become great producers as well as being great consumers. Such a policy would be a great blow to the spirit of enterprise that is the chief characteristic of our commercial life. That the question of breeding good and serviceable horses for the army will occupy a prominent position in current literature is certain, and that the inspector-general of remounts will be bombarded with everybody's views as to what ought to be done is not less likely, though I believe he is no supporter of schemes in which the Government should undertake the responsibility of establishments of this kind.

Such and kindred subjects must often occupy the attention of the officers in the remount department, far oftener than those who write occasional letters to the press, or those who manage affairs so well in comfortable chairs in country houses. The strong and weak points are constantly brought under the notice of the department in the form of reports; and this year there has been plenty of experience gained that will be most valuable when the time comes to give this matter of the supply of remounts serious consideration in connection with the general scheme for the reform of the army.

The exigencies of war have been especially trying to the cavalry and artillery horses; and the greatest proof of this was brought to my mind when I had driven from places

along the route that had been taken by the advancing army. Horses dead and dying were left on the road in hundreds, and—disgusting sight—their carcasses were being torn asunder by dozens of greedy vultures.

Some idea of the wear and tear in horseflesh that has taken place in South Africa may be gathered from the fact that no fewer than sixty horses of the A Battery R.H.A. died from exhaustion in one day, the result of making some ascent in the march to Machadodorp or to Pilgrim's Rest.

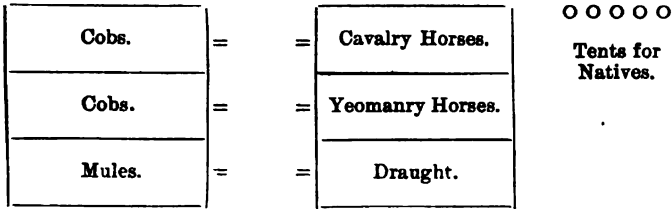
A single squadron of Lancers passed more than 400 horses through its ranks in a few weeks, and during the war several regiments have been entirely remounted, a necessity which resulted, not from bad or unsuitable animals, want of care or ignorance of their management, but attributable to overstrain in long marches and the loads they have had to carry.

To meet such like heavy demands as these which have been made by the mounted forces in the field, the remount department has had to exert itself to the utmost, and that it has responded to them satisfactorily is proved by the fact that remounts have been issued to repair the losses without delay.

In order to do this, remount depôts have been established in Pretoria, Standerton, Bloemfontein, Kroonstad, Kimberley, and all important military centres, which are fed from the rest-camps at Cape Town, Port Elizabeth, East London, and Queenstown, Durban, Pietermaritzburg, and other places on the lines of communication.

On an average, an advanced depôt would contain about 2000 animals, whilst a base depôt would at times have double that number.

The remount camps are divided into lines and kraals; in the former are the invalids looking very sorry for themselves whilst waiting for the visit of the veterinary officer. The kraals are large squares of about 100 yards, thus :



the animals being fed from mangers running down the centre of each division. A circular memorandum from the inspector-general informs all those concerned that immediately on the arrival of animals they are to receive the personal attention of the veterinary officer.

Those that have unduly suffered from the journey are to be kept separated from the rest, and upon notification that horses are expected to arrive, bedding for them should be drawn, hot gruel and bran mashes prepared, and their comfort seen to in every way as far as possible.

The following figures show the number virtually used up during the advance from Bloemfontein to Pretoria in four months :—

CAVALRY.					
	Horses.		Cobs.	Mules.	Total.
April . . .	659	...	1516	...	—
May . . .	2450	...	1035	...	—
June . . .	398	...	598	...	—
July . . .	2869	...	392	...	—
	<u>5376</u>	+	<u>3541</u>		= 9917

ARTILLERY.					
	Horses.		Cobs.	Mules.	Total.
April . . .	643	...	161	...	1459
May . . .	1083	...	14	...	528
June . . .	597	...	33	...	58
July . . .	586	...	—	...	—
	<u>2859</u>	+	<u>208</u>	+	<u>2045</u> = 5112

THE ANGLO-BOER WAR

OFFICERS.						
	Horses.		Cobs.		Mules.	Total.
April . . .	114	...	714	...	—	
May . . .	164	...	562	...	—	
June . . .	83	...	182	...	—	
July . . .	71	...	309	...	—	
	<u>382</u>	+	<u>1767</u>			= 2149

TRANSPORT.						
	Horses.		Cobs.		Mules.	Total.
April . . .	—	...	186	...	7790	
May . . .	—	...	988	...	6233	
June . . .	—	...	183	...	1382	
July . . .	—	...	106	...	2358	
			<u>1408</u>	+	<u>17,763</u>	= 19,171

YEOMANRY.						
	Horses.		Cobs.		Mules.	Total.
April . . .	—	...	484	...	—	
May . . .	28	...	1011	...	—	
June . . .	93	...	66	...	—	
July . . .	289	...	1045	...	—	
	<u>410</u>	+	<u>2606</u>			= 3016
	Grand total					<u>39,365</u>

(See the despatch at the end of the volume.)

That the Remount Department requires the services of a large number of officers and men is evident from the above figures, in which, however, the debilitated beasts are not included.

Many reliable and responsible officers have to be deputed—mostly drawn from the cavalry or artillery, to purchase and bring the large number of animals that are required to carry on this conflict in South Africa from distant countries, and see to their embarkation and entraining at both ends of the

journey. The hands required to feed and water them alone number a few thousands.

In the original and succeeding supplementary estimates presented to Parliament during the period of the war, the vote for the purchase of remounts stands for a sum of three or four millions sterling. If the returns of this department as to the loss of transport by land and sea ; the pay and allowance of officers, men, and natives ; forage and stable stores of all kinds, were separated from the expenditures of other departments, the same would form no inconsiderable item in the total of sixty-five millions already provided by the nation for war purposes.

The strength of an advance remount depôt is usually one commanding officer, one adjutant, three officers, six rough riders, and 600 natives, which latter are divided into batches of thirty and placed under the superintendence of white men.

The responsibility connected with the issuing of these animals is very considerable, especially when the requisitions from the officers of mounted corps have been so heavy as has unhappily been the case throughout the war. Forced marching and chasing De Wet have resulted in terrible havoc amongst the cavalry and artillery horses, to say nothing of the ruin to the health of the men themselves.

Shortly after the occupation of Bloemfontein, the remount depôt, which had only just been established, issued remounts in one day to the number of 3000 animals, which I believe is the "record number."

When this fact came to the knowledge of Lord Roberts he directed attention to a previous memorandum, and issued the following army order to all officers with mounted troops :

The Field-Marshal Commanding-in-chief fully recognises that, under certain circumstances, and when some important advantage can be gained by sustained rapidity of movement, the sacrifice of horses may become a military necessity. Contin-

gencies of this nature have occurred during the recent operations, and have no doubt contributed in no small degree to the present condition of the mounted corps. On the other hand, there have been periods when the troops have halted, or only marched short distances, and on these occasions it is to be feared that due care has not always been taken to feed the horses at short intervals, and to water them whenever the opportunity offered. Moreover, Lord Roberts has frequently observed that men remain mounted when there is no necessity for it, and on the line of march he has never yet seen the horses being led.

Making every allowance for long and rapid marches, want of water, and deficient forage, Lord Roberts is of opinion that, if the horses, more particularly those of the cavalry and mounted infantry, had been better cared for, fewer of them would have become useless. The supply of remounts is not unlimited, besides which, fresh horses are not likely to be immediately forthcoming at the moment when they may be most urgently wanted. The success of military operations in this country largely depends on the mobility of the troops employed, and this ceases as soon as the horses fall into bad condition.

The Field-Marshal Commanding-in-chief is confident that the officers to whom this order is addressed are as anxious as himself to maintain the efficiency of their respective corps, and he appeals to them to spare no trouble in looking after the feeding and watering of their horses, and to see that the men dismount and that the horses are allowed to graze on every possible opportunity.

His lordship draws the special attention of general and commanding officers to this subject, which is of vital importance to the army in South Africa, and he holds them responsible that his instructions are clearly understood and strictly complied with by all those serving under them.

That certain instances of thoughtlessness in remaining mounted when the horses might have had the benefit of a short rest, and that every chance of grazing, &c., was not seized, is most true; but, taken as a whole, the men are so fond of animals that the order was only applicable occasionally. It is the wear and tear of the war, the insuperable difficulties

connected with it that kills both man and beast, and consequently result in that miscalculation complained of by Sir William Harcourt, when criticising the estimate of £16,000,000 voted in the House of Commons in December, 1900.

It is generally admitted that this war has been more productive in "unexpected developments" than it is usual for Governments to anticipate during a period of hostilities.

It is to provide for probable contingencies that the estimates are framed.

While in South Africa I made a special point of understanding how things in connection with horses were managed, and how, in the hurry and rush, they were looked after.

All along the lines of communication I found stationed small parties of men (British soldiers and natives, whose duty it was to water and feed the horses in the remount trains, and exercise them if opportunity permitted). Owing to the great distances and the inconvenience of conducting a heavy military traffic on a single line of railway, this is a frequent operation between the points of departure and destination, and one that can hardly be accomplished in less than three hours.

The officers and men in the Remount Department are perhaps better acquainted with Dutch farms than any other section of the Imperial army. They could furnish some valuable information, as to the quality of the land, and the nature and quantity of the water supply, that would be most interesting to intending colonists whose talents lie in agriculture, in breeding and rearing of farm stock, and the cultivation of grain and produce.

In Bloemfontein the Remount Department had three farms; one of 4000, another of 6500, and a third of 20,000 acres respectively. On each of these were erected kraals, where the animals were fed every morning and evening, and

during the rest of the day they were allowed to graze within certain limits.

On each farm, in addition to the regular remount staff, was a veterinary surgeon with his assistants. On Fisher's farm, near Bloemfontein, there is stabling for 800 animals, and when the stabling in the town itself was full, the overflow was sent to this farm. Only such horses as were ready for immediate issue were kept in the Bloemfontein stables, for obvious reasons. The arrangements made by the department for the remounting of the Natal army were conducted on similar lines; and between October 1, 1899, and September 2, 1900, no fewer than 20,000 could have been received and issued to the various corps in that part of the theatre of war, to replace those that succumbed to the hardships inseparable in war in such a mountainous district.

From the foregoing it will be seen that the remounting of an army in the field of 250,000 men is no small matter, and that the organisation pre-existing must have been fairly good and sufficiently elastic to have allowed such enormous expansions that this unprecedented war has necessitated, and which has undoubtedly been attended with such marked success, that nothing but praise is due to those who have laboured night and day in the discharge of their duties, and in overcoming the difficulties connected with their important department.

The trials that confront the remount officer are so overwhelming that it seems almost hopeless to try and cope with them. Not the least of these is the prevalence of horse sickness, a disease peculiar to horses, asses, and mules in South Africa, which is so severe that the rate of mortality consequent on it amounts in periods of epidemic to 90 per cent.—epidemics that recur each October, and last to April or May, though varying from year to year in severity.

With a permanent garrison of about 50,000 troops which will have to be kept mounted, the loss in horseflesh from this disease will be such a serious item of expenditure that the Government will probably appoint a commission to undertake scientific investigations that may lead to the discovery of the causes and succeed in suggesting an effectual remedy.

Eminent bacteriologists have been engaged for a decade or so in researches that have led to a certain amount of useful information, which, if the remedies and precautions were more generally adopted, might reduce the losses in animal life to an appreciable degree, though not leading to the clue that will eradicate the disease altogether.

Of my many experiences in connection with the army none have given me greater pleasure, nor interested me more, than those in which the horse has been the central figure. The hours I spent in visiting the various remount camps was time well spent. No lover of animals could have complained of the care taken of the horses in them, of which there were types from England, Ireland, Australia, Hungary, North America, Argentina, Burmah, India, and South Africa.

In every instance the staff officers were most courteous, and ready to direct my especial attention to anything remarkable. They pointed out the differences between the various breeds, but this was a class of information that sometimes was rather beyond my powers of comprehension.

A remount dépôt is a wonderful sight, as evincing the power of steam, and what near neighbours it has made of all the inhabitants of the earth!

But a few short weeks previously, both the men and animals concentrated on a small patch of veld in South Africa were living under all sorts of other conditions in every part of the globe.

CHAPTER VIII

THE ARMY ORDNANCE DEPARTMENT

As the British army is entirely voluntary, it follows as a matter of course that the whole male population does not gravitate towards it in the same way as if conscription compelled every man to serve in either the navy or the army.

The two years the Germans, for instance, serve in line regiments, or the three years they spend in the cavalry, naturally give every man an interest in the army that does not exist amongst the civilian population of this empire. Those who have shown a special desire to combine military knowledge and the use of arms with their civil avocations have in times past had little in the way of encouragement; and if the war in South Africa has taught anything it has taught the value of volunteers, and that in future both they and the militia must be treated with more consideration and greater courtesy than hitherto by both the Government and the regular army. This war has been really a blessing in disguise. It has pulled the nation together, and has united all the colonies with the mother-country in a way that nothing else could have done.

Whilst in South Africa I spent my time very industriously in trying to understand the working of the component parts that are comprised in the general term army organisation, and in my search for knowledge I have often been surprised to find the important work that is accomplished by departments that many people—the majority of civilians—hardly

know by name, and have no idea of their duties and responsibilities, nor what a general collapse there would be in the fighting lines if there were any slackness in the discharge of them.

It was in no spirit of fault-finding that I visited all these camps and centres of military activity, for no self-respecting person should venture to circulate adverse criticisms on the performance of this or that department until he had thoroughly appreciated the difficulties to be overcome by it. This appreciation could be effectually gained only by sharing in the work of the department and endeavouring to see if it could be done better. Without adequate knowledge criticism is useless. What is wanted is that the general public should interest itself intelligently in its institutions, so that it may with a proper understanding raise objections to the extravagant expenditure of the money it provides, or to the administration of those in charge of the public services.

I have stated elsewhere in this volume that my great wish in writing this book is to try and interest those, especially ladies, who through want of opportunity know less than I do of military matters, and to inform them how their men kind, especially those entrusted with the management of transport and stores for the fighting troops, have discharged their important though often thankless and inglorious tasks.

Except by those in service circles, it is not generally known what the duties of the Army Ordnance Department really are. Many people regard the work as a part of that done by the Army Service Corps ; and this is not so strange as it would at first appear, as it is not so many years since the Control Department provided the army with all stores and supplies.

Then, again, the term " Army Service " would lead to the assumption that all the wants of the troops were met by the

Army Service Corps. But the reality is very different, for the Army Ordnance Department is charged with the supply of every kind of store except food and forage and medical drugs and appliances. The supply of the two first necessities is the business of the Army Service Corps, who are a sort of general provision and provender merchants. In a time of siege, or when civil stores cannot be brought into a town, very important sort of merchants they are. But for Captain Haggard and the officers of the Army Service Corps the civil population would have been in far sorer straits in Johannesburg than they have actually found themselves during these long months.

Now, the words "every kind of store" is in itself a very indefinite term to those unacquainted with the army's wants, and have no knowledge of the size of its mouth—one that is so big that it requires daily tons of stuff to fill it! Medical instruments and drugs are provided by the Royal Army Medical Corps for men, and by the Army Veterinary Department for horses. The pay for the troops falls to the lot of the Army Pay Department—and very important all these things are. The want or shortness of any of them would produce serious consequences to the army in the field, but happily, such has not been felt to any appreciable degree in any part of the extended area over which the British army has operated in South Africa, thanks to the foresight of the authorities at home, and to the unremitting energy of the officers and men of the departments, who strain every nerve to get their stores to the places where they will be required by the fighting units.

Food, forage, medicine, and pay, though obviously of first-class importance, do not by any means satisfy this gaping mouth. The Army Ordnance Department must provide much more. To begin with guns: there were no fewer than eighteen different natures brought into the field, each with its own

special ammunition ; then come gun-mountings, gun-carriages, limber ammunition-waggons, and spare parts of all kinds ; cartridges and shells of every sort, and many descriptions of tools for repairing damages, all of which go to make up the military term "equipment," and without which the artillery might not be fit for use at some critical moment. I saw a blacksmith's forge hastily got out and a huge fire blazing away to repair a wheel whose tyre had come off, and in a very short time the invalid was sent rolling away as merrily as ever. However long it may take the army officials to do some things, they can on occasions do work as expeditiously as the smartest Yankee.

When in Kimberley I saw many things that were new and strange to me besides the diamond mines, and amongst others some "live shells" in the ordnance camp, which had to be treated with great respect until the fuses were removed, as serious accidents had occurred in the town owing to people bringing in live shells that had been left about by the Boers, and had exploded in the hands of their unfortunate bearers. Major Parsons, who at this time was in charge of this camp, showed me sheds full of harness for draught animals, saddles for riding horses, pack saddlery for pack transport, picketing gear, horse-shoes in thousands, and stable necessaries for all animals ; small arms of all sorts, rifles, carbines, lances, swords, bayonets, pistols, and accoutrements, borne on charge of the ordnance department.

I saw also vast quantities of clothing, *i.e.*, wearing apparel, the various articles of attire to fit all sizes of the male form, from giants of six feet six to tiny men of five feet nothing ; some big enough to meet on figures that measure a yard and a half round the waist, and others small enough for those who can lay claim to no more than twenty-two inches. To my certain knowledge, Colonel Ricardo turned over a couple of

gross of smasher hats before he could find one sufficiently becoming to his style of features and delicate shade of complexion. At last he was satisfied, but later in the day he presented me with his purchase, as the puggaree was not the right colour, though I found it most useful in my next cross-country trek. This dry goods warehouse had to furnish clothing for officers of all ranks, soldiers of all degrees, and provide great coats for native drivers, which for quality as well as for abundance was a sight that was highly gratifying to those who have the welfare and comfort of the troops at heart, and was a satisfactory evidence of the faithful fulfilment of the terms imposed by Government upon the contractors.

The Army Ordnance Department is also responsible for the provision of all waggons, carts, and vehicles, together with their equipment; for all kinds of scientific signalling accessories, and the technical stores used by the Royal Engineers for telegraph and siege train purposes; stores for bearer companies, for field, stationary and base hospitals; for tents, camp equipage, blankets, waterproof sheets, and tools for everybody—and that means a good deal!

To give a few figures. Between the months of September 1899 and December 1900, 87,000 tons of ordnance stores were shipped from England to South Africa for the use of the army, in addition to those purchased, to the amount of nearly two millions sterling, in Cape Colony, in Natal, and in the annexed territories.

During this period, amongst numberless other things that could be mentioned were 753,000 blankets, 350,000 waterproof sheets, 700,000 bars of soap, 300,000 nose-bags and fringes for horses, 250,000 sets of picketing gear, 2,000,000 horse and mule shoes. But these few items are sufficient to give an idea of the scale upon which ordnance stores have had to be purchased and despatched to the seat of war to

meet the requirements of a force of nearly 250,000 men under arms.

The mere enumeration of ordnance stores will not make it clear to the mind of those who are not accustomed to dwell on such matters, and are consequently unable to realise what such figures mean in the aggregate. As an illustration I will take an instance of what will the most readily appeal to the interest of the non-professional intellect.

The equipment of a base or general hospital includes the articles necessary for a hospital say of 520 patients—though they generally are fitted to receive 1000 sick—of which twenty would-be officers.

Every reader of this book will have some experience of sickness in their own homes, or amongst their friends, and can readily bring to mind the thousand and one things that are indispensably necessary, without considering the medicines and surgical instruments and dressings ordered by the doctors.

In a large military hospital, bedsteads, spring mattresses, and beds and bedding of every description have to be thought of, that are always pre-existing even in a cottage home; then a large quantity of every sleeping requisite has to be allowed, so as to permit of constant changes, such as wool mattresses, pillows, sheets, blankets, and sleeping suits. Then water-tanks, stoves, cooking appliances, and the crockery ware, indispensable to serve the prepared food to the sick and to sustain those who attend on them, have to be provided. As for the pots and pans, of all kinds and sizes, they will readily suggest themselves to all those ladies charged with the responsibility of managing a home, and to not a few men who have to perform these duties for themselves, or who have to listen to endless tales of woe on their return to the bosom of their family after a hard day's work of a more masculine character. But however these domestic fiends may dance before them, they will probably find such

things as mosquito nets and fly whisks conspicuous by their absence. Not so the poor ordnance officers! They have to think of flies and mosquitoes, and to provide measures to mitigate these plagues that drive both man and beast nearly distracted in South Africa. So terrible are they that Mr. Treves, the eminent surgeon, could think of nothing worse whereto to compare the ladies that came to Cape Town, and where they were buzzing about and dipping their wings into everything, and causing much irritation to the hapless staff officers who had not the time to play about, however much their inclination lay in that direction.

The equipment of a general hospital comprises the furniture and all necessary articles for the comfort of the twenty or thirty nursing sisters who form part of the *personnel*. Without going too much into detail, there are for a base hospital of 520 beds 263 different kinds of articles in the equipment, which make a total of 24,866 when multiplied to their full number. Of every article received and issued, down to the tiniest screw, an accurate account must be kept, which of course entails a large amount of clerical work.

The peculiar characteristics and conformation of the country in which this war has been waged have enhanced and multiplied the difficulties which the department has usually to contend against.

The equipment of the British army is based on conditions which would prevail in a civilised country in Europe, with good roads; and consequently the vehicles and their harness are all fitted for horse draught. In South Africa, however, this had all to be changed; there are either no roads or else they are mere tracks with impassable drifts and dongas. Except in the case of gun-carriages and limber and some ammunition waggons, all vehicles are drawn by mules or oxen. This has entailed the provision of mule harness for 60,000 or

70,000 mules. The vehicles had, likewise, to be adapted to meet the altered conditions and fitted with a peculiar screw-brake to the hind wheels which is used in this country by both Afrikanders and Boers alike. It is no less certain that the horse shoes originally provided would not fit mules, and consequently large additional numbers were sent for their use from England.

When ships arrived in the docks it was often found that their whole freight consisted of ordnance stores only, which gave plenty of work for ordnance officers to do in arranging for their disembarkation. For months their daily toil lasted from daybreak to midnight, Sundays included. When the stores had been discharged in their hundred tons from the steamers they disappeared into the sheds in the South Arm, where they were classified, separated, and then despatched by rail to the ordnance depôts which supplied the forces at the front.

It was, however, frequently necessary to divert large portions of the cargoes to Durban or to the other coast ports, from which places the mode of up-country transit was the easier of accomplishment. This was particularly so at the commencement of the campaign. So pressing were the demands at times, before the reserves of stores had arrived, that vessels have had to be boarded in the harbour and the particular kind of ammunition taken out and sent on to Durban by another ship, that had coaled. This was also the sort of work at high pressure that was going on, though in a lesser degree, at Durban, Port Elizabeth, and East London.

Where all have done so well it is impossible to point to a department that has done better than the others; but I think it will be generally allowed that the ordnance officers, with their staffs, both at home and at the seat of war, are not one whit behind the best; and but for their foresight and energy in anticipating the requirements of the fighting force

it could not be said with truth, as it can to-day, that at no time have the men suffered from lack of stores and equipment, and that no army has ever been so well and regularly supplied with all that is requisite to wage a successful warfare as the British force now in South Africa.

The other day I saw a criticism on our play-houses, and the question was asked, "Why are the plays not as successful in England as in other countries?" and the answer was: "Because the English cannot play, they can only work!" An officer who in normal times is a great glutton for work said: "Ah! yes; but I never had the faintest notion what work was until I came to South Africa as an ordnance officer."

As the troops advanced, and as the operations covered a larger area, the work increased in proportion. From all parts of the Orange River Colony and the Transvaal telegrams arrived in hundreds for stores and ammunition which were not easy to satisfy with only a single line of railway, and that constantly interrupted by the depredations of the enemy; and, of course, the ordnance department had to take their turn with all the other services of the army. Matters, too, were complicated by original orders being countermanded, which caused a diversion from the intended destination to a totally different one, sometimes after the train or convoy had started; but every other consideration has to give way to the movements of the troops in the field, and for obvious reasons they are not divulged and are subject to rapid alteration.

With so much technical work to be done, it is important that ordnance officers should have a special training. All the officers in the Army Ordnance department must have served for four years in a regiment, and then have passed a course at the Ordnance College. In this course they are instructed in the manufacture, inspection, and use of all

warlike and other stores, and also in the regulations relative to their custody and issue to the troops.

The warrant officers, non-commissioned officers, and men are composed chiefly of clerks and tradesmen. There are also in the corps armament artificers, viz., mechanics skilled in the repair of guns and mountings, and armourers—that is, men trained to the repair of small arms.

Promotions depend on a soldier's capability; and in the higher ranks a man cannot get advancement unless he has a first-class certificate of education; and, to their credit be it said, there are more men holding these certificates in the ordnance department than in any other branch of the service.

To conclude this chapter on the transport and supply of stores at the seat of the war it would be wrong not to make some allusion to the staff at the War Office in London, who have never failed to meet the urgent demands imposed from South Africa. It is hard to conceive the difficulties attendant on making arrangements for the forwarding of so many million pounds' worth of all kinds of warlike stores, the details of which were so ably conducted by Sir Henry Brackenbury and his capable assistants. The public will never know the debt they owe to this officer, who is spoken of on all hands as being pre-eminently the man of the hour at that dark period when we received so many reverses following closely one on the other, and when really clear-headed and business judgment was all-important to the country. The great ability displayed by Sir Henry at this critical period may not be known to the man in the street, but it cannot fail to have been appreciated by those in power, and it is to be hoped that he will receive in due course the honourable recompence which such services deserve.

In the despatch at the end of this volume, it will be seen Lord Roberts fully appreciates the work done by this department.

CHAPTER IX

NATAL GOVERNMENT RAILWAY

EVERYBODY knows that the efficient working and safeguarding of a great railway in times of war are matters of first-rate importance. The railways in South Africa which have been used during the campaign now drawing to a close constitute three separate systems: the Natal Government Railway, the Cape Government Railway, and the Imperial Government Railway—the Imperial Government taking over entirely the lines which belonged to the Orange Free State and the Transvaal. In order to appreciate the work accomplished by the railways it is necessary to set forth some of the facts. To recount the multitudinous services rendered during the pressure of the last year would, of course, be too great a task, but a record of at least some of the things the railways achieved may have an appropriate interest at the conclusion of the operations. As the Natal Government Railway had to lead the way in carrying our troops and munitions of war to the part of the colony which had been invaded almost simultaneously with the expiration of Mr. Kruger's ultimatum, I propose to describe some of the work conducted over the lines in that quarter.

The Natal Government Railway authorities have during the conflict had the entire control of the line under their own employés—the military appointing only railway staff officers to act as intermediaries between themselves and the railway managers—as well as to see that things worked smoothly and

that trains were not unduly delayed—a matter of serious moment on a single line, where the crossing of trains has to be carefully calculated. The lines of the Natal Government are constructed on the colonial gauge of 3 ft. 6 in., and are single throughout. Those chiefly employed in connection with the military operations were the main line from Port Natal or the Point (Durban) to Ladysmith, Newcastle and Charlestown, a distance of 307 miles; the main line from Ladysmith to Harrismith, a stretch of sixty miles; the North Coast line from Durban to the Tugela, a distance of sixty-nine miles; and the Greytown line, which branches off from Pietermaritzburg, a length of sixty-nine miles, making a total of 501 miles. The railhead station, however, up to the relief of Ladysmith was Chieveley, a hundred and sixty-six miles and a half from Durban. The striking and almost unique features of these railways are the many steep gradients and sharp curves, the prevailing gradient between Durban and Ladysmith being exceptionally heavy, namely, 1 ft. in 30 ft., and the ruling curvature 300 ft. radius, incline and bend being often found in combination. The main lines north of Ladysmith, however, have slightly easier grades, 1 ft. in 40 ft. or 1 ft. in 50 ft. Every one has heard a great deal about the difficult country in which Sir Redvers Buller had to fight, and the figures I have given will convey, at least to military officers and railway engineers, some definite idea of the general's task.

Trains running between Durban and Charlestown have to ascend in the aggregate 12,600 ft., which is equivalent to about two and a third miles of a vertical rise. This demonstrates some of the difficulties to be surmounted in the carrying on of traffic to prosecute a great war and to support the civil population. The business of loading trains is, in consequence of gradients, a most serious problem. Under ordinary conditions it is necessary to alter the goods train

load no fewer than thirteen times between Port Natal and the Border station, the gross load of the train hauled between certain points on the steepest portions of the track being only 137 tons. Think of this in connection with the conveyance of naval 4·7 guns and batteries of artillery! The large and urgent military traffic with which the Natal Government Railway authorities had suddenly to cope was carried on in such an efficient manner night and day throughout the struggle, that Lord Roberts telegraphed to Mr. Hunter, the general manager, expressing his appreciation of the services rendered. The first troops to arrive in the colony were the Manchester Regiment, which was landed at Port Natal on September 20, 1899, from the steamer *Gaul*. When the vessel went alongside the wharf the whole regiment was disembarked, and within three hours it was entrained for its destination up country. The same time was taken in despatching other infantry regiments, while the forwarding of batteries of artillery and field hospitals, whose material required the use of cranes, occupied on an average about six hours from the time the steamer came alongside the wharf.

In connection with railway operations, armoured trains have bulked largely before the public. The construction of these ponderous instruments of war demonstrates the enterprise and zeal of the locomotive department of the railway. In addition to the six armoured trains, special carriages were prepared for the 6 in., the 4·7 in., and other heavy guns, not to speak of the mounting on trucks of the electric search-light apparatus which was used at Chieveley, for the purpose of communicating with Sir George White at Ladysmith, during that long and wearying siege. What has been said, however, does not finish the story of train adaptation. Even before the fighting began two complete hospital trains were constructed out of Natal Government Railway coaching

stock, and were delivered on October 9 and 10, while the famous Princess Christian train, which was all white, was quite new. These trains conveyed between the beginning of the war and the end of August, 23,000 officers and men, while other special and ordinary trains were employed in conveying an additional 7000 officers and men, making a total of 30,000. In this connection it is worthy of remembrance that the Princess Christian train, in the course of its maiden trip, was the first through train to enter Ladysmith after the siege was raised, crossing the River Tugela by the temporary trestle bridge on March 19, 1900. On the following day it began its errand of mercy in bringing back the sick from the now historic town of Ladysmith to Durban. It is hardly necessary to say that the hospital trains were fitted with electric light and all sorts of conveniences, and that they were kept in a state of thorough repair. The aid of the railway was sought by the base hospitals at Estcourt, Mooi River, Howick, and Pinetown Bridge, which the department lighted with electricity. It supplied the current by means of accumulators fixed in trucks periodically charged at the nearest electric light depôt, and it connected the main wire with the hospitals from sidings. The accumulators used in connection with the X rays at the various hospitals were also filled up and charged by the railway authorities.

No effort was spared by the Natal Government Railway officials to assist the Army Medical Corps by placing conveniences at their disposal—goods sheds, for instance, electrically lighted, wherever there was a call. They made arrangements for the maintenance of supplies of medical comforts in special vans, and afforded every facility for conveying accessories with regularity to the army in the field. The co-operation of the railway people with Colonel Morgan, director of supplies, enabled that officer to work

out with accuracy his highly successful plans for feeding the forces. The result was that in Natal the army was never on short rations. On the contrary, every section was on the whole well-fed, a point on which General Buller was always most solicitous. The supply of water occasioned as much anxiety as the food question. The method adopted to secure a supply was the arrangement of a succession of cylindrical tanks on the line adjacent to the camps. These tanks were filled from others which were fitted on railway waggons, and brought by train from the pumping stations, twenty to twenty-five miles distant. While the troops were being concentrated before the battle of Colenso, the whole of General Buller's forces were furnished with water in the way described. During the four months' siege, when the water supply was cut off, the plant for condensing water from the river for the 20,000 persons shut up in the beleaguered town was found there through the forethought of the railway department.

On September 29, 1899, the Volunteers of Natal were called out. The day was a public holiday, being Michaelmas Day, and many were away from home. Despite this circumstance, and notwithstanding the fact that many resided at considerable distances from railway stations, the men in every part of the colony responded to the call with such promptitude, that by the evening of October 2, nearly 1500 officers and men, with horses, guns, and equipment, were in their allotted places. So excellent was all this that the late and much-lamented Major-General Sir William Penn Symons expressed in a general order his appreciation of the "celerity and smartness with which the Natal Volunteers turned out and assembled at their stations," recording at the same time that the railway arrangements were perfect. The Indian contingent, consisting of 8311 officers and men, 2792 horses, 29 guns, and 1500 native attendants, with stores, ammuni-

tion, and equipment, requiring the employment of twenty-seven transport ships, began to arrive at Port Natal on October 3, 1899, and continued coming till October 27. From the time of the first five ships being berthed, at and after twelve noon, the troops were all landed in Ladysmith, 191 miles distant, in less than twenty-four hours.

The following particulars give a clear idea of the enormous number of troops, guns, supplies, live stock, &c., conveyed over the Natal Government railways from the opening of the campaign up to the end of August, 1900, a period of nearly twelve months :

Officers and men	166,195
Women and children	484
Natives and Indians	11,434
Vehicles	1,607
Guns	267
Ammunition (boxes)	9885
Baggage and stores (tons)	6594
Pontoons	89
Traction engines and carriages	80

FROM DURBAN AND POINT ONLY.

Troops.	Officers.	Men.	Horses and Mules.	Guns.
Indian contingent	340	7971	2792	29
Imperial troops from England and Cape ports	1812	51919	18185	79
Natal Volunteers	43	1820	760	6
Irregular troops	182	4428	2288	3
Total	2877	65638	24025	117

SUPPLIES, &c.

	Tons.
Supplies	169,806
Hay and forage	28,600
Firewood, coal, &c.	30,241
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Total	228,147
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Live stock (horses, mules, oxen, and sheep), 91,614 head.

The work of the railway engineering staff was immense in connection with the reconstruction of bridges, culverts, permanent way, water-tanks, &c., which, in spite of every effort to protect them, had been ruthlessly destroyed. In the short space of five days, a trestle bridge at Frere was erected in place of the 300ft. iron structure which had been blown up. Only four days were occupied in laying down a branch line, four miles long, from Chieveley to the army's encampment at Hussar; while some twenty days were taken up in the construction of another trestle bridge over the Tugela at Colenso, to replace temporarily what was the largest bridge in Natal. Operations were continued night and day, the work after sunset being carried on with the aid of a powerful searchlight. Altogether no fewer than seventy-two bridges and culverts were blown up by the Boers, and thirty-two different portions of the railway were destroyed.

Lord Roberts expressed his appreciation of the work done by the Natal Government Railway in the following words, which I take from his farewell speech on December 7, when leaving Durban for Cape Town *en route* to England to take up his duties as Commander-in-chief, and initiate the reforms that are to take place at the War Office :

From September 20, 1899, to October 30, 1900, the number of troops passing through Durban comprised 2450 officers, 68,374 men, 26,789 horses, and 117 guns. In addition to this, there had been sent up to the troops 206,289 tons of supplies, 32,000

tons of hay and forage, and 32,000 tons of firewood and coal. There have been also a large number of men, wounded and invalids, brought down here, amounting to no less than 81,935 officers and men. These figures will show you to what extent the powers of Durban have been taxed, and nothing pleases me more—believing now that at this time I can confidently say that the war is practically over—than to bear testimony to the noble way in which the Durban officials responded to our wants, and to thank them all on the part of the army in a most heartfelt manner for the aid they have given us. Of course, it was only natural that Durban should be more intimately associated with the Natal Field Force than with the fortunes of the troops which I myself had the honour personally to command, and I was delighted to see, not long ago, that Sir Redvers Buller, in very eloquent terms, bore testimony to the help which his troops had received from one and all in Durban.

CHAPTER X

IMPERIAL AND CAPE GOVERNMENT RAILWAYS

AFTER a year's experience in almost every part of South Africa affected by the war, and with opportunities of forming an opinion on almost every administrative department, I have no hesitation in stating that whatever faults of judgment, or errors in individual conception of duty may have occurred during this Anglo-Boer war there is scarcely an officer or man, whatever his position, that has not done his utmost to forward the Imperial cause. These remarks also apply to the many ladies, whose service the Army Medical Corps describe as, perhaps, the best of the campaign. It is not only those who are in direct military employ that have done so well, but those who indirectly contribute to the great object in view, whose acts of heroism have not even been surpassed by those nine gallant men who received the coveted V.C. from their Commander-in-chief at Pretoria. In Cape Town and Durban, and all along the lines of communication, the staff officers and those serving under them have for months—getting on for two years—been working at high pressure, with a corresponding effect on their nervous system, though, in justice be it said, it is never observable in the reception of any one who visits the castle, the main barracks, or the docks on legitimate business. The greatest courtesy is extended to all, from the general to the youngest officer on the staff.

Amongst so many hundreds and thousands it is unreason-

able to expect that everybody should exhibit an equal amount of intelligence and physical strength, which latter has not infrequently been the cause of "breakdowns," which have been exaggerated by those who make it their business to criticise unfavourably. In spite of all that may be said in regard to want of foresight and the bad management of the war, it must be remembered that the requirements have been enormous; yet the organisation has somehow expanded to such a wonderful degree that our foreign critics stand amazed and declare that no other nation could have conveyed 250,000 troops from point to point with fewer mistakes.

Personally, I prefer to make a statement of facts as correctly as I can, and leave to the public the judgment as to whether the work done is good or bad, adequate or inadequate.

In a former chapter on the Natal Government Railway many remarks will be found that are equally applicable to the case I am about to set forth; and as the Imperial and Cape Government railways are a continuation of each other, I will deal with both together; though these remarks should be regarded merely as an outline of their contribution to the successful issue of the war in South Africa, and not the result of the whole of their labours.

The systematic despatch of troop trains to different parts of the colony, and into the Free State, is second to nothing in importance, and was for a long time in charge of Colonel Wyncoll, D.A.A.G. About seven trains per day used to leave the South Arm, conveying troops, supplies, and stores. A squadron of cavalry, a battery of artillery, or a battalion of infantry requires two trains for their men, horses, guns, vehicles, and stores. The railway is a single medium, or 3 ft. 6 in. gauge, and there are numerous crossings which have to be arranged for. All troop trains stop for at least an hour—remount trains nearer three hours—three times

per day, to feed men and horses. Hot water is kept ready, that the men may have tea, and each train carries three days' supply of rations for the men and forage for the horses. In addition to the organisation which this military traffic requires, Colonel Wyncoll personally attended to the departure of the mail trains to Bloemfontein and Kimberley, as staff officers and persons of importance nightly proceed in them to the chief seat of war, and to the military bases *en route*. As far as possible, the ordinary passenger service is also carried on with regularity.

The steep gradients and sharp curves that characterise the Natal line are not difficulties that have to be contended against by Colonel Girouard, Military Director of Imperial Railways, and Mr. Elliot, the General Manager of the Cape Government Railway, except on that section which connects Pretoria with Lorenço Marques; there the physical difficulties are even more severe, resembling the rack-and-pinion railways that ascend the sides of the mountains in Switzerland. In addition, the railway authorities on the Cape side have had to counteract the erratic proceedings of an extra "traffic manager," known to the public as De Wet, whose activities required no less than seven construction trains, constantly at work, to repair the enormous damage done; during the month of September the line was cut somewhere every day. As yet all efforts—and they have been many—have failed to deprive this destroyer of lines of his functions, for he possesses superior speed and knows well how to escape.

People in England, accustomed to the smooth working and well-organised lines, can hardly appreciate the difficulties that this occasioned, especially as the presence of the enemy obliged night running to cease, for safety's sake, thereby greatly increasing the traffic to be dealt with during the hours of daylight, half of which were spent in repairing

damage, thus leaving but a small portion for regular traffic.

The Cape Government Railway is the same as the Natal line, a single line throughout. The length of those portions that were required for use by the military were practically:

	Miles.
Cape Town to Vryburg	774
Salt River to Simonstown	20
Port Elizabeth to De Aar	339
Naaupoort to Norval's Pont	59
Rosmead to Stormberg Junction	83
East London to Aliwal North	280
Albert Junction to Bethulie ¹ Bridge	39
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	1594

Of this total the enemy had possession of 374 miles. These figures, however, by no means represent the total mileage that has now to be worked, for, since the relief of Mafeking, trains run to Bulawayo, a distance from Cape Town of 1360 miles. From Cape Town to Pretoria is 1040 miles, and Pretoria to Koomati Poort is 292 more. It will thus be seen that the military and railway authorities have a very great length of line to protect. In considering these enormous distances and their surrounding circumstances, who can venture to criticise unfavourably the organisation and administrative ability of Colonel Girouard, Mr. Elliott, and Mr. David Hunter, all of whom have so harmoniously—with the military—directed such a gigantic undertaking?

Colonel Howard Vincent, in a paper read at the United Service Institution, says the German calculation is that not more than 40,000 men can be fed on a single line; but 120,000 men, with stores and baggage, and 60,000 animals, with their complement of vehicles and forage, were conveyed over the single Cape Government line of 3 ft. 6 in.

Now that the time is near at hand for summing up results and rewarding those who have rendered yeoman service in the cause of British supremacy in South Africa, none will be found to have been more zealous in their duty than those who have had the control of railway traffic, civil as well as military.

The small number of soldiers in the colony at the commencement of the war, in October, impelled the railway department to render considerable assistance to the military in guarding the several lines by night and day, in order to prevent damage at vulnerable points by sympathisers with the Free State and South African Republic, thus allowing of the safe passage of the army until troops in sufficient numbers could be landed to protect the lines of communication.

Had this assistance not been forthcoming, sections of the line would certainly have been destroyed and traffic would have been stopped—probably for weeks—especially considering the rebellious state the Cape Dutch were in at this period.

During the time the Boers were in the colony they inflicted considerable destruction to the railways—tearing up rails, blowing up culverts and bridges, utterly destroying the important bridges at Norval's Pont, Bethulie, Modder River, Fourteen Streams, Leuwfontein, and Oorlogs Spruit, damaging stations and men's quarters to a frightful degree.

In the notable defences of Kimberley and Mafeking, the railway staff took an active part, some of the officers and men being mentioned in despatches; and at those places which were taken possession of by the Republican forces the staff exhibited considerable courage in remaining at their posts up to the last moment. Their hours on duty were anxious and long. More than one driver stood to be shot

rather than yield his place on the engine. On September 20, 1900, a driver was shot dead while running a night train; his seriously wounded mate pluckily stuck to his post and brought his dying comrade into Heidelberg.

Lord Roberts' latest act prior to sailing from Cape Town for England was to sanction the issue of a special medal for all engine-drivers engaged on endangered lines throughout South Africa during the war, he himself personally testifying to their heroic services. The Cape Government issued a circular notifying this decision, which caused intense satisfaction among railway men.

The heroism of these men is constantly related by those who come in contact with them and know their danger.

The present far-reaching organisation of the Imperial railway in the month of April 1900 had scarcely begun to take form. The staff of the South African field force consisted of the Director of Railways and some few officers of the Royal Engineers, who acted as Deputy-Assistant Directors of Railways, and, as troops arrived, railway staff officers were appointed to the principal stations.

I have heard many adverse criticisms on the folly of having soldiers to run a railway—that it was not their proper *métier*, and that it was impossible for them to work a great line as well as civilians who have spent their lives at the business. This is undoubtedly sound argument in times of peace; but how could a company find men in sufficient numbers to meet the demand and face the dangers that each step forward taken by the advancing army entailed?

How could civilians, unaided, direct the entraining and feeding of troops as they were passed on in their myriads? Would "Tommy Atkins" have been obedient to their orders?

Many devices were employed to find a sufficient number of reliable railway men to work the constantly increasing

length of line, some being soldiers with railway experience. All that could be spared were lent by the Cape Government Railway; some were the employés of the old Free State Railway, and advertising was freely resorted to. A regiment of pioneers, consisting chiefly of railway men, was raised in December in Cape Town, to be employed in repairing the bridges destroyed by the enemy, this invaluable corps being commanded by Major T. E. Capper, R.E., with Major L. T. Seymour as second in command.

Just to show the dangers these railway pioneers had to encounter, I will mention that whilst at Orange River, Modder River, and Norval's Pont, they carried on their important work in imminent danger from the enemy's fire.

On June 5 No. 5 Company was ordered north to repair the bridge at Rhenoster Spruit. They arrived at Roodewal in the evening of June 6, and the next morning were attacked by General De Wet with a large force and four guns.

In company with about forty details of other regiments, who were on the station, they defended the place for about six hours, and surrendered, after losing Captain Gale and six men killed and several wounded. They were marched about the country for about a month, and were then put over the Natal border with 700 other prisoners.

The right and centre wings were ordered to Zand River June 10, and arrived there on the 12th for the purpose of repairing the bridge. On the morning of the 14th they were attacked at daybreak by a commando, under Commandants Roux and Borman, said to be about 800 strong.

After a fight of several hours' duration, the enemy was driven off with a loss, as was afterwards ascertained, of nine killed and thirty wounded. In this fight Major L. T. Seymour (who was mainly responsible for the raising of the regiment),

Lieutenant Clement, and five men were killed, and one officer and five men wounded.

During the period the enemy's forces were in Cape Colony's territory the Cape Government Railway retained complete control over their lines. All that was necessary for the army railway officers was to see that the Cape Government Railway authorities were not asked to carry out impossibilities, and for this purpose Colonel Girouard's officers were posted at various points of the system to act as intermediaries, and to control the direct military traffic.

Upon the occupation of Bloemfontein, however, the railway management assumed a totally different aspect. There being no existing staff available for the Free State Railway, the military had at once to assume direct and sole control from Norval's Pont, employing, as a temporary measure, the old Free State Railway employés who had left the country on hostilities being imminent, but were ready to return on the British occupation. The working staff was further augmented from men in the service of the Cape Government Railway.

No greater proof of Colonel Girouard's appreciation of civilian help could be adduced than the appointment of Mr. Hoy, of the Cape Government Railway, to be traffic manager of the Imperial military railways, and no words can convey an idea of the help rendered by the Cape Government Railway to the military authorities in all emergencies. Whatever requisitions were made—and they were large and constant, often causing great inconvenience to the department—they were cheerfully given, whether it was in the services of the staff or supplies; military requirements being paramount.

Prior to the arrival of the first troopship at Cape Town, in November, 1899, a time-table had been framed by the railway department for the prompt despatch up-country of the

first army corps, and as the whole of the South Arm at the docks was placed at the disposal of the military for the disembarkation of troops and their supplies, the men entrained practically alongside the steamers, and were sent directly to their several destinations without delay.

It was a matter of comment that transports were signalled but the troops were never seen, so quietly were they entrained and sent away.

Subsequently large numbers of troops, horses, mules and stores were sent inland from Port Elizabeth and East London; but in regard to the number of men, horses, mules, vehicles, guns, &c., and the tonnage of forage and supplies of all descriptions, they come under their respective departments. All freight, however, whether men, animals, or stores, carried over the railways, was conveyed at so much per short truck, a bogie vehicle counting as two shorts. The military requisitioned for the number of carriages or trucks which they required, and loaded them to their full capacities as they saw fit.

The demand for trucks for the conveyance of military stores was so great that for months fully two-thirds of the entire Cape stock of trucks were entirely in the possession of the military, and even with that the cry for trucks was ever heard. In this particular perhaps something more might have been done by the military. Instead of trucks being unloaded and returned for further use, many were kept for weeks on the lines, serving the purpose of store houses; but trucks will not unload themselves, and labour at certain points was hard to get.

Important work was undertaken by the locomotive department in armouring trains and converting carriages, vans, and trucks into five complete hospital trains for conveying the sick and wounded to the hospitals at the coast. 9-ft. 2-in. and 6-in. guns were mounted on special trucks, mainly

designed by the locomotive officials, and the result gave every satisfaction to the military authorities.

It is worth recording that in consequence of the almost complete stoppage of the coal mines within the colony, and the impossibility of obtaining coal from the Orange River Colony and the Transvaal, from which, prior to the outbreak of the war, the department was taking from 150,000 to 200,000 tons per annum, it became absolutely necessary to augment the supply on hand by ordering Welsh coal with the least possible delay. A quantity was purchased at the following high prices, and delivered at the several ports, viz., Cape Town, £4 15s.; Algoa Bay, £3 17s. 6d.; and East London, £4 7s. 6d. per ton. This excessive price was due to a coal strike in Wales, coupled with the fact that the Admiralty, War Office and Colonial Office had chartered so many steamers for various purposes that the freight charges had increased by leaps and bounds. Ever since the war began the railway department has had to pay considerably enhanced prices for imported coal. Yet it is satisfactory to know that during the year there has been a net profit on the railway receipts. Owing to the large military requirements, in one week £17,000 more was earned than in a corresponding one of the previous year.

It has been officially announced that the railway systems of the Orange River Colony and the Transvaal will continue to be administered as Imperial military railways for the next three years at least, and will then be handed over to their respective Governments.

Earl Roberts, in his despatch on the work done by the Administrative services of April 19, 1901—see at the end of this volume—bears grateful testimony to the arduous labours of the railway staff, both military and civil.

CHAPTER XI

RAILWAY STAFF OFFICERS

STAFF OFFICERS are generally supposed to be to a large extent ornamental, and to a certain degree useful, but they are not generally understood to be called upon to overburden themselves with work.

I have heard several officers express their opinion that the railway staff officer was nothing better than a "glorified railway porter," with nothing to do but walk up and down the platform and look "pretty" in his staff cape and red tabs.

No one who has any knowledge of the duties and responsibilities connected with the staff work of the Imperial military railways in South Africa would credit such a statement.

If they only answered silly questions which are put to them in rapid succession, they would have something to do and enough to test their good breeding.

Take a railway staff officer at large stations or centres of distribution, Elandsfontein for example, the Clapham Junction of South Africa. No fewer than five lines converge in this railway centre, and those in charge are called upon to deal with traffic of all kinds from the Cape, from Natal, from Pretoria, and from the Delagoa line; from Johannesburg and from Springs—the latter a coal-mining district. Elandsfontein is not only a great junction, through which, in ordinary times of peace, 210 trains pass daily, but it is also a great depôt for military stores, the receiving and distributing of which to the various army corps is, if taken separately, a

great undertaking. The entraining and detraining of troops, with all their paraphernalia, the controlling of such passenger traffic as a state of war permits, the custody and passing on of prisoners of war, censoring telegrams, issuing of travelling permits, and the control of a considerable staff of both military and civilians, provide other occupations than walking up and down the platform looking "pretty."

The qualifications that appear to me to be most necessary for the position of a railway staff officer at a place like Elandsfontein are, in the first place, that he should possess an imperturbable good temper, with natural amiability; firmness in dealing with the varied human elements which like a kaleidoscope pass before him; readiness in emergency; tact and discrimination, if he is to cope successfully with the task set him by the chief of the staff.

The railway staff officer should be something of a linguist, in order to communicate his instructions to the polyglot community that make their requests in lingoes that are enough to bewilder any ordinary man. Exclusive of the foreign and native languages, dialects from various parts of the British Empire are not a little confusing when they come altogether. A knowledge of Dutch, French and German, and a certain amount of Zulu, Basuto and Hindustani is indispensable.

An army of such dimensions as that transported to South Africa has a large mouth; and Mr. Atkins, if he must fight, must also be fed, and with regularity.

When the army halted at Bloemfontein for food and equipment an enormous quantity of stores had to be worked up to meet immediate requirements as well as to form reserves in anticipation of the next advance.

From a railway staff officer's point of view, the war has been conducted in three great rushes: the rush to Bloemfontein, the rush to Pretoria, and the rush east.

In the organisation of each of these great movements the difficulty most felt was the shortness of the staff and of the rolling stock, but above all, the interruption to traffic, caused by the continual damage to the line, and the stoppage of night trains.

The traffic managers and their assistants were in all cases civilians of experience, but the engineering staff was officered almost entirely by the military, though it must be noted that this did not necessarily mean only Royal Engineers officers. Colonials and others were employed in the department.

It could not, however, be expected that a staff hastily got together could work smoothly at first. The military did not understand the civilians, and the civilians did not quite take to the somewhat overbearing and inconsiderate ways of the military, both on and off the railway. It may not be without point here to observe that when these colonials were in the positions of command their own demeanour was frequently the most inconsiderate and overbearing of all. The Guards were perhaps the most successful of any set of officers in holding together in harmony the various human elements that came in contact on the railway. In the discharge of uncongenial duties the Guards, both by precept and example, may claim to have got the best work out of the men under their orders, and that *con amore*.

It was in such cases that the railway staff officer was seen to such advantage and his tact and temper tested. He was a sort of "Buffer State"; and was responsible that only authorised persons and goods proceeded by rail. His duty made it necessary often to say "No" when he would greatly have preferred to say "Yes," the applicant being frequently very angry at the refusal. Hence it will be seen that much depended upon 'this much-abused person, the railway staff officer.

As regards the method of dealing with the traffic, the chief of the staff issued the orders as to what was required, whether regiment's supplies or ordnance, and *no one* nor anything else was permitted to pass. It often happened, however, that some urgent troop-move compelled all previous arrangements for ordinary traffic to be set aside. The collection of cattle trucks and bogie flat trucks that were necessary for a troop move meant the practical suspension of remount traffic and the disorganisation of the supply traffic. This dislocation could not, perhaps, be set right for a day or two, as the trucks were naturally landed empty at the opposite end of a long journey from that at which they were required to be refilled. In spite of all these difficulties, a large amount of traffic was got through, owing chiefly to the dogged determination of the military and civil staff. The energy and rapidity with which the line was repaired was often amazing, traffic being sometimes resumed even before the Director of Railways had had time to hear of the interruption.

Foreign attachés were often heard expressing their surprise at the way the work was done, and by men who had had no former training in these duties. Had there been a moment of real ill-feeling between the military and civil authorities in the traffic department, things would have worked ill and gone to the bad. Instead, the duties connected with the railway were carried on with an energy that surpassed De Wet himself, and reduced all his endeavours to small account.

In stating the case for the railway staff officers it must not be supposed that I claim for the working of the railway that it could not have been better. The ignorance of many officers of all ranks as to the working of railways was a serious feature. It caused orders to be given and carried out which led to the most disastrous results in the traffic—consequences entirely attributable to the ignorance of the

giver of the order. Also a number of good railway men in the ranks never found their way into the Imperial Military Railway from the same cause, as well as from a natural unwillingness to part with them. I know that such stress of circumstances occurred, that men were put on an engine who had no idea of how to work it, and have been heard to say, "It is all very easy to say 'all right,' or 'go ahead,' but how do you start the blooming thing?" If there was so little knowledge of how to start, how was the stopping coming off?

Let us hope steps will be taken to remedy these defects before another campaign, and that the lessons of history may be better learnt and applied in the future. It is not, however, encouraging to this hope to remember that the self-same difficulties arose and were pointed out in a standard work on the railway operations in the Franco-German war.

CHAPTER XII

THE STAFF COLLEGE

THE one institution in the British Army above all others concerning which more ignorance prevails in and out of the service is the Staff College. What is the Staff College? True, it is an educational establishment, but its work is done in quite a different way to that most people suppose. The unfortunate Staff College is expected to do for a man more, aye, far more, than any other establishment in this world, or professor for a pupil. It is supposed to convert a dullard into the most brilliant and unerring staff officer, and the unreasoning and unreasonable officer into a most capable one. When gold or some other metal is obtained from a mine it is submitted to an assayer for analysis, and this expert really determines the nature of the "find" and its fineness. Now, the Staff College only does for the army what the assayer does for the mine-owner. The professors at the Staff College, after all, can only ascertain the qualifications of the officers who study under them. In testing minerals chemicals are used, and it often happens that portions of the minerals under test become incorporated with the chemicals used as agents in the test. So it is at the Staff College: during the process of the test at that establishment, a large number of officers of different branches of the service are brought together, and this intercourse leads to a dissemination of military knowledge. Officers discover that officers of their branch of the service do not possess an

exclusive knowledge of this military subject, or that; they also discover the points on which their knowledge is either defective or erroneous; they learn also that although they may belong to different branches of the service, yet they are able to work together harmoniously to bring about a certain result. But how is this done? Some fancy that an attempt is made at the Staff College to bring about this desirable result by cramming the poor officers who go to that establishment, with a knowledge of higher mathematics, chemistry, and other useless subjects. Now, no greater error can be made than to suppose that the Staff College course consists in the learning by rote of figures relating to military details and a certain number of cut and dried military maxims. What are the subjects then which are taught at the Staff College? They are the following:—

- (i.) Military history, tactics, and strategy.
- (ii.) Field and permanent fortification.
- (iii.) Military topography.
- (iv.) Staff duties.
- (v.) French and German.

But how is the instruction in these subjects carried on, and what is the real necessity for instruction in each of the above-named subjects? It has already been hinted that the officers studying at the College at one time mutually instruct one another; it should also be understood that rapidity in dealing with the problems given out is also an essential feature in the system of instruction adopted. To explain this system it will perhaps be best to deal shortly with each of the subjects taught separately.

(i.) *Military history, &c.*—It is hardly necessary to explain that from military history it is that most of the lessons of strategy are to be learnt. In reading of past campaigns conducted by the renowned generals of the world,

we learn that the adoption of certain precautions led to victory, and their neglect to defeat and disaster; we learn that certain strategical manœuvres when executed by a particular general, under certain existing conditions, were successful and had a beneficial bearing on the subsequent operations of this general's army, yet the identical manœuvres conducted by another general, under slightly different conditions, it will often be learnt, ended in disaster. It is from actual war experience that one learns how far the tactics of the period have been modified by the progress in armaments, new propellents, &c., and it is to military history that a soldier turns for a true account of that actual struggle on the battlefield which finally decides as to the side with which the victory rests. Strategy is taught at the Staff College by creating a situation which resembles one which has actually occurred in war. Sometimes the situation is created merely on paper, the theatre of operations selected being one chosen from history, at other times a situation is created on the actual ground, either near Camberley, or may be even at a distance from the Staff College. The former exercises are worked out by officers, either in groups or individually; they are allowed the use of books, but a date is always fixed by which the arguments, &c., on the subject must be handed in. The latter class of problems are generally dealt with on the field of operations by groups of officers. Tactical problems are generally worked on similar lines. But as in this case actual units can be dealt with on the ground, the greater part of the instruction in tactics is given at the time the exercise takes place. An area near Camberley, Reading, Newbury, or some other point easily reached from Camberley, is chosen for the day's operations, and the officers are told off as brigadiers, divisional commanders, and staff officers to the several brigades and divisions which it is assumed will take part in

the operations; next, a scheme as nearly as possible resembling one likely to occur in war is set, the brigadiers and divisional commanders, with their staffs, write out the orders for their commands which the situation appears to demand, and the exercise is worked out to even the disposition of the imaginary divisions, brigades, and battalions on the actual ground. The day's operations are afterwards thoroughly discussed, and errors are pointed out. In this way many details of staff arrangements come to light, and the effects of neglect of trivial details of staff work also show themselves in the failure in this or that part of the field. The officers are not required nowadays to burden their memories with a whole mass of detail concerning the movements of armies in the theatres of the wars they deal with, nor are they called upon to remember the wanderings of the units from one part of the field to another in the famous battles of the world. It is to the main results to be expected from the adoption of this course, or that, that their attention is directed. It is not every man who knows all the propositions in the twelve books of Euclid who can work out a "rider"; so it is with strategy. It will not be denied that the officer who can often rattle off all the well-known maxims of war—so called—as fluently as the parson can the Lord's Prayer, is the last person who can apply the proper maxims to the military situation of the moment. During the present war Mr. Rhodes asked an officer shut up in Kimberley during the siege, what course he would adopt if given command of the army—this was at the time of Magersfontein. This officer happened to be a Staff College officer, and therefore, according to the opponents of the Staff College course, he ought to have argued somewhat on the following lines: "Theory demands that for a large army the 'line of communication' shall, if possible, be a railway; now, there is only one railway through the Free State to Bloemfontein, and therefore I would, if given command,

advance with my main army either from Norval's Pont or from Bethulie *via* Springfontein or Bloemfontein." However, the answer of the officer in question was totally different. He stated that given a sufficient British force in Natal to deal with the Boers known to be in that portion of the theatre of operations; given also that there were sufficient British troops in Cape Colony to safeguard the "lines of communication," and to put down any rebellion likely to break out in Cape Colony; given, further, that a sufficient force remained over in South Africa to deal with any Boer force likely to be met south of the Vaal River in the western theatre of preparations, then if he were given command and the preparations for an advance were complete, he would at once make an advance with his main western army on Kimberley, and after turning the Boers under Cronje out of their stronghold at Magersfontein, he would pursue the main body of this Boer force even should it retire either along the Modder or the Vaal River. But why did this officer give such a reply? Simply because the first and most important maxim in war is that a commander shall bring superior forces against the portion of the enemy's army at the decisive point. This is a maxim which never changes, and is as old as the hills; Julius Cæsar probably knew no other, and the campaigns of the great Napoleon teem with examples of how he brought about this combination of superiority of his troops at the decisive point. At the opening of the Transvaal War the decisive point in the western theatre of operations was for the time being the point of concentration of the Boer forces in this theatre, *viz.*, Magersfontein. Strange as it may appear to the unreasoning critic of the present day, to no other military maxim is so much importance attached at the Staff College as to this one, and to no other consideration than that of bringing about a superiority of force at the decisive point is so much attention paid in the strategical and tactical

problems considered at that institution. There is no greater fallacy than that which credits strategy with being a science which must be conducted in accordance with a certain narrow set of rules, lines similar to those by which some teetotal club or abstinence society is conducted. Strategy is, after all, based on common sense; and it is not the Staff College, but rather the ignoramus and the pedant who give a false conception of the elements which make up the science. In all matters of this world one can learn from the recorded experiences of others the common-sense way of dealing with the more difficult problems which present themselves in every calling of life daily—if Nature has not given one an abundance of common sense as an inherent gift, the Staff College cannot. By those less blessed, strategy and tactics are military matters that are written down and talked down as “pure theory,” and are merely recorded as the experiences of military *grands-seigneurs*.

(ii.) *Field and permanent fortification*.—Some consider that fortification is a subject which concerns the Engineers alone, and wonder why the precious time of a would-be staff officer should be wasted with this subject, which they suppose consists essentially of a mass of details concerning the dimensions of various parts of redoubts, forts, &c., often possessing some cross-bred name. But the Staff College student is not expected to become an Engineer, and therefore he is not called upon to deal with the details of this subject. As in tactics, the instruction given in field fortification is given on the ground. A scheme is set in which units of an army are supposed to take part; the officers work either individually or in groups, and make all the arrangements for their supposed commands on the actual ground; the professor criticises the dispositions, and the students are called on for their reasons for doing this and not that, and so on. But why should field fortification be considered so much a special subject? In its

essence is it not, after all, a form of applied tactics? Permanent fortification, further, does not consist entirely of an elaborate disposition of cupolas, ravelins, counterguards, &c., and of rules to determine the dimensions for this part of a work or that. There is another aspect from which this subject can be looked at, and that is the strategical aspect. It is to the strategy of permanent fortification, if it may be so called, that the attention of the Staff College student is directed. He is familiarised with the reasons which have prompted the creation of fortresses along one section of an existing frontier on one scale, and on a totally different scale on some other section of the same frontier; in fact, the whole consideration of the question of frontier defence from the point of view of strategy is fully gone into. Similarly, the strategical relations of the permanent defences of various important places to field armies likely to be operating in their neighbourhood are fully dealt with. In this subject also the students are not called on to remember details; but only a knowledge of the principles governing the selection of the points to be defended is expected from them. Will any one be found to hold that such knowledge is unnecessary on the part of the staff officer? Surely not. The Engineer may in the first place be called on for the exposition of his views on such a matter, but the officer whose duty it is to give a decision regarding the acceptance or rejection of the Engineer's advice surely ought to be one possessing some knowledge of the general principles of this subject.

(iii.) *Military topography.*—It is necessary to state for general information that military topography does not consist in the production of highly accurate and artistic maps of a road or tract of country. Of all subjects taught at the Staff College this is the one in which a more searching test of the capacity of the student to work against time is made than in any other. Whether the map to be produced is a road

sketch, or the map of a river line, or that of a tract of country, a tactical scheme is always associated with the production of a representation of the physical features of the ground to be dealt with during the day. The relation of ground to manœuvre and of manœuvre to ground, in this manner, is vividly brought before the student. The importance of this relation has been amply demonstrated in South Africa since October 11, 1899, and therefore it is not necessary to say more on the subject here.

(iv.) *Staff duties*.—The last, but by no means the least important, subject taught at the Staff College is, for the want of a more comprehensive title, called staff duties. This subject deals with the wants of an army, the different departments that are charged with the responsibility of providing for these wants, and the relation of these departments to one another. It is a subject which covers a wide area: it deals with the clothing of an army in peace and in war, with the feeding of an army at all times, with the provision of transport for an army, with the conveyance of troops by land and by water, with camps for a force, large or small, and with the preparation of all that is required for the well-being and comfort of the men in the same. Under the head of staff duties are also considered the questions relating to marches and the writing of orders for the same, detailing measures for safety, arrangements in connection with supply, &c. The majority of the schemes in this subject are also worked out on the actual ground, generally by officers in groups. Some organised unit of the army is brought into requisition, the student officers are detailed to the various staff billets which the unit is allowed in our organisation, and a scheme is set dealing with some requirement of this force on the supposition that it is operating under certain conditions, either in the immediate neighbourhood of the Staff College or even in some more distant area. In this manner the students

become acquainted with the details of our army organisation, the hundred and one wants of the troops under the varying conditions of peace and war service, and the students also learn to whom they shall refer this matter and that. Without learning the details in connection with railway construction and traffic management, without acquiring any extensive knowledge concerning electricity and telegraph instruments, &c., the students yet do become acquainted with a sufficient knowledge of railways and of telegraphs to enable them even to deal consistently with questions relating to the use of railways and telegraph for the benefit of troops.

(v.) *French and German.*—The only languages now taught at the Staff College are French and German, and each officer must pass a qualifying test in one or other at least of these languages before he can obtain a P.S.C. Perhaps the acquisition of a language is, after all, only an accomplishment, still, it cannot be denied that it opens up to the man possessing it a wider field of literature, past and current, and therefore this man can keep himself more in touch with modern thought in countries other than his own. Will any one maintain that there is no advantage in this?

Summary.—The foregoing examination will show that an attempt is made, at least, to make the instruction at the Staff College practical; and yet one must admit that men go to the Staff College, and after a two years' residence still remain unpractical. How is this to be accounted for? The regulations for admission to the Staff College require commanding officers to answer certain questions concerning would-be candidates for the institution. If these questions were in every case answered without fear, favour, or affection, *i.e.*, if commanding officers would dry up the milk of human kindness in their natures, when considering applications from candidates, the complaint would be less frequent that this duffer or that was a Staff College graduate. It is neces-

sary to repeat that the Staff College cannot do for a man that which no other agency in this world can do for him. Now, in the South African campaign the "inky-fingered," Staff-College-trained officer is said to have been a failure, and names are even mentioned in this connection. To deal with this question fairly, it must be pointed out that the method of instruction of ten years ago at the Staff College cannot be compared with the present-day instruction, and therefore it is unreasonable to condemn the Staff College of to-day because a pupil of the establishment of antiquated-method-of-instruction days proves himself incompetent. In common fairness it must be admitted that during General Hildyard's *régime* at the Staff College reforms were instituted and the instruction brought up to date. If the nation really desires to reap the full advantage from this establishment, two things are absolutely necessary, viz., that favouritism must cease, even as regards the selection of Staff College graduates for important staff billets; and in every case that the graduate be chosen for the *particular appointment* who has *the special aptitude* for the *particular duties* of the vacant appointment. Lastly, the question arises, of what use are highly trained staff officers, if the generals they are called upon to advise and assist have not studied their profession and fail to follow the reasonings of these staff officers? So there are two sides to this question, as to every other. There are as good fish in the sea as have been taken out of it, so also there are as good officers in the British army who have not been through the Staff College as there are officers who have passed through that establishment. But is this a good reason for abolishing the Staff College? Surely, the answer of an unprejudiced person cannot but be, No. Is it not the case that the British army would benefit rather than otherwise by extending the advantages, even in a modified form, to a large number of officers. The officer who can go away

from the Staff College after two years' honest study and claim that he has learnt nothing, must be either a crass fool or a conceited idiot. It has been admitted that all officers who graduate at the Staff College do not possess the necessary qualifications for staff appointments. But can the privilege of writing P.S.C. after their names be denied these? Certainly not. Although they may be wanting in some respects, there are few indeed who have not improved by undergoing the two years' course of study; and if the distinction of the coveted letters were withheld from all but those thought to be qualified for the staff, is there not a danger that many would be deterred by feelings of pardonable pride from running the risk of failure, so to speak, and thereby a reduction in the number of candidates for the college might follow? Students of human nature, it is fancied, will answer, Yes. Is this not an argument for increasing largely the number of students at the Staff College, so as to remove the idea that the sole reason for the existence of this establishment is to provide staff officers rather than to disseminate military knowledge throughout the British army? By increasing the number of students, the powers that be would have the field of selection for important appointments very much extended for them, and the officers of the army would approach nearer to the ideal article than they do to-day. The officers of the different arms of the service would be brought into closer contact with one another in their maturer years if they had to study together; and too much is not expected when it is stated that such an arrangement would tend to increase the sympathy between the different branches of the service, and would also result in a more perfect understanding of the functions of these branches by officers of all arms than is the case to-day. The foundation would also be laid for a better understanding between staff and regimental officers; and one

of the most serious complaints of the day concerns the lack of sympathy between the staff and the regimental officers.

Owing to the great demand during this war for every trained officer available, the College at Camberley has had to be closed for the year. Both in South Africa and in England I have heard many military men of various ranks and ages express the hope that it might never be re-opened; but this is not the view entertained in Pall Mall, as it recommenced its educational functions as usual on the 22nd of January.

The failure in the field of some of the most trusted Staff College graduates, and the brilliant success of certain generals that have never been near it have been most extraordinary, and lent a certain colour to the adverse criticism that has been levelled at this famous establishment and its graduates, and, in the opinion of some, these results amply justify the total abolition of the college.

They argue: "What is the use of a college that turns out only a set of 'stupid officers' good for nothing? The test of actual war proves the truth that the course of instruction they receive only muddles their heads; and, besides, it is very expensive, and takes up two valuable years of their lives—time that might be better employed."

Now, in India just the reverse of this opinion is heard. There is quite an agitation going on amongst military men for a special Staff College for teaching Indian officers the higher parts of the science of war, which will find additional recruits with the return of the troops that have taken part in the South African campaign. To anybody that is unprejudiced and knows the conditions of service in India, such an institution would be a great boon.

There is no such college in India to which a man can go who wishes to make his mark in his profession.

The officers in the Indian Staff Corps are not, generally speaking, rich enough to afford to go to Camberley, and it

seems a pity that young officers who are keenly alive to the importance of self-improvement and anxious to rise by their merits, have not the chance of doing so.

A staff college could more satisfactorily carry on the instructive work that is being done by teachers who hold classes of all sorts in different parts of India, which are necessarily very expensive to both those who teach and those who are taught.

There are many great families in India that would readily support such an establishment, and, if our military organisations are to be made adequate to the needs of the Empire, encouragement must be extended to every part of it where men may be found to serve in the army and anxious to fit themselves for military service in its higher branches.

CHAPTER XIII

PRESS CENSORS AND WAR CORRESPONDENTS

FROM a war correspondent's point of view there is no staff officer connected with the field force so important as the chief press censor. He is the all-important one amongst them.

During the greater part of the war, until the return of Earl Roberts, Lord Staaley, M.P., occupied this important and difficult position, and Major Bagot, M.P., was *the* great man at Cape Town; at Durban, Major W. I. Jones, Wiltshire Regiment, was press censor.

On arrival at the Cape, every war correspondent had to report himself and show his licence and other credentials, which, if satisfactory, and the newspaper he purported to represent was not already served with the maximum number of press men at the place to which he desired to proceed, then facilities and passes to travel were given to him as far as the military arrangements permitted; though it has often happened that correspondents have had to make their own way independently as best they could. If they were zealous in their work, and if the journals they represented were generous in their financial arrangements, the cost they entailed in getting about the country after information was very considerable. But news is a commodity the public is willing to pay for, and it is but seldom that newspaper proprietors are not sufficiently alive to their own interests to allow large sums for travelling expenses and remunerating

those who face the dangers, difficulties, and hardships in time of war with the recompense that is their due. Not to do so would be a very false economy.

The fact that the position of a war correspondent accompanying the troops is very arduous and trying, is indisputably proved by the heavy losses amongst them in the war now pending in South Africa, losses occasioned by shot and shell and by the still more deadly effects of fever.

The names of prominent war correspondents who have especially suffered, such as Mr. Steevens of the *Daily Mail*,* who died in Ladysmith from enteric fever, and Mr. Knight of the *Morning Post*, who lost his right arm and nearly his life at Modder River, will readily occur to the mind, but such a long list of casualties amongst them will come as a surprise to a great many people. Up to June 6, 1900,† there were over forty victims who were reported as sick or dead, and there were others who struggled through their maladies "somehow," of which no mention was made, but upon whose constitutions the effects of a long campaign have left indelible marks, my own person bearing testimony to the truth of my statement.

The *Daily Express*, in its issue of June 6, 1900, says, in giving the appended list, that,

It seems to have been the fate of half the correspondents to fall on the veld, to fall ill, or to fall into gaol. The *Daily Mail* was particularly unlucky; Reuter's and the *Times*, on the other hand, phenomenally fortunate. The *Express* correspondents have only had a few weeks of the war, but one of them has been laid low by the deadly enteric.

* The proprietors of the *Daily Mail* have given a pension of £500 a year to Mrs. Steevens, though her financial position was not one of pecuniary distress.

† As far as I have been able to ascertain, no deaths or seriously wounded casualties have since occurred.

Mingled with their regrets at this sad price of success, pressmen may feel a just pride at the courage and enterprise of their colleagues. Cowards would not be shot, nor laggards taken prisoner.

The victims were :—

Mr. G. W. Steevens, *Daily Mail*, died of enteric during siege of Ladysmith.

Mr. Alfred Ferrand, *Morning Post*, killed at Ladysmith.

Mr. Albert Collett, *Daily Mail*, killed in action, Molteno.

Mr. Lambie, *Melbourne Age*, killed at Rensburg.

Colonel Hoskier, *Sphere*, killed near Stormberg.

Mr. Ernest G. Parslow, *Daily Chronicle*, shot dead by Lieutenant Murchison at Mafeking. Murderer, penal servitude for life.

Mr. Mitchell, *Standard*, captured, escaped, took enteric fever, and died.

Mr. W. Spooner, *Reuter's*, died of fever.

Mr. Charles E. Hands, *Daily Mail*, dangerously wounded, Maritsani (recovering by last news).

Mr. A. G. Hales, *Daily News*, wounded and captured.

Mr. Julian Ralph, *Daily Mail*, struck by shell fragment at Belmont and severely injured in accident.

Mr. F. W. Walker, *Daily Mail*, wounded at Stormberg.

Captain Wright, *Daily Mail*, injured while despatch riding.

Lord Delawarr, *Globe*, wounded at Vryheid.

Mr. P. J. Reid (son of Sir H. G. Reid), *Echo*, seriously wounded at Kheis.

Mr. E. F. Knight, *Morning Post*, shot with sporting Mauser bullet at Belmont, right arm amputated.

Mr. Winston Spencer Churchill, *Morning Post*, captured at Chieveley, afterwards escaped.

Lord Cecil Manners, *Morning Post*, captured near Johannesburg, and liberated.

Mr. Hales, *Sydney Morning Herald*, captured.

Mr. George Lynch, *Morning Herald* and *Echo*, captured, released, in hospital with enteric fever, now in England.

Mr. M. H. Donohoe, *Daily Chronicle*, captured, probably released yesterday.

Mr. A. Graham, *Central News*, missing since May 21, supposed captured.

Mr. A. F. Hellowell, Rev. Adrian Hofmeyr, Lady Sarah Wilson, all *Daily Mail*, captured.

Lord Rosslyn, *Daily Mail* and *Sphere*, captured.

Mr. James Milne, Reuter, captured.

Mr. John Stuart, *Morning Post*, nearly blind after siege of Ladysmith, recovered, now ill with dysentery.

Mr. W. Maxwell, *Standard*, enteric fever during siege of Ladysmith, recovered.

Mr. Alfred Kinnear, Central News, enteric, invalided home.

Mr. Jos. S. Dunn, Central News, twice captured, enteric, recovered.

Mr. W. Martindale, Mr. W. S. Swallow, and Mr. Charles Bray, Central News, enteric, recovered.

Mr. F. A. Stewart, *Illustrated London News*, down with dysentery at Durban.

Mr. W. T. Maud, *Daily Graphic*, laid up with enteric fever after Ladysmith, and invalided home.

Mr. Bullen, *Daily Telegraph*, invalided home.

Mr. H. W. Nevinson, *Daily Chronicle*, in hospital with fever now recovered.

Mr. J. A. Cameron, *Daily Chronicle*, enteric; permanently invalided.

Mr. Brayley Hodgetts, *Express*, invalided with enteric.

Mr. Lester Ralph, Mr. H. Lyons, Mr. R. C. E. Nissen, and Mr. L. Oppenheim, *Daily Mail*, invalided.

The conditions of modern warfare are such that the correspondents who wish to see for themselves the realities of war, and the consequences of long-range guns and smokeless powder, must advance well to the front line of battle, accompany patrols, and follow the army whithersoever it goes. They must live in camps or tramp along like any ordinary soldier. There is no going to the top of a hill to watch at a safe distance. They must be in the centre of things, not beyond the reach of bullets, shrapnel, and lyddite shells; that is to say if they wish to get their information at the actual point of observation.

At Magarsfontein the correspondents were in the midst

of the battle, taking cover as best they could under the ant-hills, where they lay low for some twelve hours, in fact the whole day in a burning sun, without food.

In addition to the dangers and hardships of the fighting force in which the war correspondents at the front are obliged to participate, they have their troubles in connection with the press censor, which are close and continual. With the exercise of tact and good feeling on both sides, friction can be reduced to a minimum, though now and again small ruptures in their amicable relations must from time to time arise.

The correspondents have their papers to serve, and they wish to pass messages through that the press censor, for military reasons, cannot sanction. I am convinced there is no position so difficult to fill on active service as that of press censor. He is between two fires. In censoring the war correspondents' telegrams which they submit to him for transmission, he has to consider how far the information would be useful to the enemy when telegraphed back by Boer sympathisers in the course of a few days, and to what detrimental effect it could be employed against the British forces.

Having arrived at a decision as to what should be eliminated, he has to run with no unsparing hand the well-known and thoroughly hated blue lines through the objectionable paragraphs, which not unfrequently includes the whole message.

Then comes another question which is not always settled in accordance with what this or that correspondent considers strict justice and impartiality—the precedence of telegrams on the wires. The official despatches to be sent are so numerous that the lines are often blocked for days, and it is impossible to get a press message through.

The first place has, of course, to be accorded to the reports

of the Commander-in-chief to the Secretary of State for War ; and as the information they contain is, as far as possible, given to the public, it renders that of the correspondent, which he has been at great trouble and expense to obtain, of hardly any value to the editor of his newspaper ; simply because he has already published the same thing, officially supplied to him days before.

The most courteous man, and the most popular man that ever breathed could not perform his duties as press censor, and retain that character.

A friend of mine assured me that he had never been so abused and disliked as he had been during the period he had acted in that capacity in the Transvaal.

I think I may say, however, on behalf of the majority of the war correspondents that they feel no undue restrictions were placed on their communications ; those despatched by telegraphic means were allowed to proceed by the wires as soon as possible, and as for their letters by post, they were not censored nor interfered with at all. Indeed, except where martial law prevailed they could not, as it is contrary to the law in Cape Colony to open letters. In some instances it would have been a decided advantage if some had been subjected to an official scrutiny, or had been revised and tempered before the accounts were given to the public. I do not mean sufficient to injure the article, but enough to maintain the dignity of the journal, and to prevent the irritations of the moment marring the reputation of its representatives.

Perfection cannot be found in any class ; and the experience of those who have been in a position to form an opinion is that war correspondents, taken as a whole, are not nearer the ideal standard than are press censors.

It always appears to me to be a waste of time to be discussing perfection and what ought to be. They are both improbabilities, and in their entirety are impossible.

K

Men and women have always had their individual faults and failings ; and whether they are taken in groups or personally, they vary in degree if not *in tota*.

It is with them and their blemishes the governing authorities have to deal, and that in time of war, promptly. Reforms of all sorts and kinds are advocated by those who, judging from their contributions to the columns of the daily press, know something of what they are talking about, but there are others who apparently know nothing of their subjects, nor have they a notion of the far-reaching consequences that would result from their proposed *improvements*.

What will be the status of, and what facilities will be given to, war correspondents in future campaigns, it is not easy to forecast, but if the Commander-in-chief acts as his own special correspondent of the operations of the forces under his command, one thing is certain, that newspaper proprietors need not go to the enormous expense they have done in the past to furnish their readers with telegraphic information, when the same and more is supplied to them gratis from the War Office, and that at a much earlier date than they can receive it from their representatives on the spot. Whether young noblemen, rich sportsmen, military men, or the ordinary type of pressmen are better qualified for writing telegraphic summaries or picturesque accounts of military operations or censoring the same, is a question that each person will answer according to his interest or preconceived opinion.

In consequence of the range of the 15-pounder field artillery and the Lee-Metford and Mauser rifles, which are the weapons chiefly employed in this war, a battle occupies such a vast extent of country that no person can see more than a small part of what is going on ; and it is only the commanding officer of a division, to whom all reports are brought, who can know the result of the fighting, these being again

sent to the Commander-in-chief, who alone is in a position to judge, and he only approximately, the doings of the whole of the army under his orders.

In camp, wild stories of all sorts are related, but by degrees they assume a vastly modified aspect as the narrators compare notes with each other. When writing their record of the battles or incidents on paper, they are again tempered, and in the case of the telegraphic accounts they go through yet another course of purification by the press censor.

But for this much-abused official, many extraordinary stories would be spread broadcast throughout the length and breadth of the civilised world, bringing discredit on the army and the whole British nation.

Mr. Winston Churchill says, press correspondents as a whole did not require censorship. The great bulk of them did their best to do justice to the army, and fought with their pens as soldiers do with their swords and rifles. But there are some black sheep in every flock. For men who seek notoriety by the violence of their statements, rather than by adherence to the truth, it is necessary that a press censorship should exist.

Besides, some consideration is due to the public, especially that large section which has relatives fighting for the national cause. Their feelings should not be harrowed by morbid telegrams that report dear ones as killed or captured by the enemy.

But for the press censor the reputations of whole regiments would have suffered, even more than they have done, from exaggerated statements, whilst individuals would have been mercilessly attacked, or, what is even worse, taken up and patted on the back for some action that had no tactical or strategical significance. Such newspaper praise and blame are ruinous to military discipline and efficiency.

The correspondence that has taken place between Lord Stanley, the chief press censor, and Mr. Burdett-Coutts, in the *Times*, indisputably proves the truth of the foregoing statements, and all readers of the daily press can call to mind long descriptions of events that occurred in a totally different order from that which the correspondents would have the public believe. But the worst feature in this connection is the unwillingness of the editors to publish contradictions to them. They prefer individuals or public departments to remain under the false imputations rather than acknowledge that their correspondents were misinformed.

The very first paragraph in Mr. Burdett-Coutts' letter of December 10, 1900, shows that my remark on page 144 as to the relations between the press censor and war correspondents are not invariably the most amicable.

The whole letter, which I append, is very instructive from that point of view.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE *Times*.

SIR,—I am in this position with regard to the last step in the campaign of personal hostility and aspersion which Lord Stanley has carried on against me from the first moment I landed in Cape Town, but which I had no intention of dragging into a great public controversy until his evidence given before the Commission appeared in the press.

Immediately on the return of the Commission to England I wrote to the president stating that I desired an opportunity of answering Lord Stanley's evidence, either by being recalled before the Commission or by putting in a statement in reply, to be printed with the evidence. The Commissioners decided that I should adopt the latter course. I was furnished with an official transcript of Lord Stanley's evidence. I sent in my reply a fortnight ago. I am not, I believe, at liberty to publish these documents before the report and evidence are issued by the Commission.

I may say, however, that my reply contains a full and precise recital of all my dealings with the press censor, and exhibits

from his evidence five misstatements of fact and nine errors of omission, all of vital importance to the case.

I will now deal, as far as I can under the above limitations, with the particular charge contained in Lord Stanley's letter of to-day. On April 7, the day of my arrival at Bloemfontein, where I had gone in order to join the expected advance and describe the treatment of the wounded in the field, I saw Lord Stanley. He told me I must go back to Cape Town, and that I should not be permitted to go on with the troops. I protested against this, and urged that I should see Lord Roberts, Lord Stanley, as press censor, being the medium through whom correspondents approached the Field-Marshal. He said I could not see Lord Roberts. (A second time when I made the same request at Bloemfontein he gave the same answer ; I have reason to doubt whether these requests were ever conveyed to Lord Roberts.) At length, after a heated discussion, Lord Stanley said he would consult Lord Roberts. Two days later, on the 9th, I saw Lord Stanley again, and he then by Lord Roberts' orders handed me my pass to stay and to accompany the troops.

Between the two interviews I had seen some of the field hospitals and found them in a very bad condition, as related in my Article IX. in the *Times*. On all sides there were promises of improvement with a better railway service. I knew that the railway had only been opened a short time, that the difficulties of transport were great, and I did not think it fair to mention the hospitals then in an article I was writing to the *Times*. (Article VIII.)

Now, in the interview of the 9th, after I had received my pass, I told Lord Stanley that I had seen the field hospitals, that they were very bad, and that I did not intend to describe them then for the reasons given. Upon this perfectly fair and straightforward statement I heard that he had constructed a report that I had said I would give a bad description of the hospitals unless I was allowed to go on with the troops. There was not a shadow of foundation for this construction being put on my statement then or at any other time.

As a matter of fact, although subsequently I saw things going from bad to worse, I waited until April 28, when the railway had been running for nearly six weeks, and the period

devoted to the "accumulation of forty-five days' reserve stores" had nearly expired, before I began to describe the field hospitals. The descriptions of these contained in Article IX. (in which the dates of the 9th and 28th are precisely mentioned in the sense I have stated) were written before we left Bloemfontein for Kroonstad. The portions of the article dealing with the false impression created in England with regard to the condition of the sick and wounded, which I considered a public danger, and which was my reason for publishing the article in the form I did, were written at Cape Town.

At Kroonstad Lord Stanley told me that I could go on with the troops to the Vaal and possibly farther. How, then, could I, at Kroonstad, have "threatened to speak ill of the hospitals" if I "was sent down from the front"? There is another important point. Lord Stanley had no idea whether I had already written about the hospitals or not. Since the interview already alluded to at Bloemfontein five weeks had elapsed, during which our relations were, to say the least, strained. If he really believed that anything he could do or say would influence by a hair's-breadth my public description of the hospitals, why did he assure that I had held my hand during all that time? The fact is he had invented this theory of a threat from the first and had thereby created a precedent impression in other people's minds.

With regard to Mr. Maxwell, although I know him by name, I do not know him by sight, and I cannot remember at which of the interviews I had with Lord Stanley at Kroonstad he was present.

Lord Stanley told me at Kroonstad that there would probably be no more fighting; and being compelled to be in England by June 23 (about a month later), I decided to leave. He told me I could not stop at Bloemfontein. I replied that I must stop there a few days to close up a house I had been living in, and that I wanted to have another look at the hospitals. He gave me three days there, and added that if I wanted more time I had only to apply to Lord Wolverton, then press censor at Bloemfontein. I did not avail myself of this extension.

I regret the length at which I have had to recount these facts. I need not add how much more I regret the compulsion I am under to write on such a subject at all. From the first I

have endeavoured to keep this great controversy on the plane to which its public importance entitles it. These miserable personalities and attributions of motive were not initiated by me, and I have left most of them unanswered. This last is the most gratuitous and obviously absurd of them all. For what is the proposition? That I, who in this matter would be compelled to occupy a prominent position before the public, first conceived a project of threatening the press censor, a public official, for some personal ends of my own, that I not only made that threat to him but made it in the presence of another person, and that I then proceeded to carry it out by means which I knew would entail the widest publicity and draw the most searching light on all the circumstances surrounding it. I make no further comment at present.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

W. BURDETT-COUTTS.

The only comment I have to make in regard to the charges brought against Lord Stanley is that in such a campaign it was impossible that every request made by correspondents and others could be brought under the personal notice of Lord Roberts, and that head officials had to dispose of them on his behalf without their ever coming to his knowledge. Lord Stanley, in his official capacity, was not always as tactful and gracious in the discharge of this duty as he might have been. Civility costs nothing, and often avoids much unpleasantness and ill-feeling.

I remember writing to Lady Roberts to ask her to bring some important fact to the notice of the Field-Marshal, but in a kind letter she said "that the cares and responsibilities inseparable from his position in South Africa were such that it was the duty of every one to abstain from adding to them." Continuing, Lady Roberts said: "The strain is telling on his health, which, I need scarcely say, it is most important should be kept in as vigorous a condition as possible."

CHAPTER XIV

ARMY FIELD POST OFFICE

THE Army Post Office has had as hard a time as any non-combatant branch of the army. Those connected with it in the field, and those employed in local post offices, have had to face experiences that have put their powers of endurance and valour to the severest tests. On more than one occasion acts of conspicuous bravery have been mentioned in despatches to which, however, I will again refer.

Through the Army Post Office communications are mainly maintained between the Commander-in-chief and his several generals, as well as with his bases of supplies.

Seeing the importance attached to the combined action of certain troops, or the prompt evacuation of places that are insufficiently garrisoned, to repulse or evade an anticipated attack, the necessity for an efficient postal system in the field is obvious.

In accordance with a precedent which dates back to the Crimean war, but was not applied on an organised basis until the Egyptian campaign of 1882, a Post Office Corps was sent to South Africa with the earliest transports that left these shores.

The 24th Middlesex, or Post Office Rifle Volunteers, were first raised in the year 1877, by Colonel du Plat Taylor, and much encouraged by the late Mr. Henry Fawcett, the Postmaster General from 1880 to 1884.

From continual enlistments, and the special training they

have since undergone, the present efficient Army Post Office Corps now in South Africa is the outcome.

In this branch, as in all other sections of the army, however, the colonies have come forward with valuable assistance. India originally intended to send an Army Post Office ; but did not do so in the end. Canada, for instance, sent detachments to look after the letters and parcels intended for their own men, who, however, have been employed for general postal duties as their services were needed. But even with this help, and that given by the Cape Government Post Office Department, together with civil assistance of all kinds, the energies of the staff have been taxed beyond expression. The strain has been so severe that in the midst of it the health of the Postmaster General at Cape Town gave way, and an immediate cessation from his official duties was ordered by his medical attendant.

At the commencement of hostilities the General Post Office in St. Martin's-le-Grand made their arrangements on the basis of one Army Corps of about 35,000 men, and the depletion that has since gone on to provide a working staff for 250,000 men has had the natural result of putting much extra duty on those remaining. Apart from those attached to the Army Post Office Corps, about 2685 left the Post Office as reservists, militia, yeomanry, or as volunteers.

From the Postmaster General's last report, I see that the total number of men withdrawn from the Post Office staff for service in South Africa amounts to the large number of 3400. But what affected the department most of all was the continual stream of resignations from officials, who were anxious to serve in irregular forces that were being formed all over the country, and in the colonies. Even the late Postmaster General himself, the Duke of Norfolk, resigned his appointment in order to proceed to South Africa with the Sussex Yeomanry, in which he was a major.

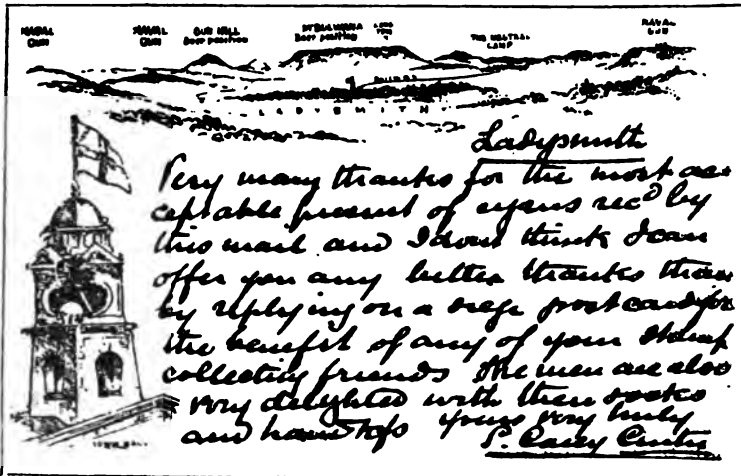
From these causes, and from the overwhelming amount of work the war entailed, the path of the Marquess of Londonderry, who was appointed to succeed the Duke of Norfolk as Postmaster General, was beset with no ordinary departmental difficulties. It soon became apparent, from the crippled state of the office, that all leave would have to be stopped, and those on furlough in Europe recalled to duty.

That the staff has had no light task to perform may be gathered from the following figures. The weekly mails sorted and made up into separate bags for the Army Post Office, sent from this country, sometimes contained over 300,000 letters and nearly 150,000 newspaper packets. The number of parcels sent each week by post to the troops has increased to a very remarkable extent as the war progressed. On January 30, 1900, the number of parcels sent in a week's mail to the troops was 3745, by March 31 it had risen to 10,783, and by May 12 to 19,347. The large amount of correspondence affords an interesting comparison with that sent during the Crimean war. In 1854, when, of course, there was no parcel post, it was estimated that during a period of eight months the number of letters despatched to the seat of war was 362,000, as against 345,000 sent home, whereas returns covering a similar period during the South African war show totals of 5,629,938 letters in the outward and 2,731,559 in the homeward direction.

Up to the beginning of the new year, this great increase in correspondence has gone on. During the three months ending December 16, 1899, the number of parcels sent to South Africa were 29,114, but during the corresponding period of this last year 1900, the number of despatches were over 65,000. The pressure at the General Post Office in St. Martin's-le-Grand has continued throughout the whole period of hostilities, as comparatively few of the men who left it to



A SIEGE POSTCARD FROM LADYSMITH.



POSTCARD, REVERSE SIDE.

conduct the Army Post Office at the front have returned to their ordinary duties.

At Christmas time 1900-1901, no fewer than 1,500,000 parcels were handled by the General Post Office. As a distinguished peer in the House of Lords says: "It is a golden and ideal wish that friends at home should send to the beloved one at the front a box of 'dainties.' But my experience is that they seldom reach him." The good intentions of wives and sweethearts, however, that find expression in this way have to be dealt with somehow; and in justice to the Post Office it must be admitted that the result of their endeavours has been marvellous, when one takes into consideration the gigantic task the authorities of that department have had to perform.

In the July issue of 1900 of a publication entitled *St. Martin's-le-Grand* I read the following, written by Mr. Arthur Ferrard:—

Not long after the campaign opened news came that on account of the large area over which military operations were extending it had been necessary to establish, in addition to two base offices in the Cape Colony and Natal, no less than forty-three field post offices.

A large increase of force became imperative, with the result that at the present time the staff consists of as many as ten officers, and about 400 non-commissioned officers and men. This is not taking into account 326 Post Office telegraphists and line-men, who are serving with the Royal Engineers. The majority of these were selected from the Post Office Rifle Volunteers.

It is interesting to compare these numbers with those we find on previous occasions when the Post Office has been represented in the field. At the time of the Crimea, to ensure prompt delivery of correspondence at headquarters and a regular despatch of return mails to this country, an experienced officer of her Majesty's forces, and three assistant-postmasters, together with seven letter sorters, were afterwards despatched from England to aid him in his duties. When the expeditionary force was sent to Egypt in

the summer of 1882, an Army Post Office Corps was, for the first time, regularly organised for service abroad, and on that occasion 100 non-commissioned officers of the Post Office Rifle Volunteer Regiment were enlisted as soldiers in the regular army, and sent out under the charge of two officers.

In the matter of transport we find that at the time of the Crimea measures were taken to supply eighteen horses and mules for the exclusive use of the Post Office. I presume that in Egypt they availed themselves of the useful but obnoxious camel, and what they do in Africa I do not exactly know. Perhaps Mr. Greer, the Postmaster of the Northern District, who is in command of the Army Post Office, or one of the other officers who are so zealously assisting him, will some day furnish the readers of this magazine with some interesting particulars on the point; but for the present we must suppose that it is Lord Kitchener who has again come to the rescue, and that the Army Post Office avails itself to a large extent, if not entirely, of the military transport arrangements.

There are some people to whom the question of transport in time of war would present no difficulty, and who expect letters to be delivered on the field of battle with the same regularity as on a breakfast table in London. Those people, of course, it is impossible for any post office to satisfy; but there are good grounds for thinking that, taking things all round, the public in this country, as well as the troops in the field, have really appreciated the efforts made to render postal communication as efficient as possible. At both ends difficulties abound, many of which cannot be foreseen and can only be dealt with as they arise.

Irregularities, moreover, and delays in particular, are to a certain extent unavoidable when operations are being carried on over so vast an area by troops perpetually on the move. But it is probable that many people who think their letters are a long time going to or coming from the seat of war are in reality ignorant of the time required for transit, and would blame the Post Office because they do not receive a letter from the front before the soldier from whom they expect it has had time even to reach the Cape.

The war has not only thrown a very heavy amount of work on

the General Post Offices in London, Cape Town, and Durban, but also in those places where troops have been or are stationed up country.

The consequences of certain operations on the part of the enemy have likewise been severely felt, and necessitated the ordinary services being diverted. The "holding up of trains," the cutting of telegraph wires, and the capture of mail carts and convoys, may help to explain to anxious inquirers in the daily press the fate of their letters and telegrams.

After the war had been in progress a full year the telegrams to the Commander-in-chief had to go up by train, instead of being flashed along the wires.

Perhaps the most serious loss through the direct action of the enemy occurred on June 7 at Roodwal, when 2000 mail bags which were in the charge of Lieutenant Preece and seventeen men of the Post Office Corps were captured and destroyed.

These mails, which represented an accumulation of several weeks for the main body of Lord Roberts' army, had been pushed on from Bloemfontein to Roodwal Station, where the line was being repaired. Military stores of all kinds were lying about in vast heaps, with a guard of 160 men to protect them.

In the fight that ensued with de Wet and the 1200 men and five guns, this small force held out gallantly, and the Post Office men defended the mail bags with great courage and persistency, employing the greater part of them to make sangars.

In the struggle two privates were killed, and Lieutenant Preece and the uninjured men were taken prisoners. Whilst in Johannesburg I read a graphic account of the whole affair, and the news occasioned great consternation amongst the troops stationed along the line to Pretoria and still farther north.

It was not quite with pleasure they heard of their letters,

containing money and valuable enclosures warm clothing, boxes of "dainties," &c., making a huge bonfire on the veld, one that could be seen for miles around !

In the ordinary way a truck-load of mail bags arrive by train, and are "chucked" out on the open veld for a detachment of perhaps one Army Post Office Corps man to deal with. The bags are opened, and some twenty fellows, more or less, stand round the heap ; sometimes they keep their "hands off" until the "postman" gives them their letters, but sometimes they do not.

It will thus be seen that an army field post office in the field cannot be managed quite like a civil post office in a city.

The effects, however, of storms of rain and hail are even more detrimental to the fate of letters than the movements of troops or the depredations of De Wet. A storm of a couple of hours will swamp everything, reduce everything to a pulp. Tents and tarpaulins have no chance of withstanding its violence. One officer assured me that the hailstones were as big as goose eggs, and had riddled a corrugated iron shed ! Admitting that he was imposing on my credulity there is no doubt that the hailstones are exceptionally large in South Africa, and owing to the speed at which they descend, they do more damage to property than can be readily imagined by those who have never been to the country.

When Lord Algernon Gordon-Lennox was carrying some important despatches to Lord Roberts from Cape Town to Pretoria, he found in the person of the American Consul-General at Cape Town, who was a fellow passenger in the same train, the truth of the old adage that a friend in need is a friend indeed.

When the mail train was passing over the line at 1.30 A.M. at Holfontein, a point south of Kroonstad, on August 4, 1900,

it was fired upon by the enemy, and all the soldiers, thirty in number, that were proceeding in it to Pretoria were taken prisoners and subsequently released. Lord Algernon would have shared their fate but for the fact of his being in Colonel Stowe's car, who, on his own responsibility, described him as "my friend Mr. Gordon," to the burghers who came to identify the American Consul-General, which saved him and his despatches.

With the exception of the engine and the carriage that Colonel Stowe occupied, in which he, Lord Algernon, and the released soldiers proceeded on their journey, after a delay of twenty-four hours to repair the line, the rest of the train was burnt by the Boers.

This was a friendly action that was greatly appreciated by Lord Roberts, though it was but one of many that could be recorded as evidence of the good understanding existing between the two great English-speaking nations.

The British as prisoners of war in Pretoria have every reason to feel grateful to Mr. Hay, the American consul, for all his good offices on their behalf in those dark days when reverses were of frequent occurrence.*

* When the Boer authorities decided to remove the prisoners from the Model School in Pretoria to the Waterworks a mother and two daughters used to take a walk in that direction, and, when near enough, the mother contrived to feel faint, which enabled the girls to fan her, which they did in such a manner as to carry the message to the prisoners they wished to convey to them.

When the conduct of this family was made known to Lord Roberts he sent a note to the mother requesting the honour to call upon her. On the occasion of his visit he expressed his thanks for all she and her little daughters had done to mitigate the sufferings of the prisoners, and did the gracious and agreeable, as he knows so well how to do.

I had intended going fully into the condition of the prisoners of war in Pretoria, and into the sentiments that led to certain actions on the part of several officials belonging to the now defunct Dutch Republics, but the notes I had made and the information I had collected have been mislaid in the post, or have been captured with other mail matter by De Wet.

One little incident, however, I will relate. The officers of the Royal

In conjunction with the Royal Engineers, the Army Post Office corps have been put through some wonderful work in repairing railway lines and telegraph wires during this campaign ; and however much we may ourselves find fault with what has been done, and the way in which we have conducted the war, nothing but praise has been heard from the intelligent observers of the great military Powers that have been attentively watching the operations on the spot or noting the organisation at the bases and in London, for transporting and feeding the troops and keeping the public informed of the doings of the contending forces in this far-off land.

In consequence of the lessons the war in South Africa has taught to the whole military world, modifications and extensions are constantly announced by this or that great Power who do not adopt the system of improvising as they go, but think out and prepare plans for every conceivable war in which they would possibly be engaged. But then, they have compulsory service, and know exactly what they can do, whilst we have a voluntary army, subsisting on the transient feeling of public opinion.

When the War Office recently called for a further detachment of forty non-commissioned officers and men from the 24th Middlesex regiment to replace casualties, &c., in the corps in South Africa, the Postmaster General, in taking leave of the men prior to their departure, remarked that the present detachment brought up the total to the large number of 738 of all ranks that the Post Office corps had supplied for service with the Royal Engineers and Army

Irish Fusiliers—who were confined in the Model School—used to learn tidings of the war from some little maidens of tender age living opposite, who had been taught flag-signalling. It was arranged that when Captain Burrows' bald head appeared at the window they should stand a little back in the passage, and, with a white handkerchief on a whip-handle, signal their messages. Their father was in the telegraph-office, and sometimes they had important information to give.

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Post Office; and, after having referred in sympathetic terms to the patriotic feelings which prompted them to join their comrades on active service, said: I have received a letter from Lord Roberts, giving his opinion on the work they have done, *i.e.*, "I am glad to say that, considering the vast difficulties this department has had to contend with, the arrangements were, on the whole, most satisfactory."

The possession of such an over-sea empire as makes up Greater Britain, to garrison in times of peace and defend when attacked, imposes duties that are constantly changing, and the careful calculations that are made are in a few hours all thrown out by the "sudden" despatch of some punitive expedition, which often entails a sort of "general post" in the movement of troops on the different stations. The preparation for war for a continental army is simplicity itself in comparison.

Immediately the Republican forces began to invade the territories of Cape Colony and Natal, the dislocation of the postal service began. The first line of postal communication disturbed in Cape Colony was that between De Aar and Kimberley; the railway line being damaged by the enemy beyond Belmont on the night of October 14, 1899.

One interruption succeeded another so rapidly that at one time there were no fewer than 105 mail routes over which the conveyance of mail matter was entirely suspended.

The stoppage of the Rosmead-Stormberg railway by the Boers seriously handicapped the work of the Post Office. Previous to the outbreak of hostilities, the quantity of mails passing over this portion of the line had been so great that it was necessary to run the travelling Post Office vans from Cape Town through to Queenstown, instead of direct to Johannesburg, in order to save the labour and loss of time involved in transferring the heavier eastern mails *en route*.

As an illustration of the amount of mail matter that was

ordinarily carried over the Stormberg railway for which other outlets had to be found, the average number of bags shipped at East London went up from 30 to 3000 per month. Endeavours were made to augment the post-cart service, but without success, for nobody would incur the expense involved in providing additional plant for the short period that it was then thought probable the war would last.

But for the transport department the troops could not have been served at all with their letters and papers in certain parts of the affected districts. Express riders kept up a limited communication with Kimberley, Mafeking, and Ladysmith, but by degrees this had to be given up, as it was too dangerous to be maintained.

General Baden Powell got his last message through by a native employed in the Army Post Office. The despatch was written on the thinnest paper, which was rolled up and inserted into the stem of his pipe, with orders to smoke if he was searched by the Boers, as that would allay all suspicion, and he would be permitted to retain it.

The work of the Post Office in Mafeking was carried on for months in a "dug-out," in Kimberley in splinter-roof shelters or down the diamond mines, and in Ladysmith the local Post Office staff had plenty of opportunities of distinguishing themselves as telegraphists, heliographists and special despatch riders.

The great importance attached to the manipulation, repairing and destroying of telegraph wires and apparatus as demonstrated by this war, has induced the French Minister for War to give it as an army order that cavalry officers should go through a course of instruction in these and kindred subjects, as, during hostilities, their missions often oblige them to make use of telegraphic and telephonic means of communication. The extreme value of the latter was proved at Kimberley. Lieut.-Colonel Kekewich said it was

a "telephone siege." His conning tower was a bewildering maize of telephone wires and tubes, which connected him with camps, redoubts, "look-out" places within the area of defensive operations, thus enabling him to give orders for any counter-move the action of the besiegers rendered necessary.

The strain on the General Post Office in Cape Town has been at breaking point throughout the whole period of the war. The departments suffered from the results of the martial spirit of the people in the same way as at St. Martin's-le-Grand.

Resignations from the highest official to the lowest employé came in daily, in order to allow them to join irregular forces, and some were given leave of absence for the same object, though they could ill be spared.

The depletion of the staff continued to such an extent that an order from the general commanding the lines of communication, to the effect that only volunteers who could be spared from the post and telegraph offices would be accepted for active service, alone saved the department from a complete breakdown. The imperative necessity for this step is proved by the fact that Imperial telegrams, which under ordinary circumstances did not exceed 1000 a month, bounded up to 35,000 for the same period in a few weeks. Those officers and men, therefore, who necessarily had to remain at their posts, had the satisfaction of knowing that they were rendering their country even a greater service than if they had been allowed to participate actively on the field of battle. Those that were employed in country post offices remained at their posts until the last moment with a loyalty that is deserving of all praise.

The postmaster of Jamestown was caught at his instrument whilst hurriedly advising the next telegraphic station—Dordrecht—of the arrival of the Boers; in fact, he had got

as far as "Boers h—" intending to signal "Boers here," when he was dragged away from the instrument. Many instances could be adduced to show the heroism of those in charge of local post and telegraph offices—how they tramped through the country for miles, when the villages were invaded by the enemy, carrying their stock of valuables, cash, stamps, money orders, postal orders, and, not the least important, the telegraph instruments, or at least such portions of them as to render the apparatus unworkable.

Official documents show it was not only the men who showed remarkable pluck and resource in the face of the enemy, but the postmistresses were also among the heroes of the war.

By the kind permission of the Editor of *St. Martin's-le-Grand*, I reproduce from the January number of 1900 the personal narratives of two ladies mentioned in despatches.

" Who looked down the rifle without dismay,
British born ! true to the core ! "

MRS. GLUECK'S NARRATIVE.

On the 13th November, 1899, a commando of Free State Boers under Commandant Ollivier crossed the Cape Colony frontier, occupied the border town of Aliwal North, and proclaimed as Orange Free State territory the district of Aliwal in which the village of Lady Grey is situated. Simultaneously a horde of local rebels who were in league with the invaders cut the telegraph wire between Herschel and Aliwal North, on which Lady Grey is an intermediate station.

The object of arranging an outbreak of rebellion and an invasion of the district at this juncture was to effect the capture of about sixty waggons and full spans of oxen which were then expected at Lady Grey, en route to join General Gatacre's transport column at Sterkstroom. Fortunately, however, I was enabled in my official capacity to obtain timely information as to their intentions, and as the result of prompt action being taken on a telegram which I despatched to Cape Town, the waggons were

stopped in transit and sent on to their destination by a more circuitous route.

After a long period of disquieting rumours the position was now clearly defined, so I despatched my assistant, Mr. H. Ludwig, to Barkly East, in charge of the local, Basutoland, and Herschel mails, the two latter having arrived that morning, in order that they should not fall into the hands of the enemy. My office cash and other valuables were also sent forward by the same opportunity, and I returned to my office to await developments.

The following day a few Free State burghers, accompanied by a number of local rebels, arrived from Ollivier's commando at Aliwal North (which, by the way, had been renamed 'Olliviersfontein'), bringing with them a copy of President Steyn's proclamation; and this they proceeded to post up on the post office notice board. My keys were then demanded, but I refused to give them up. By this time a large crowd of mixed humanity had congregated outside the office, and they appeared to enjoy seeing me in such an unpleasant predicament. I, however, removed the Free State proclamation, and substituted that issued by Sir Alfred Milner, warning her Majesty's subjects of the obligation under which they were placed as subjects of the British Crown. The special references to allegiance I carefully underlined to attract the attention of the rebels, and to add a further zest to it, "Rule Britannia" was written in large characters over the heading.

The Boers subsequently left Lady Grey, and the whole of the local police, saving one solitary private, having retired on Herschel, I utilised the services of the latter as a guard over the now precious Governor's proclamation, which was exhibited daily and removed at sunset. No attempts were made to "commandeer" it on the approved Boer principle. Lady Grey was comparatively quiet thereafter until Sunday, November 19, when a commando of Free State burghers appeared at the office and reiterated the demands of the local rebels for the keys; but I again refused to comply with the request. I then read aloud to the rebels (the leaders I was well acquainted with) a copy of a telegram from the Hon. W. P. Schreiner, the Prime Minister, which had been received at Herschel, warning all British subjects of their duty; and in reply to their pressing demands, I informed them that

they were British subjects and that I refused to see them become traitors.

The following day the local magistrate was instructed to offer no resistance, and the keys of all the public offices were therefore handed over to the commando. Later Commandant Ollivier arrived with a large number of Free State Boers and hoisted the Free State flag. In a warlike speech, that worthy said that the burghers would not rest until their flag floated over Table Mountain, and afterwards the crowd sung the "Volkslied," which, I may add, was ironically remarked to be their funeral hymn. A rebel upstart was appointed landdrost or magistrate under the new government, and I was handed a pass by him allowing me forty-eight hours in which to quit the village. Three days later I left for Herschel, where I was most kindly received. Since my banishment I have had the satisfaction of seeing many of the rebels whom I have addressed as friends or spoken to threateningly, come to Herschel to deliver up arms, looking very crestfallen and apparently sadder and wiser men. I now look forward longingly to our Union Jack, the emblem of justice, flying in peace throughout the whole of South Africa."

The following extract from the report of the Postmaster General shows Mrs. Glueck to be equal not only to a great occasion, but to a prolonged demand on her resources and self-sacrifice :—

The postmistress of Lady Grey has again proved her high value as a public servant by taking charge of both the Lady Grey and the Herschel post offices, while the postmaster of the latter place proceeded with the military forces to Barkly East, and reopened the telegraph office there. The postmistress travelled on horseback from her own station to Herschel and back daily, and so temporarily served the requirements of both communities in regard to postal and telegraph matters.

MISS WALTON'S NARRATIVE.

Early on the morning of March 13, 1900, about twenty Cape Colonial rebels entered and took possession of the village of Van Wyks Vlei, which is situated about forty-five miles north-west o

CHAPTER XV

INTELLIGENCE DEPARTMENT

To write a book that claims to deal with the staff work of the war, and to omit all mention of the department that acts as the eyes and ears of the army would be a fatal error, but to give any description of what the Intelligence officers have accomplished in this South African campaign in the direction of supplying information to our generals and civil authorities must be left to some one more competent to deal with this secret service than I am.

Perhaps Lieutenant-Colonel Henderson, who is the official historian of the war, will give the public some information as to whether the officers have been really intelligent, have put their eyes and ears to good use; whether they make first-class detectives and are equally matched for worming out secrets with the slim Boer.

The Intelligence Department is constantly held under severe criticism, and is charged with supineness and inefficiency. To what extent this is true as regards the manner in which the department has performed its specific duties both before and during the war, and how far the higher authorities have profited by the knowledge of the facts that have been supplied, Colonel Henderson *could* throw a light that would reveal many things that are carefully shrouded from the public vision.

In the early months of the war, he was serving in Natal with Lieutenant-Colonel A. G. Sandbach, who was head of

this department with Sir Redvers Buller's force, but fever—the dread enemy—cut short Colonel Henderson's career, and prostrated him on a bed of sickness for weeks in Cape Town, where the Intelligence duties were controlled by Major Davies, Grenadier Guards, who is now chief commissioner of the police in Johannesburg.

The methods by which the Intelligence Department acquires information and employs it are very varied, and for obvious reasons are kept profound secrets; but that they have been satisfactory, despatches of the Commander-in-chief and subsequent events have amply proved. The discovery of plots, such as those planned to assassinate Lord Roberts and his staff in Pretoria and in Johannesburg, are evidences of the alertness of the Intelligence officers. The one that was planned to dispose of the military governor and his staff in the last mentioned place, but was luckily found out in time, was due, "they say," to the solicitude of a young lady, who was in the secret, for a "gentleman in khaki" who had made himself so agreeable as to have gained her affections; and when he mentioned that he was going to the race-course to see the gymkhana, she begged so earnestly that he would not do so that he began to think there were serious reasons for such *bonâ fide* anxiety. What it was he was determined to ascertain, and said he *would go* unless she told him why she so much desired he should not.

At first he could get nothing but evasive answers, but by diplomatic means, now gentle, now stern, the whole story was told to him in such a manner that it left no doubt as to the serious danger the whole military staff were in.

Of course the gymkhana did not take place, and the conspirators were raided; a hundred being caught the first night, and a similar number the following one, and were conducted over the border. In their case it was: "*Cherchez la femme!*"

Even Intelligence officers make mistakes sometimes. The error that I have in my mind this moment is not one of serious consequence, though it was more than disagreeable to the individual chiefly concerned.

Owing to the composition of a sentence in a letter which was capable of a double meaning, it unfortunately happened that the one that told against the writer of the letter was taken. He was suspected of being a Boer spy, and was sent as such from Frere to Durban, thence to Cape Town, and on to England.

The gentleman, a British officer, was thus placed in a most invidious position. He was pointed out as a Boer spy on the boat and in the trains, and stared at until the blood rushed to his head, and not a few angry words were muttered at the indignity to which he was subjected. He tried to explain his case both at Durban and at Cape Town, but nothing could be done to remove the false imputation under which he laboured. He was passed on from one staff officer to another, and in due course he arrived in London.

He proceeded direct to the War Office, where he was received with great courtesy; and when he presented his papers, 'so clear were they that he was not only at once acquitted of every treacherous intention, but every reparation was made to atone for the error. Another and better appointment was given to him, and he was returned to South Africa for duty by the next steamer.

The Intelligence Department is constantly blamed for not having done things not its business to do, and more often still it is sharply taken to task for neglecting to do what has already been done, though, for reasons easy to conceive, the facts must not be made public to all the world.

It is often declared that we were altogether in the dark as to the strength of the Boer armaments, their nature, and the

number of men they could put into the field. The contrary of this is the case.

It has now been proved that exact and accurate information as to the men and guns, and the amount of ammunition of all kinds was correctly given, with the exception that the Intelligence Department had credited the late Dutch Republics with possessing one Creusot gun more than they had, and with having more Mauser cartridges than was absolutely the case, enormous though the store accumulated has proved to be.

What has not been sufficiently grasped has been the skill with which these "poor ignorant Boer farmers" are capable of handling these modern weapons, the advantages they give for defensive operations, and the effects of long-range guns in such a clear atmosphere. Their mobility—that is being first at a given spot—was not calculated at all, or the order of "Infantry preferred" would never have been issued.

As regards the outcry against the maps supplied to the generals in the field, it should be clearly understood that the Intelligence Department is under no obligation to make surveys and prepare maps.

There are some people, however, who are willing to acknowledge this fact, though they go off on an equally wrong tack in supposing that it is the business of the Director General of Ordnance, because they are called "Ordnance Survey maps." As a matter of fact, he is not in any way responsible for them, nor has he anything to do with them.

The Ordnance Survey is a branch of the Board of Agriculture, and is managed chiefly, if not entirely, by officers of the Royal Engineers.

I have not been able to get at absolutely certain information as to how they came by their title of "Ordnance"

maps, but as far as I can ascertain, it appears that at one time the Survey Department was under the old Board of Ordnance. This Board was an Army Department that existed three centuries ago, and was abolished in 1855. It was presided over by a Master General, and its duties were "to supply" material for the army at the requisition of the Secretary of State for War, and to provide Engineers and artillery contingents at the demand of the Commander-in-chief. The artillery and Engineers up to that time (1855) were known as "the Ordnance Corps," and were not under the actual Commander-in-chief's orders, but under the Master General of Ordnance.

Thus it came about that as the surveys were always carried out by Royal Engineers or Royal Artillery officers, the maps took the name of the corps to which the officers belonged.

The Ordnance Survey is, of course, only for the United Kingdom and Ireland. Thinking it better that I should myself get as clear a conception on this much-debated question as possible, before I ventured to say anything about the Intelligence Department's responsibility in this connection, I wrote to Sir Richard Temple for an expression of his opinion, which, as an ex-Governor of a large Indian Province, and a member of Parliament for a long series of years, I felt what he said would certainly be practical and based on experience and common sense. Sir Richard writes :

DEAR LADY BRIGGS,

I quite share in the belief that our Intelligence Department has served us well throughout the South African war. They gave us full information about everything that belonged to the Boers, with one exception, namely, the Continental European adventurers, whose numbers could not possibly be foreseen. Many people in England have supposed that their information could not have been complete as to the great forces of the Boers ; if

it had been, why were we not prepared to meet them? But that is a question not for the Intelligence Department at all. It is for the British nation to answer that, as I will presently explain.

As to maps, &c., there is the strangest misconception on the subject among many English people at home. Because maps exist in Europe it seems to be supposed that such things exist everywhere, or that if they do not exist the English Government can and ought to make them. Well, the English have managed to make charts of every coast, or almost every coast in the world; but when you come to make maps inland, that depends upon whether the country is enemies' country or not. If, of course, the enemy has made maps for himself and published them, we can get hold of them; but if he has not, then he will not let us make them, and we must do without them when we come to fight.

Even in the American magazine article,* written by an English officer apparently, there are traces of this misapprehension. He says at the outset that we went to war in the Crimea without topographical knowledge. But if the Russians had published maps we could have got at them; if they had made such and not published them, then we could not make any use of them. The idea seems still to linger that we, the invaders, could somehow have made maps, but of course we could not do that till we got possession of the country. Again, if I understand him rightly, the same writer seems to think that we might have done some triangulation survey in Boer territories; but certainly Steyn and Kruger would obviously never have allowed this. Again, I have heard people say when the Germans invaded France, in 1870, all the soldiers had maps. When the English invaded the Boer territories why had they not got maps? But the cases are dissimilar. The Germans had French maps in the minutest particulars, and why? Because the maps were French; the French authorities having published maps of every kind and sort.

In the same way, if the French invaded Germany they would have German maps, because such things have been published and are in existence everywhere.

If the French invaded England they would have information of

* *The Forum*, November 1900.

every brook, lane, and hedgerow ; and why? Because our Ordnance map has been published everywhere.

The case is wholly different in South Africa. Steyn's Government being more respectable, might have had surveys, but I suppose that Kruger would have taken care not to have such things, except upon such lines as suited him ; or, if he had made surveys, he would have kept them to himself, lest one day the British should get hold of them. But it is said that, granting that the Boer territories had no surveys or maps, yet the British Government in London could have had such things made in Cape Colony and in Natal, these being British dominions. Well, that does not follow. If you come to think of it, these colonial territories are administered, not by the British Government, but by their respective responsible governments. Certainly the Cape Colony ought to have made such surveys south of the Orange River had it been wholly loyal, but was it so? Would the Afrikaner Bond party in Cape Parliament have sanctioned such surveys for facilitating British military operations? For instance, would Schreiner's government have undertaken such a thing? If they held back the British Government could not have undertaken it without raising constitutional trouble in the colony. In Natal the case would have been easier, for that colony was for the most part loyal, but then it was poor, and a good survey from say the Tugela to Laing's Nek would be more than it could afford. If money had been asked for from our Parliament for this purpose there were plenty of men, inside and outside the House of Commons, to object, and say that such a proceeding was threatening and precipitating war. Nevertheless, they were somehow managing to make such a survey in Natal, but it was stopped by the outbreak of hostilities.

Therefore I say that those who reproach their own Government for want of maps in this case cannot have thought out what they are saying. You were asking me as regards the Indian surveys, which do constitute a monument of British rule. I cannot possibly sketch them in a letter, but if you look to my book, "India in 1880," and refer to the Index, you would see the various surveys indicated by pages, that is to say, Trigonometrical, p. 353, the Topographical, 354, the Cadastral, 213, 214, the Geological, 357, the Marine, 379, the Archæological, 351. Inasmuch as the results

of this mass of geographical inquiry have been largely published everywhere, the Russians, if ever they invade India, would have maps to their hearts' content, whatever else they might or might not get. It does not follow that we should have similar advantage if we invaded Central Asia, for they may or may not have made maps equally good there.

Lastly, I understand you to desire me to write briefly the substance of what I said in conversation regarding unpreparedness.

Undoubtedly at the outset of the South African war the British were utterly unprepared, in my opinion dangerously so; but was the unpreparedness a fault at all? and, if so, whose fault was it?

Now, rightly or wrongly, we were intentionally and deliberately unprepared, that is, we purposely refrained from preparing in order to avoid provoking war. There was extreme anxiety in the majority of Englishmen to keep the peace. It was thought, both inside and outside Parliament, that to make preparations would precipitate a crisis which might otherwise be avoided. Personally I used to think this was a mistake, and the result has abundantly proved that it was so. I was of course in the minority. Still, I can see that the policy, though quite erroneous, was an intelligible one, and doubtless one dictated by the best of motives; still, if a nation chooses to accept such a policy as that they must face the consequences, and these indeed proved to be grave enough.

The Boers declared war upon us while we were unprepared.

Had they been ably or indeed competently commanded, they might on the one side have pushed on to Durban, and on the other side to Cape Town, raising all the Dutch district on their way. I daresay in the end this would have only rendered their discomfiture the more complete, but in the meanwhile our repute in the world would have suffered grievously by such disasters until they were retrieved.

You may have observed in the House of Commons Opposition speakers have reproached the Government for not making originally the very preparations which they themselves had helped to prevent the Government from making; but that is only the way of party spirit.

Again, in England day by day, reproaches were directed against the authorities for this great unpreparedness—the Colonial Office, the War Office, the Commander-in-chief's Department—as if they were to blame for not making preparations which the nation did not wish. It was the nation itself and the nation alone that was to blame—if blame there was at all.

For a free nation to commit an error and then to round on its servants for the consequences of such commissions is but too common a phenomenon. Still, public opinion comes round in the end, and so it will be in this case.

In fine, look back upon all the things that have been said in England against our own Government regarding this war. They all relate to the initial unpreparedness. Setting aside that one thing, then, I think that our several State departments have done very well. No State departments in any country have surpassed them. And our system too—that can certainly be improved, as it always has been from time to time. To say that is the tritest saying that can be said, for it applies to every human arrangement. But if a tree is to be judged by its fruit, and a system by its results, its practice and its performances, then I claim that our system, since October 1889, up to date, has accomplished the greatest achievements in military administration yet seen in the annals of war.

I am, with best wishes,

Yours sincerely,

RICHARD TEMPLE.

As to whether Sir Richard Temple is right in his suppositions in regard to Steyn's and Kruger's governments, and whether they would facilitate surveys or otherwise, with a view to map making, or allow such if prepared to fall into our hands, may be gathered from the following preface to the succeeding translation of a pamphlet that was published in Grahamstown in the dark days of February, when the reports from the various places where battles had taken place were such as to cause grave uneasiness, and resulted in a flow of enthusiasm and martial spirit such as has never before been witnessed in British history.

It is the spirit and desires of the Boers—the official Boers I mean—that have been grasped so tardily; and as showing the sentiments to the British rule and people, I reproduce statements that should be well known to all the subjects of King Edward VII., and carefully read by all who take an interest in the merits and demerits of the negotiations and predispositions that have resulted in the present Anglo-Boer war.

If this book dealt with the causes of the war instead of with the staff work of the war, how much valuable material I could employ which I have had reluctantly to lay aside as being extraneous to the subject. Mr. Chamberlain has been accused of forcing on this war to gratify his personal ambition. His critics act on the assumption that he connived at the Jameson raid, and that Sir Alfred Milner is a firebrand, sent out expressly to bring about the war, so as to seize for the capitalists the Witwatersrand Gold Fields. The Colonial Secretary and the High Commissioner were charged with wanting war when they were pretending to seek peace. But the perusal of this document, that was first published in 1882—shortly after the surrender of the Transvaal to the Boers—will convince most people that the reverse was the case, and that our magnanimity was not regarded by the Boers in the way we intended it should have been. The spirit in which they regarded it was wholly wrong.

The title of the original pamphlet is *De Transvaalshe Oorlog* (the Transvaal War), and its contents have been faithfully reproduced excepting that a portion has been omitted to avoid repetition. It consists of a series of leading articles originally published in the *De Patriot*, then the most vigorous of Bond organs. It is believed the statements will prove a revelation to British colonists, and to the British public at home, of the hatred, as bitter as it was ungrateful, which at that time was cherished by Afrikaners in this colony, as well as in the Republics, which

has been ceaselessly fomented ever since by the most shameless misrepresentations.

Here, too, the reader may view the Afrikaner Bond at its very beginning, and mark the lines on which it was projected, and which have been exactly followed out in its ill-omened career. We see that it was designed to be a preparation for an Afrikaner "nation," a confederation totally independent of Great Britain. With this key all the moves of the Bond and of the Republics fall into their places—the enmity practised towards English colonists, the diligent propaganda of the Dutch language, the underground war of imperial influence, the dogged refusal to make concessions to the Uitlanders, the accumulation of war material, the fostering of the manufacture of explosives, the consolidation of the two Republics, the assumption of absolute independence and the declaration of war at the earliest moment it was thought safe.

Fortunately the grand conspiracy has failed, but we earnestly desire that our countrymen should realise the danger from which South Africa has had a narrow escape; there can be no better means to this end than the universal perusal of the following pages.

THE TRANSVAAL WAR, 1881.

The moral pressure was too strong; England was forced to give back the stolen Transvaal. If the Transvaalers had indeed stayed quiet, as nearly all advised them to do, then England's injustice would have been successful; she would have been confirmed in her robbery, and would also easily have absorbed the Free State. Now all her thieving is over, and probably she will never repeat it. Might has run its race against right and lost, and will never be able to resume the conflict on such favourable terms. And our faith in the righteous is all the stronger, that England will be yet more severely punished if she dares to begin again with her policy of robbery and murder.

England's power has been repeatedly beaten and humbled. The little respect the Afrikaner had for British troops is utterly done away. And England has learnt so much respect for us Afrikaners that she will take care not to be so ready to make war with us again. Think of it; no English soldier has had the honour to set his foot on Transvaal ground. Those that were in

the Transvaal already had to sit still in forts like mice in a trap, and those that were to go and relieve them got their sound beating in Natal territory.

The Transvaalers have now got what they wanted, and what they for four years vainly solicited from England, namely, the revocation of the annexation, the giving back of their land, and the restoration of the South African Republic.

The Free State shall now also remain a free State, and England must now keep her claws off from the Transvaal long enough for us Afrikanders to recover strength a little and pull things to rights.

The Afrikanders have now a little time and opportunity to develop themselves as a people. We have all been fearing that the Jingoos would simply overwhelm us.

The Transvaalers are now restored to credit in their own eyes and in the eyes of all the world. Now all Europe and America are alive to the rights of our affairs, and it will be dangerous for England to go on with her accustomed plundering.

The Afrikanders, especially the young ones, have now got an aversion to foreign languages and customs, and particularly to the English, and an ambition is awakened within them for their own people and their own language. The Englishman has made himself hated, language and all. And this is well; for the contrary evil had already made great progress.

The English sovereignty over South Africa has now gone back at least half a century. Good; we are heartily glad of it.

The Formation of the Afrikander Bond.

This is another matter we must now carry through, now or never. We have seen how necessary it is that the Afrikanders should have a general union or body, so as to be able to work together. This was never more necessary than now. Even the *Volklied*, which formally was not favourable to such a Bond, and even now objects to its being empowered to watch the press, finds the establishment of the Bond not only advisable but pressingly needful. It remarks: "All doubt as to the pressing necessity of taking this matter in hand vanishes now that we see that branches of the London South African Union are being formed at the Cape, so as to give powerful assistance to

the English merchants. If there must be a conflict between English and Dutch here, then let the Dutch take care that they are ready for it.

The *Free State Express* of April 7 last (1882) publishes the draft of such a Bond, similar to what we have several times proposed in *The Patriot*, but worked out more in detail by some friends at Bloemfontein. [Here follows the constitution]. The object of the Afrikaner Bond is the establishment of a South African nationality through the cultivation of a true love of this our fatherland.

The Bond must grow up out of the heart of the people: the rules can come on after. This is now our time to establish the Bond, while a national consciousness has been awakened through the Transvaal war. And the Bond must be our preparation for the future confederation of all the States and Colonies of South Africa. The English Government keeps talking of a confederation under the British flag. That will never be (daar kom niks van nie). We can assure them of that. We have often said it, there is just one hindrance to confederation, and that is the British flag. Let them take that away, and within a year the confederation under the free Afrikaner flag would be established.

But so long as the English flag remains here the Afrikaner Bond must be our confederation. And the British will after a while admit that Froude's advice is the best for them; they must be content with Simons Bay as a naval and military station on the road to India, and give over all the rest of South Africa to the Afrikaners.

If an Englishman is willing to become an Afrikaner, and acknowledge our land and people and language, then we will acknowledge him as our countryman and heartily support him, or one of any other nationality on the same terms.

The Anti-British Campaign.

We must form trading associations with Europe and the United States of America. There is now a good opportunity for this, as there has recently been started a direct line of steamers between Germany, Holland, and Belgium and South Africa. And it is said there is to be a separate line to run from Belgium and the

Cape. There is now so much interest in South Africa awakened in Europe, and such sympathy felt for our Boer nationality, that it will be easy to establish the desired trade connections.

The *Amsterdam Handelsblad* (Journal of Trade) remarks: "The future of England lies in India, and the future of Holland in South Africa. When our capitalists vigorously develop this trade, and, for example, form a syndicate to buy Delagoa Bay from Portugal, then a railway from Cape Town to Bloemfontein, Potchefstroom, Pretoria, Delagoa Bay will be a lucrative investment. And when in course of time the Dutch language shall universally prevail in South Africa, this most extensive territory will become a North America for Holland and enable us to balance the Anglo-Saxon race."

The Boer stores which we must establish must be Dutch or Afrikander through and through, not any English. No English signboard, no English advertisements in English newspapers, no English book-keepers; no, all Dutch or Afrikander. Just as English stores help to uphold English newspapers, English schools, English social life in a town, so on the contrary our Boer stores must work to prevent the English element from prevailing, and must uphold the Afrikander spirit in the place as against the Afrikander spirit.

Yes, England is a Bildendyk; the Dutch poet has rightly called her, "a gang of robbers," and those islanders live only by plunder; their ships plunder on every shore, their vultures fly over mountain and valley and light upon every carcase; they gather and glean whatever they can; therefore it is they have so many colonies, and therefore they raked in the Transvaal. And now we must endeavour, instead of their being able to plunder more in our land, to cut it off so that they shall have less, and if possible nothing to prey on in our land. And then we shall see if we are not quickly rid of these vultures. Where there is no carcase there you see no vultures. The trade is still under the British flag; thus England cannot hinder us from starting such associations in the colony and in Natal, and in the Free State and Transvaal we are of course able to do so. But the English rob us not only in their stores but in their banks. We give an extract from the *Amsterdam Handelsblad* of March 13, from which any one, and our Transvaal

friends above all, may see how an English bank dared to serve us. "The only bank in the Transvaal was in English hands. It had advanced money on the Secococeni war. Suddenly it demanded payment, and refused all further credit. That was the cause later on (says Mr. Moodie) about the empty State chest and the few pence that the Queen's treasurer found as a balance of ready money." And how are we to prevent such an evil? Why, in the same manner as with the stores—by helping ourselves.

Let us start a National Bank, with branches in all towns and villages of our land.

Preparations for War.

To start manufactures of the munitions of war is another lesson we must learn from the events of last year, particularly from the late wars in the Transvaal and Basutoland. And this of course especially concerns the two Republics.

For this two things are required :—

- (1) To make their own ammunition, and
- (2) To be well supplied with cannon, and to provide a regiment of artillery to work them. To begin with the last. In this way we may praise President Brand. We believe the Free State is fairly well provided with cannon, and with ammunition for cannon. And he has also had for some time past young men drilled in the fort at Bloemfontein to work with the cannon. So that if the English troops were coming over the Drakensberg by Harrismith way, for example, they would not be the only ones to use field guns, but the Free Staters from the Bergabove would have kept them far enough off with their cannon; and if the Transvaal had had just a couple of cannon on Laing's Nek, with a few clever gunners, there would have been still less chance for the English ever to have got over that way. Unfortunately, in the betrayal of the country, the cannon the Transvaal had also fell into the hands of the robbers, and were used against the Boers at Pretoria. But when once the Transvaal gets its independence back, the Government of the Republic will have learnt from the recent war a lesson as to what they must do for the future.

But the other point is of much more importance; the Free

States and the Transvaal must make their own ammunition for themselves. This is the matter by which the English have always harassed them. Think how Sir P. Wodehouse was ready to hand over the Boers to the ill-will of the Basutos, by stopping the supply of ammunition to the Free States. And we must fully express our astonishment at President Brand and the Volksraad that they did not have their eyes opened then, and begin at once to manufacture gunpowder. And, again, in the Transvaal war the one hope of the soldiers was that the Transvaalers might run out of ammunition. And Sprigg * lent himself as a tool to stop the supply of ammunition from the colony to the Free State, so that the latter might not supply the Transvaal. Now, however, they have their eyes opened, and let them profit by the lesson. The Transvaalers are beginning to make all their own ammunition. At Heidelberg there are 4000 cartridges made daily. And a few skilful Afrikanders have begun to make shells too. That is right ; so must we become a nation. When oppressed we grow strong. Let us have a little time and we will develop our nationality.

And the Free State is also becoming vigilant. At least the *Express* takes the matter up warmly. For in its issue of April 14 it says : " Lest any one should think the proposal we made some time since to the Raad about establishing a gunpowder manufactory was merely out of ill-humour caused by the stopping of our supply from abroad, we return to the subject now. Sulphur, as is well known, is found in the country, and the evident proof thereof is the specimen exhibited in the Bloemfontein Museum. All that is needed is to determine the quantity, and Government will do well to instruct its officials to make the necessary inquiries, for we are assured it is found in more than one place in the State. Saltpetre is found in many parts, and also the best charcoal for gunpowder making, namely that from the willow wood, which is plentiful. With an outlay of say £5000 a factory can be started sufficient to provide for our needs, which is our especial aim at present, though afterwards it could be enlarged as may be desired. We cannot endure to be dependent, as we are now, on the pleasure of ill-mannered and ill-tempered rascals who in a foolish manner enter upon wild, extravagant enterprises from

* Sir Gordon Sprigg, Prime Minister of Cape Colony.

which they have to retreat with shame, and then cover it with various lying statements against the Free State, on which they wish to lay the blame of their own folly. Nor can we stand idly looking on while arms and ammunition are sold wholesale to the natives round us, while in the future decisive moment for South Africa we shall find ourselves unarmed. And, again, who knows who may be Prime Minister in England, and then what sort of policy will rule the colony? We wish for peace, and are resolved to have it. We have no glory to win by war. But we may lose that which is precious, namely, sufficient preparation of such means of defence as to make us independent of the favour, friendship, or hostility of the enemy. Thus we hope that one of the fruits of the Transvaal war will be that the Republics shall make their own ammunition, that they no longer suffer England to make a profit by them, and that they will, moreover, every year set apart £1000, or rather allow to their Government the amount of charges for powder made on their account."

No Land to be sold to the British.

And while we are now especially dealing with the Republics, we will accordingly give the Boers their one piece of advice: they must sell no land to Englishmen.

We especially say this to our Transvaal brethren. In any national conflict it is to the advantage of us Afrikanders that we are the landowners. The great majority of the English are only birds of passage (trekvoegels), that go away as soon as they have eaten carrion enough, or there is no more carrion to be got. Our Boers are really the nobility of South Africa. They think they are like the English farmers. Amongst the English the nobles are the landowners, and the "boers" are merely tenants—the slaves in fact of the nobility. Here it is just the reverse. The Boers are the landowners, and the proud little Englishmen are dependent on the Boers. They themselves are now beginning to see it, and therefore will they try to get our ground into their possession. Watch against that, Free Staters, Transvaalers; sell no land to the Jingoese, even though they offer to pay high prices. Think, if once they got a firm footing (or landed property) then you would never get rid of them again. If you have ground to part with, that you do not need for your own children, sell it to

an Afrikaner from the colony. Here there are too many of us, and there are plenty who would go north if they can get land. Once more, this is a point of great importance, we stand upon our own ground.

War against the English Language.

The English and Anglified schoolmasters, and still more schoolmistresses, teach our children from early youth:—

(a) That the English language is the finest and best; whereas it is only a miscellaneous gibberish, without proper grammar or dictionary.

(b) That English history is the most interesting and glorious; whereas it is nothing more than a concatenation of lies and misrepresentations.

(c) That they must give the first place to English geography; whereas all England is nothing but an island in the North Sea.

(d) That they are educated as soon as they can gabble English; whereas they simply make themselves ridiculous by it in the eyes of every judicious person.

(e) That English books and periodicals are the finest and best to read; though really they are the greatest mass of nonsense (with few exceptions) that you can find anywhere; and finally, in one word—

(f) That it is an honour for every one to ape the English in everything, and, in fact, to become English; whereas it is the greatest shame and disgrace for any people to belie their own God-given nationality.

The answer to the question of What is England fighting for? will be found in the foregoing extract, that is to say, if England is to continue to shape the destinies and mould the civilisation of South Africa, and to maintain her position in the world.

The despatches will prove how conciliatory were the proposals made by the Colonial Secretary, and how extremely anxious the whole nation was for peace. And after the war had been in progress a year and a half, were ever such generous terms offered to a conquered foe that had wilfully

brought on a war which has resulted in the practical extermination or exile of the whole male population, to say nothing of the devastation of the country and the misery of the women and children of those that are left on the farms?

By the extract will be seen the intolerable position in which British subjects were placed, a condition which it was impossible to permit to continue, especially with such ultimate aims in view; and as Lord Roberts says, the magnanimity of 1881 has resulted in the present inevitable war.

That the present war was inevitable is further proved by a letter from Mr. Theophilus Schreiner, brother of the late Cape Prime Minister, if British influence was not to be altogether eliminated from South Africa, or at least restricted to Simons Bay and the right of seaway.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE *Cape Times*.

SIR,—As my attention has only just now been drawn to the manifesto of Mr. Reitz, State Secretary of the Transvaal, to the Orange Free State burghers as published in the *Cape Argus* September 1899.

In this shameful and shameless document, Sir Alfred Milner, Mr. Chamberlain, the British Cabinet, the Queen of England, and the British nation are declared to be murderers, robbers, breakers of treaties, and the responsibility for the present war between the Republics and England is sought to be laid on their shoulders in a wealth of scurrilous and mendacious statement.

I feel compelled to write the following lines, not to discuss matters which have passed beyond the pale of argument, but to throw a little personal historic light on the question as to who is responsible for the present war, which may serve to show that not England, nor England's Queen, nor England's Government are the real originators of the same.

I met Mr. Reitz, then a judge of the Orange Free State, in Bloemfontein, between seventeen and eighteen years ago, shortly after the retrocession of the Transvaal, and when he was busy

establishing the Afrikaner Bond. It must be patent to every one that, at that time at all events, England and its Government had no intention of taking away the Independence of the Transvaal, for she had just "magnanimously" granted the same; no intention of making war on the Republics, for she had just made peace; no intention to seize the Rand goldfields, for they were not discovered. At that time I met Mr. Reitz, and he did his best to get me to become a member of his Afrikaner Bond, but after studying its constitution and programme I refused to do so, whereupon the following colloquy in substance took place, which has been indelibly imprinted on my mind ever since.

Reitz. "Why do you refuse? Is the object of getting the people to take an interest in political matters not a good one?"

Myself. "Yes, it is; but I seem to see plainly here, between the lines of this constitution, much more ultimately aimed at than that."

Reitz. "What?"

Myself. "I see quite clearly that the ultimate object aimed at is the overthrow of the British power, and the expulsion of the British flag from South Africa."

Reitz (with his pleasant, conscious smile, as of one whose secret thought and purpose had been discovered, and who was not altogether displeased that such was the case). "Well, what if it is so?"

Myself. "You do not suppose, do you, that that flag is going to disappear from South Africa without a tremendous struggle and fight?"

Reitz (with the same pleasant, self-satisfied, and yet semi-apologetic smile). "Well, I suppose not; but what of that?"

Myself. "Only this, that when that struggle takes place you and I will be on opposite sides, and what is more, the God that was on the side of the Transvaal in the late war because it had right on its side will be on the side of England, because He must view with abhorrence any plotting and scheming to overthrow her power and position in South Africa which have been ordained by Him."

Reitz. "We'll see!"

Thus the conversation ended; but during the seventeen years

CHAPTER XVI

THE NAVAL BRIGADE

MUCH as I should like to write on the performances of the Naval Brigade and the part it took in the operations in South Africa, I must leave this agreeable task to another, though I cannot bring myself to deny the gratification it affords me to record the fact that, of the many things this war has brought to light, nothing has been more observable than the good feeling that has existed between the soldiers and the sailors. From beginning to the end there has been a total absence of all jealousy.

The long connection my late husband had with the Admiralty in Whitehall renders the navy especially dear to me; but in a book that is devoted to non-combatant staff work, I could scarcely include the services of the Naval Brigade in it, as they were entirely executive in character. To whatever force sections of naval guns were attached, the officers and men were cared for and fed by the administrative staff of that commanding officer, though they had their own equipment provided by the Admiralty.

In returning to England, after nearly a year in South Africa, it was my good fortune to do so in the transport ss. *Lake Erie*, which on that voyage conveyed the men belonging to H.M.S. *Monarch* to the London Docks.

The article I contributed to the *Morning Post*, which appeared in the issue of November 13, 1900, relative to it, I will here reproduce.

“The exigencies of the war and the requirements of the naval service have caused the Admiralty authorities to arrange for the Naval Brigade, which has been on active service for the past year, to return to England in three sections. The first to arrive was the *Powerful's* crew, and to them and their gallant captain the nation accorded a welcome which proved that their bravery and suffering in the defence of Ladysmith were highly valued. A large section of the British public were evidently under the impression that the whole Naval Brigade was then withdrawn from active service in South Africa. The return, however, of the *Monarch's* men on the *Lake Erie* is conclusive proof to the contrary. For nearly a year the Naval Brigade has been on the march, ever ready for action when required and always reliable in every emergency. The third division will return in the course of a month or two on board the *Doris*, the flagship of the station, and on the *Barossa* at the termination of their commissions.

“But it is the second division of the Brigade—that which came home by the *Lake Erie*—that I am specially concerned with at this moment. It has, unfortunately, not had the gratification of such a homecoming as was accorded to the first section, because the *Monarch*, the ship to which the men chiefly belong, is not due to leave her present station for at least two years. That part, therefore, of her crew which formed a section of the Naval Brigade were obliged to traverse some six thousand miles of sea in a hired transport instead of on their own battleship. It is thus that the Elder Dempster liner *Lake Erie* has the privilege of bringing home the second contingent of naval heroes, as well as worthy representatives of almost every regiment and corps serving in South Africa.

During the progress of the war many things have been brought into prominence that will have far-reaching import-

ance in the future on British home and foreign policy, but perhaps no feature of the conflict is more satisfactory than that which has shown the good fellowship existing among the Imperial and Colonial forces and the Naval Service. The return of the Naval Brigade proves that the Anglo-Boer war is over,* though a large British force must still remain in the country to suppress the guerilla warfare over which Christian De Wet is the presiding genius.

“ Giving praise to the navy for the help rendered to the army during this campaign detracts in no way from the sister service; for who can doubt that if the navy stood in need of similar aid in a struggle on sea the army, if possessed of superior weapons for a given purpose, would bring them forward as readily as the sailors produced their 4·7 inch naval guns? Both services exist for the same object—national defence—and are complementary one to the other.

After the battle of Graspan, when Captain Prothero, of the *Doris*, was severely wounded, the command of the brigade was given to Captain Bearcroft, of the *Philomel*, who held it until the middle of October, when Lord Roberts thanked him and all serving under him for their valuable services prior to their final return to their ships. In his despatch of April 16 the Commander-in-chief again referred to the pluck, endurance, and cheerfulness under most trying circumstances, of both the officers and men of the naval brigade.

The high estimation in which they were held by the army may also be conveyed to the public in the words of Major-General Hart, addressed to Commander Grant, D.S.O.

KRUDERSDORP, *October 1.*

To O.C. Naval Brigade,—I send you a copy of a telegram received from headquarters, and in doing so desire to express my great regret that the requirements of her Majesty's Service

* Since the above was written five months have gone by and the war still drags on.

compel the removal of yourself and the Naval Brigade under your command from my column. Your war services in the force under my command, both before and after the formation of this column, have been in a high degree valuable, and the deportment of the Naval Brigade in your hands has appeared to me at all times admirable, and, being well assisted by your subordinates, you have overcome serious campaigning difficulties with a ponderous gun which has deservedly become the terror of the enemy. I now wish you, your officers, and all hands of the Naval Brigade good-bye and God-speed.*

That a naval 4·7 inch gun is a ponderous thing to move about will be readily admitted by all who have ever seen such a weapon; but it is only those who know something of South Africa who can appreciate the difficulties the Naval Brigade encountered in moving their guns through drifts and up mountain sides. To move the great guns about on fairly good roads two teams of oxen are required, but on occasions even this large number has to be doubled. In some cases—one in point being the road into Barberton, where the gradient is one in five—a naval gun, to get it on at all, has to be dismounted and placed on a waggon, with its cradle on another. These waggons have to be drawn by sixty-four oxen, and even then they have to be assisted by all the sailors and marines that man the gun, together with the combined strength of the escort and a company of infantry, every man with his shoulder to the wheel. It speaks well for the manufacture of the naval guns, and for the care exercised by those in charge of them, that out of the five 4·7s and five 12-pounders sent to take part in the Anglo-Boer war no greater accident than the breaking away of one wheel can be recorded against them,

* Sir Robert Harris, K.C.B., K.C.M.G., was in supreme command of his Majesty's naval forces as Commander-in-chief of the Cape of Good Hope and West Coast of Africa Station, and Lord Roberts, in his despatch of April 16, expresses his thanks and those of the army to Sir Robert for his cordial co-operation and never-failing support.

and that in spite of the thousand miles of difficult country which they traversed. Even this little misadventure was readily overcome by the resources of the "Handy Jack." A waggon wheel was soon found and fitted to the axle, which enabled the gun to continue its journey into Barberton. Within forty-eight hours all was repaired, and the gun mounted and ready for action.

That these ponderous guns can keep their place in the line of march was proved to the great satisfaction of General Hart when he made his forced march on Potchefstroom and depended on the arrival in time of two 4.7 naval guns under the command of Commander Grant, of the *Doris*.

The excellent work done by these guns will in due course be fully discussed by experts and deductions drawn as to their effect on the war as a whole, but in the meantime it is well within the mark to say that the enemy stood in mortal terror of the "Cow guns" as the Boers describe them owing to their long teams of oxen, consequent on their superior range, which resulted, also, in a great saving of life among our own troops.

"During the voyage of the *Lake Erie* the conduct of both sailors and soldiers was exemplary. One of the most noteworthy incidents of the journey was the distribution of gifts which were sent for the Naval Brigade while on service, but which could not, owing to the difficulties of transport, be served out when the warm socks and other articles of comfort would have been very acceptable. The tobacco would have been especially welcome. The fact, however, that the gifts came too late to be of practical service in the field detracted not at all from the appreciation of them, though warm socks and woollen vests in the tropics did not seem very appropriate."

Of the many instances of military enthusiasm in individuals that have come under my personal notice in connection with

this war, none has struck me as being more remarkable, more persevering, or more truly and honestly desirous of serving his country than that of the Marquess of Graham.

On November 20 I wrote to him in regard to a certain circumstance that occurred when he was on active service with Commander Grant's section of naval guns, and after having replied to my inquiries, Lord Graham continued :—

I have been wondering how I can possibly move the powers that be to get a commission (hon. or otherwise) in the Royal Naval Reserve. This has been my life-long desire, but they have always refused it me, as they maintained that I could show no special claim. But surely two years' voluntary service with the navy, two years in the mercantile marine—to further qualify—a master's certificate, and active service with the Naval Brigade ought to tell in my favour and constitute a claim sufficient to entitle me to this honour. This seems especially so just now, when commissions are going right and left in the army. I would do plenty of drill, and spare no pains to make myself as efficient as possible. There is nothing I would not do to be in the navy.

Such a letter is truly pathetic! The moral influence of such a man as Lord Graham would have far-reaching consequences on all those with whom he came in contact. The extract has another value: It shows that no nepotism prevails in the Admiralty. The authorities there show no favour to the son of a duke. But it is earnestly to be hoped that such fervour and perseverance will receive their own reward, and that at an early date.

CHAPTER XVII

DELAGOA BAY

IN a previous chapter I entered into my connections with the Peninsular and Oriental steamship *Manila*, and explained my duties, &c., on board, whilst she lay in Simons Bay. Except for the short period she was employed as despatch boat between Beira and Delagoa Bay this transport has been used since December 1899 as a prison ship for prisoners of war, or to convey them hither and thither as the authorities give us instructions. In the latter months of the war, prisoners have been sent to Ladysmith, where, by the irony of fate, they encamp, at least such of them as are exempt from deportation to St. Helena or Ceylon. Ladysmith is not the nicest place in South Africa to spend the summer months, as many who went through the siege know well.

When I was on board the *Manila* going to Beira, she landed at Delagoa Bay several maimed men from the Transvaal, as well as women and children captured in Cronje's laager, who were to proceed thence to their homes according to the terms of the Geneva Award.

Looking at those children of two years of age and under, one could not help exclaiming: "Were those babies in the trenches of a great battle? What a baptism of fire they must have had!" The tiny wrist of one infant was scorched by the explosion of a shell. I asked the women what they were doing in such a place, and why they had taken their babies? "We went to look after our husbands, and to nurse

them when they were sick," was the reply; and they added, "we could not leave the children behind."

These women, both in their persons and in their cabins, failed to leave behind them a reputation for order and cleanliness which is so characteristic of their Dutch sisters in Holland, where scrubbing, cleaning, and household neatness are ruling passions, taking precedence of all other virtues and vices.

It is but fair to say, however, that the Boer women on board kept their children sufficiently clean and tidy to pass muster, but they felt it no disgrace to walk about that part of the deck assigned to them unwashed and with their hair uncombed all day. The bath-room near at hand they did not use until the captain one day made it compulsory. No great surprise need be experienced at this want of personal cleanliness, when similar toilet provision was made daily for General Cronje, his wife, and staff while they occupied the admiral's quarters on the flagship in Simons Bay, but was never used. After the departure of the occupants, in both instances, the need for a cleaning day and for the free use of Keating's powder was proved demonstration.

The men returning to the Transvaal had had enough of war, poor things. They were hobbling back on crutches or otherwise disabled for life. In their pockets they carried a declaration to the effect that they will never again take up arms against the British Government, which is the passport for their safe conduct over the border. Had their feelings of patriotism for the late Transvaal Republic been excessive there could have been no difficulty in getting them to sign this affidavit, as their bodies were so much shattered and maimed by shot and exposure that through physical disability alone they could never again be usefully employed in any military capacity.

Some of the men have been riddled through and through,

shot in four or five different places; but they are in good spirits, and grateful for the skilful treatment and attention they received from the doctors and nursing staff at Woodstock and Wynberg hospitals, where they had been placed side by side with our own soldiers who were wounded in the same battle.

On the voyage one burgher was especially communicative. He gave amusing descriptions of men and things in general, and of his wife who was waiting for him at home. He was a Scotsman by birth, and was very proud of his wife's descent; her maiden name undoubtedly is an honoured one in England, and has been described in "Debrett" for generations. By tacit consent he was the chief spokesman of his party. He expressed in no measured language the gratitude of them all for the kindness they had received, and he was full of admiration of the Röntgen ray apparatus, which had located the damage and saved his limbs from amputation.

It was especially gratifying to me to hear this testimony, as it was only on the day previous to embarkation that I had seen the minister of the Dutch Reform Church at Stellenbosch—a man full of anti-British prejudices, who, it may be safely affirmed, has done more to breed and foster bad feeling between the British and the Dutch than any other man, or body of men, on South African soil. Perhaps if he could have heard these wounded men, speaking out of the fulness of their hearts, testifying to the kindness they had severally experienced, he might have modified his opinion as to the treatment that prisoners of war receive at the hands of the British military authorities and those who are directly responsible for their well-being. Were I not satisfied of the truth of the old maxim, "That a man convinced against his will is of the same opinion still," I would forward for his edification a copy of a testimonial given to me in English and in Dutch expressive of their appreciation of the skill,

kindness, and consideration extended to them while in hospital as prisoners of war at the base at Cape Town, and signed by all who were on board the *Manila*.

I am very pleased to possess this document, if only as historical evidence and as a souvenir of this struggle for our supremacy in South Africa. I further secured pleasant reminders of these grateful Boers in the form of "snapshots" with a camera. It was amusing to see my sitters struggle on to their crutches to make some suggestion as to the handling of my apparatus and to rearrange themselves in picturesque attitudes so as best to catch the sun! They were quite *au fait* at the business, as they had often gone through the same performance in Cape Town.

It had been stormy during the voyage round the coast, and when we made our way into the estuary—formed by the three rivers Matolla, Tembe, and Umbelosi—on the western shore of which is situated Lorenzo Marques, the captain's face wore an expression that testified to the fact that the ship was in troubled waters, where strong currents prevailed and where there were shoals and shifting sandbars that he had heard of but was negotiating for the first time.

He said he felt a thrill of nervous excitement when the ship struck against something that caused her to oscillate. He thought he was on a sandbank, and visions of a wreck and an inquiry rushed through his mind. His anxiety was soon relieved, however, when he observed that the sea, to the extent of half an acre, was dyed in blood. The ship had run against a huge fish—probably a whale—and had cut it in twain; but she was still ploughing her way through the trough of the sea, and rolling a good deal in the effort.

Much has been written in recent times about Delagoa Bay, its magnificent harbour, its strategic importance, its value as a naval station, its obligations as a neutral port, and the part it would play in the hands of the enemy. Every point has

been considered and ably dealt with by military experts and recognised authorities, but many indications showed that the British position in the estimation of local trading firms was not an enviable one on account of the restrictions on goods imported and for transit, whilst the Delagoa Bay line was in the hands of the enemy. Those who issued the regulations, and those who saw that their conditions were fulfilled, had need for a free hand, and they deserve the sympathy of those in whose interest they acted.

The positions occupied by Colonel Machado, the Governor-General, and Captain Fritz Crowe, R.N., his Britannic Majesty's Consul-General, were difficult in the extreme; and both of them had only recently been appointed to their respective posts in Lorenzo Marques. Much depended on their capacity and tact. Susceptibilities were easily irritated, and delicate questions of extreme importance came up daily by dozens for settlement. Delagoa Bay bristled with difficulties, and nothing but a judicious firmness kept out foreign interference.

With the change of Governors-General and British Consuls a new method of conducting diplomatic and consular business was initiated, which resulted in things working more smoothly, and local opinions being more cautiously expressed and hostile actions considerably restricted. Future contingencies may likewise have had something to do with the improved demeanour of the inhabitants of this Portuguese seaport town.

The trade of Lorenzo Marques is dependent almost entirely on the Transvaal, and consequently since the war began, and indeed before it started, the depression in business greatly effected everybody, and, until the Pretoria-Delagoa Bay line was opened, it was especially felt by all British firms. As can readily be imagined, for the first nine months of actual hostilities, the feeling of the majority of the inhabi-

tants ran high in favour of the Transvaal Republic, particularly as at that time Mr. Pott, the Transvaal Consul, was a great "Jack in office," though he has since found himself on the losing side, and had to haul down his consular flag to the order of the Portuguese Government, who objected to his irregularities as to contraband of war.

The visit of the Mediterranean squadron to Lisbon in December 1900 also produced a good effect. The Portuguese Minister of Marine in a speech said :—

Welcome to our allies—that is the greeting of all Portuguese who know and can appreciate the great value of the visit of the powerful British fleet. Portugal and England are two essentially colonial countries.

Pointing then to the British flag, hung on the walls, the Minister exclaimed :

There is the British flag. Let us salute it with respect and affection, as the Portuguese flag was saluted at Koomati Poort. These two salutes were the public affirmation of the alliance between the two countries. In the name of the Portuguese navy, I drink to the British navy, the Channel squadron, and to Admiral Sir Harry Rawson.

And from the late Queen the King of Portugal received the following telegram :—

I am greatly touched by your kind telegram. I sincerely thank you, dear nephew, for it, as well as for the good wishes which you entertain for me and my people. It is, again, with the greatest pleasure that I recognise the cordial and friendly understanding between Portugal and England.

VICTORIA.

The ships of war of different nationalities gave a lively appearance to the harbour, and it is not difficult to imagine that they all kept a sharp look-out on the doings of each other.

For the first six months of the war the task of dealing with

the refugees was most difficult. They poured into Lorenzo Marques in hundreds from morning till night; they besieged the Consulate, and Captain Crowe was at times distracted by their claims. From first to last no fewer than a hundred thousand passed through this town.

To house them temporarily was a matter of no small difficulty, whether they were rich in gold or had not the wherewithal to live through the day.

To the west of Lorenzo Marques is the headland of Reuben Point, the residential part of the town. The finest position for view is that occupied by Cardoso's Hotel, where, even at seven guineas a day, a room was not in the month of May 1900 to be obtained. In the lower rooms, off the entrance hall, I saw three and four beds put up in each. Smoking and all public reception rooms were utilised in this way, while the cost of living was equal to the charges at the Carlton Hotel in Pall Mall, where everything is of the very best.

Prior to May 13 all the refugees sent out of the Transvaal were provided, at the expense of the State, with a ticket to Delagoa Bay; but on that date a new departure was made, resulting, in some instances, in great inconvenience to passengers, mostly women and children, and in their suffering grave indignities. They found that their tickets were only available to Koomati Poort, and it was with difficulty that the officials at this border station were induced to allow them to proceed. When the first train arrived at Lorenzo Marques their position was a trying one, for they would have been incarcerated somewhere had not Mr. Luke, the British Vice-Consul, been on the spot to help them out of their dilemma.

In all transactions with the Portuguese Government Captain Crowe has had the hearty co-operation of the Governor-General, Colonel Machado, whose appointment for the second time gives universal satisfaction. He is the right

man for a difficult position ; he is genial, clear-headed, and self-reliant ; an able official, holding an even balance with a firm hand.

Since the war began events have followed each other with such rapidity that it is impossible to know and remember half that has occurred. The unexpected has happened so frequently that now neither the British nor the Boers anticipate the natural consequence of certain actions, nor the logical sequence of any pre-arranged plans.

The Boers could never have thought it possible that their President would be a refugee, first in Delagoa Bay, and then remain in Holland for months, leaving his old wife in Pretoria in the keeping of the rooineks. The empty sympathy of France, the refusal of the German Emperor to see Mr. Kruger and the failure of America to render substantial aid, must have caused much bitter disappointment.

The interesting document transmitted to Lord Salisbury by Consul-General Crowe on September 18, which is the full text of the proclamation, bearing date September 10, granting leave of absence to Mr. Kruger to visit Europe, ran thus :—

Whereas the advanced age of his honour, the State President, makes it impossible for his Honour further to accompany the commandos ; and whereas the executive council is convinced that the highly-valued services of his Honour can still be usefully applied in the interest of land and people, the executive council hereby determines to grant his Honour leave of absence to Europe for the period of six months, in order still to advance our cause there, and Mr. W. S. Burger, Vice-President, takes his place according to law.

S. W. BURGER, *Vice-President.*

F. W. REITZ, *State Secretary.*

To prevent the ex-President from escaping, H.M.S. *Doris* was sent to Delagoa Bay, but this could not be done when he was merely visiting Europe on "leave of absence," and

consequently counter orders were received from the Foreign Office.

Similarly the *Doris* was just on the point of landing every available man at Lorenzo Marques to go up to Koomati Port to prevent the Boers trekking into Portuguese territory. All the men, fully equipped, were ready to take to the boats, the field guns were already in, when—negative orders were issued.

The *Doris*, whilst at Delagoa Bay, kept up communication with the other ships by means of the Marconi telegraphy—an invention that will play a great part in a naval war.

In Lorenzo Marques everybody suspected everybody else, and was in turn suspected by all the world. But as to the various charges that were hurled about “nothing was proven,” as the lawyers say. The greatest vigilance was exercised during the first months of the war with respect to all contraband of war, especially so far as British traders were concerned; yet in spite of it, much that was useful to the enemy passed through Delagoa Bay into the Transvaal. Some people assert that even British firms were not too particular in their inquiries as to the ultimate destination of their merchandise; but all these insinuations now belong to ancient history.

In Lorenzo Marques there is but little social life. There are only 177 English residents there, the French coming next with 55, so for those who have to make their homes in this Portuguese colony there is no way of finding amusement outside their own home and work.

As to the climate, it is not nearly so bad as is generally supposed, and much of the malaria is due rather to want of sanitary arrangements than to natural or physical causes. The prevailing winds are cool, coming from the direction of the South Pole, which fans the temperature and reduces it to

a maximum monthly average of 79·4 deg. Fahr., and minimum 62·4 deg. for the year ending in October 1899.

When I was in Delagoa Bay the weather was perfect, such as occasionally characterises the month of May in England I was quite sorry to say good-bye to "the finest harbour in South Africa," not the finest only, but the only perfectly secure one on the east coast of Africa north of Simons Bay; a harbour which in our hands would form a magnificent naval station, especially as there is abundance of coal in the neighbourhood. Its strategical position is of the greatest importance in the route to India, though the arbitration of Marshal Macmahon gave the prize to Portugal in 1875. When Lord Carnarvon succeeded to office in 1874 he said: "I had reason to think that the offer of a moderate sum might have purchased that which a very large amount would not now compass; unfortunately the means were not forthcoming, the opportunity was lost, and in politics they do not often recur."

The parsimony of our Government has too frequently been the cause of mistakes that a succeeding one, however generous, could not rectify. This failing in successive Governments brought the navy to its dangerous condition before the passing of the Naval Defence Act. It has been the same thing in regard to the army. Any addition to its effective strength proposed by the Secretary of State is violently contested in the House of Commons by irresponsible members who have never studied the use for which the army is maintained at all. But when things go wrong they are the first to raise an outcry against those whose hands they have tied, and vote for a lavish expenditure which their action, to a great extent, rendered necessary.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE TROOPS IN BEIRA

THERE was a time, not so long ago, when it would have been no easy matter to have found two persons in a large hall filled with a fashionable and well-educated crowd of men and women that could have said were Beira was ; but now its position on the map is well known by every self-respecting person in the British Isles, and that it is a small town built in a sandpit a few miles up the Pungwe river ; also that it is the seaport town for Eastern Rhodesia.

Through the friendly feeling on the part of the Portuguese Government, who began to see the element of danger that existed for their East African colonies, by having two powerfully armed Republics for close neighbours, they allowed British troops to be landed on their shores in order to proceed to Rhodesia.

Although it is true that public interest in everything connected with the war is not maintained at the straining point of intensity, that it was in the spring of 1900, still "news from the front" is eagerly sought, and descriptions of places where our brothers have fought or suffered from fever is read with enthusiasm.

For many reasons it was most difficult to obtain information as to military movements in Beira, even so far as it concerned the Rhodesian force ; and, when obtained, it was still more difficult to transmit it. At times internal telegraphic communication was very untrustworthy. A message sent at

the time of starting on a journey, say to Salisbury, not infrequently arrived two days, or even a week later than the traveller for whose comfort it was intended to provide. It is only quite recently that the cost of a message of ten words was reduced to 2s. So it will be readily admitted that the charges are sufficiently high to ensure an early delivery.

As Sir F. Carrington's force arrived in Beira, and extended itself into Mashonaland and Matabeleland, internal communication did not improve; even after news came as far as Beira the difficulty of transmitting it further had still to be overcome. First, all communications, both for the press and for private persons, had to pass a strict censorship; and, secondly there was no way of sending information out of the country except once a week by the transport *Formosa*, which was used as a despatch-boat between Beira and Delagoa Bay during the period telegraphic intercourse was cut off consequent on the siege of Mafeking. From Lorenço Marques a message could proceed by the wires, though it often happened that it was detained there for three days, as the lines were unable to cope with the pressure put on them. With the relief of Mafeking, however, the restoration of telegraphic communication through Buluwayo was established, and as soon as the military requirements eased off a little the general public shared in the benefits accruing.

Beira, in the state which I saw it, is a place to be avoided, though, as I was assured, it had been greatly improved in the two or three preceding years. Large sums of money are being expended in draining the swampy land in the town, and the streets are going to be macadamised, which, when complete, will be great additions to health and comfort. If Rhodesia is developed to the extent that is so confidently expected, then Beira will some day be a really important seaport town.

I was told it was regarded as the Brighton of the East

Coast of Africa, but the "Queen of the South Coast of England" need not feel complimented at the comparison of her charms with this Portuguese sandpit. Instead of stately mansions along a seawall of four miles in extent there is but one building—the market—that is not constructed of corrugated iron; the others are like sheds, put up for temporary purposes.

The Portuguese and natives are very fond of light and bright colours, and in some instances the roofs are painted in broad stripes in red and white, and blue and pink, which in effect is a decided improvement on the iron in its natural grey colour. The most picturesque spot is the hospital, maintained by the Mozambique Company, where the nurses are Franciscan nuns. But for them, and a couple of Franciscan fathers, religion in any form would be entirely unrepresented. The natives have no place of worship. I greatly doubt if they hold any religious tenets whatever. As for the English residents, they hardly ever hear a church service read. The Rev. A. Roxburgh, from Umtali, called together the few people in the Royal Hotel one day, and held a short service in the waiting-room. Afterwards he expressed the hope that he might be successful in his efforts in the near future in arranging for a service at least once in the month.

Instead of going to Beira, as so many do to Brighton, to enjoy a sea-breeze and seek improved health, people living in Rhodesia avoid it, knowing that the flat and swampy land behind it gives malaria and breeds mosquitoes in millions, and the water inevitably brings about systematic disturbances that for pain and severity are never forgotten.

Beira is situated about fifteen miles up the Pungwe river, which, as far as Fontes Villa (forty miles), is wide and fairly deep—formerly the terminus for the railway and boat communication for up-country traffic.

Now the line, such as it is, comes into Beira itself, and never, it may be safely asserted, has such a toy railway transported so many men, horses, stores, munitions of war, and heavy railway stock in so short a time. I do not say that the transport has been well done from Beira to the various points where Sir Frederick Carrington has desired his troops to be stationed. But considering the hopelessly inadequate nature of the railway and rolling stock, the result is a proof of the superhuman efforts that have been made to move up the force from Beira and Bamboo Creek to Marandellas, Buluwayo, and Mafeking.

The Transport Department of the Admiralty has called forth the admiration of the whole world. Troops and munitions of war have been embarked from many ports in England, Australia, Canada, and from one port of South Africa to another; and it must be admitted that the overland transport has hardly been less efficient in results, especially when the obstacles to be overcome are borne in mind. Great as they undoubtedly have been in Cape Colony and Natal, the difficulties sink into insignificance when compared with those connected with the railway transport from Beira to Marandellas, the short distance of 320 miles.

Men of the Imperial force considered themselves fortunate if they were allowed to travel to Marandellas camp in the mail train, as there is only one, each way, in the week. The arrival and departure of a train is quite an event, therefore, in the life of the inhabitants of Beira.

The last mail train to arrive, while I was there, had a very eventful journey, especially the last sixty miles from Bamboo Creek. The passengers who travelled by it will never forget the four nights and three days it took to traverse the distance of 340 miles from Salisbury. It originally started as two trains, with two engines. *En route* three other trains were overtaken, and they were all coupled together, making a total

of ninety-three carriages and trucks, with five engines interspersed among them.

The journey was full of adventures and hair-breadth escapes, but with the exception of derailing once, and having several long delays, nothing worse than the lack of food and accommodation had to be endured until Bamboo Creek was reached, where the narrow two-foot gauge line begins. Between that station and Beira, on two occasions the ascent of a gradient had to be recommenced six times, and a stop to be made after each effort to get up steam to make another dash for the top of the hill. Finally, the train had to be taken up in sections, and this was not done until a decidedly nervous feeling had been produced on the passengers by the frequent crossing and recrossing of a temporary bridge over a ravine.

In consequence of our military requirements, the railway staff and engine-drivers were sadly overworked, and when they thought they wanted a rest they stopped the train and took it. That occurred half a dozen times on this particular journey, and once in the bend of the line would have caused a collision had not an advancing train been brought to a standstill just in time. But the crowning adventure of the journey took place ten miles from Beira, when the mail train came into collision with one in front, damaging and overturning the three last carriages and disabling its own leading engine. It took thirty-six hours to travel sixty-one miles, the passengers being without food for the last twenty-four, and having had very little for the whole journey. Finally, they reached Beira at midnight in the cattle trucks of the train with which they had come in collision, to find the hotels full. The weekly mail train has not often had such an adventurous journey as this, though to derail four or five times and be a day late are quite usual incidents. The military trains rarely reached Marandellas in less than four days, and brakes and a sufficiency of lamps for both ends of the train,

with other necessary safeguards, were conspicuous by their absence, and it is wonderful that no dire catastrophe left its mark on the Imperial force that went to protect Rhodesian territory under General Sir Frederick Carrington.

Previous to the arrival of the Imperial force in Beira, and with the way through Buluwayo and Mafeking to the Cape open, the number of the travelling public did not exceed 150 a month, and not nearly so many as that in the hot season.

When the railway authorities were attacked on the subject of the railway, they pleaded in excuse that the ships bringing railway plant and rolling stock for the new line had been detained for weeks by the Imperial authorities at Durban. Had they arrived in due course, the narrow-gauge railway would have given place to one of the same width as that which runs through Rhodesian territory before the first transport had anchored in the Pungwe river. However that may be, there was a terrible delay in getting up the troops to Marandellas, and in consequence horses have died and men have sickened while coping with such unsurmountable difficulties. The troops that had to live in the camp at Beira had a terrible time, and at Bamboo Creek it was even worse. Both camps were pitched in the midst of swamps, but of the two the last-mentioned claimed the most victims in men and horses.

When I visited the camp at Beira on May 31 I shall never forget the plight of discomfort which the troops and horses were in. There had been heavy rain two nights before, and the ground was consequently a greater swamp than usual. In No. 4 section were the Victorians, easily distinguished from the others by their soft green-coloured tents; but in such a deplorable state of mud was the ground that I could not make the call on Colonel Somerville I had proposed.

The horses in the paddocks were roaming about in twelve

inches of sticky mud, and those that had laid down were enveloped in a thick coating of it. The sight these 4000 animals presented can better be imagined than described. Mud, mud, everywhere, and nothing but mud to drink. In Beira itself the roads are so sandy that personal locomotion is fatiguing except on the sides of the main thoroughfare, which have been asphalted. The only conveyances for the streets are trollies, pushed by nearly naked natives on narrow lines laid on the top of the sand; and these are private, like victorias or broughams, for the use of which a tax of £1 10s. a year has to be paid. Even the Governor and his family have nothing better to drive in. Looking on the surface of things, therefore, it seems curious that no drier place could have been selected on which to encamp the troops. There were so many insuperable difficulties to contend against that this one should have been avoided if it had been at all possible, which I believe it was not.

The despatch of an Imperial force into Rhodesia was intended rather as a preventive measure than for active operations, and the idea prevailed that the exigencies of war were not likely to call for anything of a more martial character. If this forecast had turned out to be correct, the object would have been attained; but to those men who came from distant parts of the empire the work of quietly policing Rhodesia, Mashonaland, and Matabeleland would have been sadly lacking in excitement—an important factor in enabling the troops to support cheerfully the hardships of life in camp, in a bad climate, with a scarcity of water, and on active service rations.

The Australian contingents, however, saw a little more of the sensational realities of war before they returned to their homes, though the Boers thoughtfully provided it for them in the Transvaal and not in the territory of the Chartered Company.

When I arrived in Mafeking and Zeerust, I was surprised to find my friends, the Bushmen, had won the race and were there before me. General Sir Frederick Carrington had advised me to give up the idea of going *via* Bulawayo; he was decidedly of opinion that it would be far better to return to Cape Town, and proceed by train to Mafeking *via* Kimberley, and to get away from Beira as soon as I possibly could.

There is no place I have ever visited where so little can be bought for money—where the standard of comfort is so low, and the cost of living so excessive. For instance, a ton of potatoes, dried up like mummies, costs at Beira £27 10s. In Rhodesia it would be twice that figure. In England or Sydney the price is £3 or £4. A sack of rice of 112lb. at Beira is £1 15s., and up-country about £4. Other Rhodesian prices were: a tin of condensed milk, 2s. 6d.; a small cabbage, 1s. 6d.; eggs from 12s. to 18s. a dozen; milk hardly purchasable; a small wax candle, 1s.; a reel of cotton, 6d.; and so on with every necessary of life. These high prices are not merely the outcome of the war, but, in a slightly lesser degree, the normal cost of provisions in that part of Africa where the Rhodesian force was stationed. This is accounted for in a great measure by the railway tariff on goods—1s. a mile per ton! In Beira, Salisbury, and Bulawayo £1000 a year barely secures the same home comforts as can be acquired with £300 in England.

I was greatly impressed with the price of things in Cape Colony, and with the high hotel charges; but they are moderate and sufficiently good compared with the ruinous cost and the awful places that are called hotels in this part of the world.

This is a part of the continent where nothing is manufactured, nothing is cultivated, no farm produce grown or stock bred, and where, consequently, everything has to be imported

for use, except the water which falls from the clouds, and that is caught and treasured for drinking purposes. When this source of supply fails, the deficiency is made up by sending boats to fetch water from the Lobi river, which, though not good, is less poisonous than that of the Pungwe.

Both men and animals in the camp at Beira were for a time supplied with water from Twenty-three-mile Camp, but that source was soon exhausted, and the latest expedient was that transports should be employed to distil sufficient for the use of the troops.

The foresight of the Government provided ample stores to provision the men and feed the animals, which, by degrees, were landed from the ships in the harbour—a feat of no easy accomplishment without wharfs, with no pier, and with only a couple of lighters.

A visit to Southampton or Cape Town docks would soon give an object lesson as to the piles of stores of every description that are required to follow an army into the field, but the most vivid imagination could hardly picture the obstacles to be overcome in forwarding the tons of war material to Sir F. Carrington on such a toy railway, together with heavy railway plant and mining machinery belonging to various companies in Rhodesia.

The immediate effect of the presence of British troops on the Portuguese officials and inhabitants of Beira has undoubtedly been productive of good; and, in spite of trifling differences of opinion as to the landing of cattle, Custom House formalities, harbour restrictions, &c., a good and friendly understanding was maintained throughout.

The Governor and Port Captain are both good men for their respective posts, and are far above the common Portuguese official. By the exercise of tact and temper, both the

Consul* and Captain Hunt of his Majesty's ship *Partridge* smoothed away all causes of irritation.

On distant stations naval officers often find themselves in difficult situations and are called upon to settle all sorts of disputes and judge between the disputants. Their professional training, which commences before they can form habits of dependence on others, compels them to accept responsibility and to rely on their own judgment. If by natural disposition they are unable to respond to the responsibilities that their service in the navy entails, then there is only one course to pursue. In our first line of defence there is no room for "stupid officers."

The position of the senior naval officer in Beira was one of great international responsibility; and to look on his Majesty's ship *Partridge*, the sole outward and visible symbol of strength there to support him, caused the mind to pass in review the power that lay behind this small gunboat. Captain Hunt was also the chief transport officer and press censor, and was responsible for almost everything that occurred, even to convoying into the harbour transports whose captains had never navigated the Pungwe river before.

The ships which brought the Australian contingents had not been provided with charts before they left for this channel, and consequently a man-of-war had to give them one on their arrival and to act as lightship. The absence of a lightship is a constant source of danger, as vessels are on the shoals before they perceive the low land on the horizon.

If the transports took longer to do the voyage than was anticipated, his Majesty's ship *Partridge* had to toss about and await their arrival with as much patience as her officers could muster. When the charts were handed to the masters

* The British Consul at Beira, Mr. McMaster, was assassinated in his office, in the presence of his wife, shortly after I left, by a cattle man on board one of the Beaver Line vessels that had been carrying mules from the Argentines for the Government.

of ships it was with the caution that though they were Admiralty charts they were from Portuguese surveys, and not trustworthy. The buoys often change their positions, and the channels their course.

It has given me unspeakable pleasure to meet in various parts of this vast continent so many British subjects, all on one errand bent ; to see stalwart men, with hearts good and true, from Australia, New Zealand, and Canada, pulling together with those from England, Scotland, and Ireland. It produces the feeling that blood is thicker than water, and makes one feel proud to belong to such a nation. My greatest wish is to one day meet these friends again.

Here, in Beira, at Bamboo Creek, or wherever the Australian volunteers may be found, they respond to the demands made on them with a willingness which does credit not only to themselves but to those who selected them to help the mother-country in this great crisis.

And on all occasions they uphold the best traditions of his Majesty's regular army. This war, in its consequences, has been the greatest blessing to the empire.

CHAPTER XIX

KIMBERLEY—No. 11 GENERAL HOSPITAL

OWING to the time I spent in going to Beira by sea, the separation whilst there from all news of the outside world occasioned by the interrupted telegraphic communications with Buluwayo and Mafeking, and again the days I spent returning to Cape Town on board the transport, prevented my hearing of the adverse criticisms made in the House of Commons and elsewhere on the military arrangements for the sick and wounded.

Proceeding without a day's delay to Kimberley, I had had no opportunity of informing myself on public opinion in England on any subject, and consequently my description of No. 11 General Hospital cannot be regarded as a counterblast to the detractions made by Mr. Burdett-Coutts and others on the work and management of the Royal Army Medical Corps.

The following appeared in the *Morning Post* of August 17, 1900, just at the time there was such an agitation going on in regard to military hospitals in Bloemfontein, Wynberg, and in different parts of South Africa, but for want of space the article in its entirety was not published. Many of the details connected with the sanitary arrangements were "cut out," notwithstanding their importance. For a camp to be successful, especially a hospital camp, there is nothing so important or so difficult to arrange.

There are evidences in all directions that a vast improve-

ment has taken place in the arrangements for carrying on the war in South Africa. With the experience gained during the past eight months the organisation of the various departments has become nearly perfect, while stores have been distributed in enormous quantities all along the lines of communication. When one sees stacks of every conceivable thing likely to be required by an army in the field a vague idea can be formed as to what a huge undertaking it is to provide for and maintain 200,000 men at various points, so as to be ready in case of sudden emergencies.

The knowledge of how the sick are treated is of the greatest importance to the general public after the winning of battles, and it is satisfactory to know that even previous to the arrival of such fully and efficiently staffed hospitals as No. 11 at Kimberley the sick and wounded were better cared for than in any former war. Such a perfect military establishment as the general hospital here I had never before visited, and well it deserves the high praise bestowed on it by the general commanding the lines of communication. Having had some experience in hospital management, I could judge it by comparison, and I knew where to look for shortcomings that would not occur to the uninitiated.

Everybody in England has heard of the good work done by the civil hospital of Kimberley during the siege, and how bravely all the ladies in the town came to the assistance of the permanent staff. By degrees the sick soldiers are being removed from various public buildings that have been used to accommodate them to No. 11 General Hospital, which is situated about a mile and a half from Kimberley, on six acres of ground which have never before been camped on. Last week all the patients in the Drill Hall, the Rink, the Schools, the Christian Brothers' Home, and Nazareth House were removed to the camp or sent to Cape Town. Most of the cases were enteric fever or dysentery, some being

nursed by the good Little Sisters of the Poor, chiefly the wounded brought from places near Kimberley, among them being several prisoners of war.

The sick who were fortunate enough to have been sent to the Christian Brothers' Home and Nazareth House had the benefit of every care and comfort, and thanks to the Catholic community, headed by Bishop Coghlan, not a few luxuries and pleasures were added. At present only those in the masonic temple and a few officers in the civil hospital remain in the town.

The inhabitants, as represented by the medical officers of health, brought pressure to bear on the military authorities to remove the sick out of Kimberley as soon as they possibly could, which they affirmed was the cause of the epidemic of enteric fever among the civil population. As a matter of fact the disease is endemic in the town, and the true cause of its greater severity this winter than in others is attributable to the privations suffered during the siege by the whole community and to the defective character of the sanitary arrangements.

No. 11 General Hospital reflects credit on all connected with it, and not a little is due to the Royal Engineer officers and to the De Beers Company, who between them have erected the huts, installed the electric lights, and fitted up the camp with every convenience necessary to a self-containing hospital equipped for 1000 patients; it is also, I believe, the largest* in South Africa. The patients are all accommodated in double canvas marquees, and the hospital is divided into sections, A, B, C, D, and all the tents are marked with boards and numbered consecutively. There is a road fifty yards broad bisecting the camp, and a railway siding runs through the centre of it at right angles to the road.

* Since writing the above I find a thousand beds is the usual number for the military general hospitals on service in South Africa.

All the administrative offices and stores are situated in the centre of the camp, and are constructed of iron. The surgery and operating theatre, with an X-ray room, occupy one building. The theatre is lighted by a large skylight as well as by side windows. The X-ray room, photographic, and dark rooms open out of it. The provisions are stored in separate buildings, which are fitted with sliding windows for the issuing of supplies to orderlies, thus obviating the necessity of allowing orderlies inside.

There is an excellent kitchen in the centre of the hospital, with several large ranges, also coppers for keeping a constant supply of hot water and several high-pressure circulating boilers for the same purpose fitted to the ranges. The supply of water by the Kimberley Water Company is unlimited, and it is filtered through sand filter beds. Before being used all drinking water is boiled.

All sick convoys coming by rail are shunted into the siding and are transferred straight to the tents from the railway carriage, thus saving an enormous amount of transport, delay, and suffering. Convoys leaving the hospital for Cape Town are also entrained on the spot in specially arranged saloon carriages, with a kitchen car and everything necessary to move the men in perfect comfort. Even while I was visiting the hospital a train arrived with a hundred sick men, and I was not in the least aware of it, as everything is done so methodically and quietly.

No. 11 General Hospital is a perfect town. Electric lights are laid on in every marquee, each having two 16-candle incandescent lamps, and the whole camp is well lighted by several powerful arc lights. For the supply of the electricity, which is a great advantage, the authorities have to thank the De Beers Company, though all the plant belongs to the hospital.

It may be of interest to mention that 1000 pints of milk

a day are required for the severest cases in hospital, and as soon as the men are well enough they are given condensed milk in order to keep down expenditure, as the cost of new milk is sixpence a pint, and other things are proportionately dear. Each man has a bedside table, and is fully clothed in hospital clothing, and on leaving is carefully inspected, as well as his kit, and if his uniform and underclothes are not serviceable they are replaced by new garments, and Tommy is sent out again a new man.

After two or three days in hospital the sick begin to improve. The change from the hardships of actual war to clean sheets and good food soon begins to work wonders, and when the time for discharge arrives a little grumbling is heard in anticipation of the hankering after the flesh-pots of Egypt which they know is near at hand. In a military camp where there are 1000 patients, the greater number suffering from enteric fever—contracted in the majority of cases through fatigue, exposure, privation, and short rations—there must needs be plenty of hard work for the medical staff and for all who execute their orders. To administer such an establishment efficiently requires much previous experience, and that is where to a great extent the civil doctors who have been taken on during this crisis have failed. To those who are unaccustomed to the working of a large public department there is much that they do not understand. It is put down as red tape, and a desire is bred to cut through it, but the army as a whole is too big a machine to allow each section to manage its own affairs entirely. There must be a strict keeping of accounts so as to make up the returns that a member of Parliament might ask for any day. Of course this entails a great deal of clerical work, which would be saved if each one could do as he liked, without making any statement on paper as to his proceedings. No. 11 General Hospital is well provided with both medical

men and trained nurses. The principal medical officer is Lieutenant-Colonel O'Connell, and the medical officers in charge of divisions are Major H. Carr and Major S. Hickson. There is an army superintending sister, Miss Stewart, twelve junior army medical officers, thirteen civil surgeons, and thirty nursing sisters, twenty-three belonging to the Army Nursing Reserve and seven engaged in the colony, besides nearly two hundred non-commissioned officers and men of the Royal Army Medical Corps or trained by the St. John Ambulance. All this *personnel* is accommodated in tents quite apart from the patients, except the sisters, who have special huts built for their sleeping and messing accommodation.

The cooking for the sick in hospital is under the direction of a *chef* brought out from London for the especial purpose, and he is assisted by a large staff of trained army cooks. For transport purposes there are three ambulance waggons, two buck waggons, and a Cape cart (very old and riddled with bullets, which was taken from the Boers at Modder and has been given for the use of the sisters), and these are in constant use between the town and the camp.

It must not be supposed, however, that all this perfection in the organisation was arrived at in a day or without much hard work. It took considerable time to select a site, and when decided on the town authorities made objections that occasioned further search, and when, after various failures, the present one was finally fixed on, there was great difficulty in erecting the huts, as the ground was very rocky at a short distance from the surface. In the meanwhile temporary measures had to be adopted for both the sick and the staff, which could hardly be described as thoroughly satisfactory.

All the general hospitals sent out by Government as part of the field force were established on these lines, though the details varied with the local conditions obtaining.

Major Sinclair Westcott of the R.A.M.C. established or assisted in the establishment of four : One at Entombi during the siege of Ladysmith, and one in the tin town which was afterwards removed to Howick ; the fourth a stationary hospital at Harrismith, all of which have done excellent work.

CHAPTER XX

LIFE AT BOSHOF

ONE of the results of the present war has been educational in character. It has induced thousands of people to study the map of the continent of Africa, and they are by this time thoroughly familiar with the names and geographical position of places which, insignificant in themselves, have been the scenes of great battles that will henceforth be regarded as important historical events in the chronicles of the British army.

Since the First Division, under Lord Methuen's command, was stationed at Boshof it has become a well-known name in English homes, and much has been said and written since April 5, 1900, when the Count de Villebois-Mareuil, who was killed in action in its vicinity, was buried there, and a headstone was raised to his memory.

This is a copy of the official notification of his death sent by the burghers to the President :—

À MONSIEUR LE PRÉSIDENT STEIN, KROONSTAD.

Expedié le 9.

MONSIEUR LE PRÉSIDENT,

La très triste nouvelle de la mort héroïque de notre chef le General de Villebois nous a profondément éprouvés. Notre bût maintenant est de venger nos malheureux camarades.

Les chefs des groupes Autrichiens, Allemands, et Français, réunis en conseil de guerre ont décidé de soumettre à votre haute approbation le projet suivant,

1. La legion Européene subsiste sous le commandement des chefs de groupe agissant de concert.

2. Un chef sera nommé par election après une ou deux batailles ayant permis à tous de juger de ses capacités militaires.

3. Chacun de groupes continuera à recevoir les Etrangers par group de nationalites. Le chiffre present à Brandfort est d'environ 100 hommes approuvant ce projet. D'après les probabilités il sera de 200 d'ici quatre à cinq jours.

Agissant tous dans un but commun—" Venger des camarades " — nous osons esperer de tous un vaillant concours.

Au nom de tous Etchegoyen.

The Count de Villebois-Mareuil's grave is in that portion of the cemetery which is devoted to British officers and men ; indeed, the last resting-places of two officers who were killed in action on the same day are on either side of the French general.

Boshof is the chief town of a district of the same name about the size of Wales, second only in importance in what is now officially described as the Orange River Colony. As towns go in South Africa it is not at all a bad little place. The houses are very scattered and only one storey high, many being very dilapidated in appearance, and looking still more dwarfed by the broad streets, which are laid out at right angles. There are great capabilities for a fine city, but unless a mine or some other source of wealth is discovered Boshof is hardly likely to realise the dream of the designer, who had certainly very grandiose ideas of proportion, and profound faith in its future greatness. He scarcely contemplated, however, that it would ever be a military outpost in the occupation of the British, or that from the district an ultimatum to the defenders and residents of Kimberley would ever be despatched demanding their surrender with all troops and fortifications. I will give to my readers the text in the original and, for those who are unacquainted with the language, a translation.

OLIPHANTSFONTEIN,

District BOSHOFF, O.V.S.

Main Laager, Western Division Burgher Forces,

November 4, 1899.

To their Honours, the Commander-in-Chief of the Forces, and the Magistrates of Kimberley.

GENTLEMEN,

Whereas the Republics of the "Orange Free State" and the "South African Republic" have been forced into hostilities by the action of her Britannic Majesty's Government;

Whereas it is necessary that I shall possess the town of Kimberley;

Therefore I demand that your Honours shall immediately upon receipt of this communication surrender to me unconditionally, as officer Commanding-in-chief, the town of Kimberley with all its troops and fortifications.

In case you shall decide not to accede to my demand, I do hereby request your Honours to remove all women and children from Kimberley, so that they may be out of danger, and for this purpose I give you from twelve o'clock noon, Saturday, November 4, 1899, till 6 A.M., Monday, November 6, 1899.

At the same time I wish to inform you that during this time I shall be prepared to receive all Afrikaner families who may desire to leave Kimberley, and also to grant freedom and safety to all women and children of other nations who may leave the town.

Should you, however, fire upon my troops before the expiration of the stipulated time, I shall hold myself justified in employing all my available forces in my defence.

C. J. WESSELS,

Head Commandant,

Western Division Burgher Forces, O.V.S.

W. BILSE,

Adjutant to Head-Commndt.

The cemetery at Boshof has done more to bring into notice this military outpost than anything else. It is not the neat graves of our own brave soldiers, but one mound of earth in

Elephantfontein
dist. Boesjef tHl
Boesjef 7. 11. 1899
 17. November 1899

Charles de la Rive
officier commandant de la troupe
de Kimberley

Monsieur le Commandant
 J'ai l'honneur de vous adresser ci-joint
 une copie de l'avis de la Commission
 d'officiers de Kimberley, en date du 11
 courant, par lequel vous êtes informé
 que la garnison de Kimberley a été
 déclarée indigne de servir sous les
 ordres du commandant britannique.
 Je vous prie d'accepter, Monsieur
 le Commandant, l'assurance de ma
 haute considération.

C. de la Rive
 Capitaine Commandant
 Régiment de cavalerie
 11. 11. 1899

Ingeval tHl eêlde bevelent van dien
 zêk, niet te worden vercoor, ik tHl
 bevelende alle vercooren en keublen
 Kimberley te doen oetdoen, zodat
 zij keublen zwaars eethen geystelt was
 ken, want tHl bevel stacten wond
 van of tebede den 4. November 1899
 o namiddag Om 12 ure tot Maandag
 5 November 1899 o morggen ten 6 ure
 bevelen dat ik 21 keublen dat ik eethen
 dien tHl bevel eethen niet alle
 Ofpekensche families, o o eethen
 Kimberley eethen vercooren, te ont
 ronen, als wende eethen eethen
 held te wethen, als alle niet te
 eethen eethen eethen eethen
 andes maten
 Keublen eethen eethen eethen
 van dien dore van keublen tHl
 dien tHl of eethen eethen eethen
 geystelt eethen, o eethen eethen
 van het eethen eethen eethen
 alle te eethen eethen eethen
 o eethen

C. de la Rive
 Capitaine Commandant
 Régiment de cavalerie
 11. 11. 1899

BOER DEMAND FOR THE SURRENDER OF KIMBERLEY

the midst of them, not nearly so tidy as the rest, with a plain white marble slab, that has produced conflicting opinions as to what is right and necessary for a brave general in command to do for a fallen warrior who has been leading the enemy and fighting as a foreigner. It is a very unpretending monument to mark the spot where lies buried a French count, who died fighting for fighting's sake. If the decrees of fate had been favourable to his wishes, he would have been directing his energies and expending his skill to forward the success of the British arms rather than in opposition to them, but as this could not be, he offered both to the Transvaal, and accepted in exchange a liberal remuneration, despite the fact that his own private income stood at the figure of £15,000 a year.

To leave Boshof without visiting the kopjes where the Foreign contingent, made up of French, Germans, Poles, and odd men of other nationalities, under the command of the Count de Villebois, had been defeated and captured, was not to be thought of, so I invited the Hon. Florence Colborne, who was sister in charge of the sick and wounded in the court-house of Boshof and in another building near it, to accompany me on this expedition, as she had not had the slightest change from her wards since she arrived two months before, nor indeed since February; for both at Modder River and Kimberley her energies and health were heavily taxed in nursing the sick. The commandant, ever courteous, and anxious to place facilities in the way of all who desire his aid, borrowed a Cape cart and told off an officer of the Imperial Yeomanry and a private who had been in the engagement to escort us to the scenes of the fight known as Zwartskopjefontein, Tweifontein, and Driefontein, but somehow, in starting a little ahead of us, they rode in another direction, and their services and knowledge were consequently lost as far as we were concerned.

Our coloured driver had assured the colonel that he knew the way, but we soon found that this statement was not quite correct. We drove about for miles in a circle, not far from the kopjes we wished to see, and were at last rewarded on arriving at a farmhouse called Kreepan, which afforded us at the same time an opportunity of sampling the renowned hospitality of the Dutch.

Though the occupants could not speak a word of English, they offered us milk to drink and fodder for the horses. The farmer and his wife volunteered to accompany us to a kopje near which some fighting had taken place, and in going to it across the veld we pick up some trophies in the shape of cartridge cases and bullets. Not being able to understand the information that the good Dutchman and his wife were endeavouring to convey to us, much of the interest of the geographical position was lost, though we fully realised by the dead horses which we could see from the top of the kopje that sad scenes had recently been enacted in the neighbourhood. The enemy had apparently been driven from that position to the next kopje, where the great fight of the rear-guard took place, which resulted in many of them being killed and wounded and the others utterly demoralised. On that occasion forty men were taken prisoners, and later our soldiers went out to collect the enemy's dead, who had been left lying on the veld, and reverently buried them in one big grave in the Dutch part of the cemetery.

When the 20,000 prisoners are brought back there will be a rude awakening for some of the Dutch women.

No mark of identification was found on any of the bodies left by the enemy on the field ; and unless they had been personally known to their comrades and the addresses of their homes known they could not have informed their families that they had been killed in battle near Boshof.

Many of the women have been in utter ignorance as to

the whereabouts of their men since the beginning of the war and believe they are in their own commando or are prisoners.

On our return to the farmhouse we found delicious hot coffee waiting for us, prepared by the children, of whom there were four. Both the farmer and his wife pressed us to stay the night, and were genuinely disappointed at our being unable to do so, but Miss Colborne could not leave her patients for so long a time, and I had arranged to return to Kimberley the following day. A drive over the veld in the dark, in a cold wind, with holes, stones, and dead horses frequently on the track, is not devoid of excitement, especially when the cart has no lamps!

To reach Boshof from Kimberley a drive of thirty miles must be undertaken, as there is no railway. With good horses and a spring cart it is agreeable enough, as the air is very invigorating, and not cold as long as the sun shines. The distance can be covered in four, five, or six hours with no outspan, or a very short one. The kopjes and trenches occupied by the Boers when they besieged Kimberley for three months and a day provide plenty of food for reflection, especially after having listened to the stories of the siege and the hairbreadth escapes from shot and shell which are related by those unfortunate people who were kept in their houses or in the mines in a constant state of terror. The need for the military dictum of "no lights after dark" was very apparent when the electric lights of Kimberley were seen from the Boer positions, making excellent marks for artillery fire.

Boshof being under martial law, a military pass was required to enter the town, and it fell to the lot of only a favoured few to drive there in a Cape cart at the Government's expense. If the military authorities decree that the journey is to be made in an ox waggon, then, with a team of sixteen animals, it takes three days to cover the distance. At

the end of that time one has learnt from actual experience what trekking means, the exact significance of inspanning and outspanning and other ox-waggon terms of expression, which I hear is quite the latest thing in slang in England.

When I went from Kimberley to Boshof I had neither a Cape cart nor an ox-waggon, but a Scotch cart drawn by six mules. The officers with whom I was to travel were on Intelligence business, and were afterwards going on to Paardeberg. They were of opinion that I should be going out of Kimberley in too much style if I drove through the town in that vehicle, especially as it was decorated to its fullest capacity with spades and pickaxes and such-like ordnance stores for troops on distant outposts.

So, in order to escape from the gaze of the curious, we drove in a less conspicuous conveyance to the Remount Camp, which is well outside the town. I there realised what a Scotch cart was. We had hardly arranged ourselves in various graceful attitudes and got under weigh when we met some fashionable friends from Kimberley, returning from an afternoon drive, and, having satisfied themselves by a steady stare whom we all were, seated in a cart in which the poorest Dutchman would not be seen, proceeded to weave a story that would do credit to the most gossiping country town in the British Isles. Indeed, the inhabitants of the Diamond city are in no way behind their friends in the old country in this particular.

Trekking across the country and sleeping out on the open veld are all very well as war experiences, but such South African novelties are rather trying to a constitution not hardened to the life. The nights are cold, and are sure to leave an unpleasant reminder, even though a good fire is kept burning the whole night, and there is an unlimited supply of hot coffee, frizzled sausages, and some one to make things comfortable and replace the rugs which slip off during

the night, when the hard ground suggests to the sleepy senses a change of position.

In spite of all these advantages, which do not fall to the lot of the ordinary Tommy Atkins in war, I must confess to a preference for a spring bed in a comfortable apartment, and for the easy motion of the C springs of a landau to the inevitable jolting of a Scotch cart on a road that has been cut up by the transport of an army of 10,000 men. My advice to all who do not know what a Scotch cart is—do not travel in one for thirty miles without a preliminary investigation, and protest against a band of music composed of pioneer instruments such as spades and pickaxes.

On entering the town of Boshof, as in all Dutch towns, the first thing to attract the attention is the church. When viewed at some little distance, judging from its architectural style, and its prominent position in the centre of a huge square, it might be taken for a Roman Catholic cathedral, such as are found in out-of-the-way places on the Continent of Europe—cities that have been left behind in the march of centuries.

But as the traveller approaches his opinion modifies. As compared with all the other buildings in the town of Boshof, the Dutch church is an imposing structure, though in reality it is nothing more than a very decent dissenting chapel. When I saw it for the first time cows and calves were grazing within the rails, which, to my British notions, seemed very irreverent. The grounds surrounding a sacred edifice ought not to be turned into a meadow. Since then the church has been used to confine the prisoners of war who had surrendered and were again found in arms.

There are many incongruities connected with the Dutch churches in South Africa that come daily under observation, but the one that struck me most in this particular place was the disregard of the third commandment, especially by the women and children.

Englishmen, as a rule, are very careful how they indulge in emphatic Anglo-Saxon language before their womenfolk, and consequently it comes at first as a great shock to hear Dutch ladies and small children curse them as they pass in the street. In comparison the men bear no ill-will, or conceal it admirably if they do. They maintain a friendly and respectful demeanour towards the colonel-commandant, who, by his kindness and firmness gained their confidence and implanted a wholesome fear as to the folly of starting on a course of double dealing.

The colonel gives all rebels who are in his district to understand that if they surrender their arms and return to their farms they will find in him a good and true friend, but if they attempt to run on crooked paths he will destroy their property and punish them to the fullest extent. He speaks earnestly to them, and they believe in him.

It is certainly disappointing to find that after so many months large districts are again disturbed, and the work of pacification has in reality advanced so little—due chiefly to the irreconcilable attitude of the women and the pressure they bring to bear on their male relatives. An instance of their desire to continue the conflict was forcibly brought to my mind: A man returned to his farm during the hours of darkness, and when his wife came to see who was knocking at the door, he said "Open it, darling, I am back from comando. It is no use fighting any more, as there is nothing to be gained by it, and much to lose." When his wife heard this she refused to let him in, and said, "My husband must go and fight." So, finding his wife would not relent, there was nothing for him to do but to go back to his comando, which he did the same night without even having entered his home.

Lord Methuen left Boshof with the First Division (consisting of the 9th and 20th Brigades, under Major-Generals

Douglas and A. Paget) on May 14. His movements since then have been followed with interest at home. When Lord Methuen left Boshof Colonel A. H. Courtenay, 4th Battalion Scottish Rifles, took over the command. The importance of the place from a military point of view may be realised from the fact that a large mixed force of artillery, yeomanry, and infantry was left to protect it, consisting of half the 4th Battalion Scottish Rifles, half the 3rd Battalion South Wales Borderers (under Colonel Healy), and detachments of the 1st Northumberland Fusiliers, 1st Loyal North Lancashire, 2nd Northamptonshire, 1st Royal Munster Fusiliers, 1st King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry, and 3rd South Staffordshire regiment, half the 38th Battery of Royal Field Artillery, half a Battery of Diamond Fields Artillery, and the 58th Company and details of the Imperial Yeomanry; all these detachments representing the different units of the First Division. The remainder of the 4th Scottish Rifles are with their Brigade (20th), and the remainder of the South Wales Borderers formed at this time the garrison at Hoopstad, about sixty miles from Boshof.

The first week or ten days of Colonel Courtenay's command was a decidedly anxious time, as it was well known that small bodies of the enemy were working round, and it was reported that when the division left it was their intention to unite and endeavour to carry the place. Every precaution was taken to guard against attack, and a few days after the division left a large body of Boers was reported about seven miles out, advancing towards the town.

The alarm was sounded and all the troops were at their posts in the smartest manner, ready to repulse the attack, but much to their regret the enemy disappeared behind a kopje, and held a council of war. On the following day 150 of the enemy came in to surrender their arms.

All the men who have surrendered declare that they are

thoroughly sick of the war, and the weapons, ammunition, and horses they bring to the commandant are all serviceable and of the best pattern. A visit to the Intelligence Office, where the guns, ammunition, bandoliers, &c., are in the custody of Captain Ross, who is also district commissioner, would satisfy the most sceptic as to the genuineness of those who have surrendered them, but they have all been furnished with fresh ones since then.

During the military occupation of Boshof the sickness among the troops was very severe; chiefly enteric and dysentery cases. There have been as many as 600 men in hospital at one time, and during the hot weather there were very many deaths each day. Though the severity of the epidemic subsided when the winter set in, there were 150 to be dealt with, and nearly every building in the town floated the Red Cross. When I was there the court-house, the schools, the little English church, and several private houses were used as hospitals or convalescent homes.

As usual, the sisters and doctors on the spot were deserving of all praise for their skill and devotion to the sick and dying—the unfortunate victims of this war. Many of those stationed at Boshof have never seen a shot fired, which is a great trial to both officers and men who love their profession. They know that credit and honourable mention go chiefly to their comrades in the fighting line, whose places they would gladly fill, but the long lines of communications must be protected.

Though the doctors and nursing sisters have exerted themselves to the utmost in the care of the sick, their efforts have not been as successful as they might have been had the Administrative Department been more energetic in forwarding medical stores and other necessaries. The fact that Boshof is thirty miles from Kimberley, and off the railway line, materially adds to the difficulties of transport, but

hardly excuses running out of such medical comforts as brandy and quinine.

The officers and men, doctors and sisters, all complain that parcels that have been sent to them from friends in England never come to hand. The non-receipt of the good things, the despatch of which they are informed of by letter, is greatly deplored ; but thanks to the public spirit and indefatigable energy of Mr. Hamilton Gatliff, the War Office agent for the distribution of soldiers' letters and parcels, most of them arrived safely in the end, at even such ungetatable places as Boshof.

Only those who have knowledge of commercial undertakings can form any conception of the tons of goods of all descriptions, and in packages of all sizes, that await despatch at Shed No. 4, South Arm Dock, Cape Town. When I was last there Major Cockburn, of the Queen's Bays, was spending his sick leave from the West Coast coping with this gigantic task, and at Kimberley I found Mr. Hamilton Gatliff carrying on his good work with a method and zeal worthy of all commendation, and certainly the result has been eminently successful. The task he undertook was a great one for a man to undertake at his own expense, and has been most helpful.

The labour it involved was onerous and full of difficulties. Ever the same ; the one of transport being the chief obstacle. Obviously, to get tons of parcels to their destinations for a couple of hundred thousand men scattered over thousands of miles and constantly on the move required trucks ; and the rolling stock of the railways was insufficient for purely military purposes. Thus it occurs that for weeks and months 600 tons of parcels, cases, and bales—presents from the British public to the officers and soldiers—were lying in Bloemfontein without protection from the weather because the military authorities could not grant a single truck

—not even half a truck—to convey Mr. Gatliff's goods north, where the regiments for which the gifts were intended were scattered. Much of the contents of the parcels has been looted.

I have heard some hard things said about the railway staff officers, but Lord Kitchener is chief of the staff, and he rightly claims precedence of everything for his own purposes. The presents Mr. Hamilton Gatliff was so anxious to have conveyed to the persons to whom they were addressed were not luxuries, but necessaries. Still, it is the business of the staff to care for all the troops rather than for a favoured few, and so trucks were not available, except to transport those stores entrusted to the Ordnance Department and to the Army Service Corps.

For months this state of things existed and was very hard, but was unavoidable, and Mr. Gatliff was reasonable enough to see the true state of affairs. Now everything sent to the troops at the front is promptly delivered.

CHAPTER XXI

MAFEKING TO POTCHEFSTROOM

Of the three besieged towns, Mafeking, Ladysmith, and Kimberley, Mafeking presented to my mind far more outward signs of having been besieged than either of the other two.

I was in Mafeking shortly after the siege was raised, and I thought it looked deplorably knocked about. Every house seemed the worse for Boer artillery fire. There was scarcely a building that had not been shelled; some hopelessly wrecked. But it was the miles of trenches that ran through the streets, with dug-outs here and there that impressed me most.

No words could have conveyed an idea of the actual state of a besieged town comparable to the one I obtained during my short visit to Mafeking. Of one thing I am certain: However excellent a story may be that is founded on the personal experience of being besieged, and, no matter how admirably it may be garnished with hairbreadth escapes to the tune of shot and shell in constant touch with one's dwelling-place, I would not voluntarily go through it in order to secure myself the pleasure. I have met people from all three towns who have undergone this trying ordeal, who exclaim: "I am glad I stayed. I would not have missed the experience for worlds!" This is easy enough to say now all danger is safely averted, but I fancy not a few have expressed themselves to the military officers in other terms when they

saw shells bursting in the streets and in their houses, and had nothing but horseflesh to eat, and not too much of that. I have a ration of bread that was served out on Good Friday in Mafeking. It is in shape like a Cross bun, but it does not look very appetising!

The War Losses Compensation Commission has awarded £103,123 to Mafeking for damage done by shell fire, which is a generous allowance out of public funds, though many individuals will find when it is divided that it is very inadequate to the losses they have sustained, and the anxieties they have endured—dangers and losses I do not propose to recount, as they have been ably described by others.

But stamps, the "Mafeking Besieged," were occupying an important place in local opinion at this time.

It is not my desire to enter into any of the considerations which guided the three brave defenders of Ladysmith, Kimberley, and Mafeking, nor do I wish to criticise the means they respectively employed for holding the inhabitants of those towns together in the face of a common foe. But in consequence of friends at home and in different parts of South Africa constantly writing to me to obtain for them Transvaal, Free State, and surcharged stamps, I should like to express the opinion of a friend on the principle of British officers trading in rare stamps or assisting in enhancing the market prices paid for them—a practice that would have far-reaching consequences if largely resorted to.

In a small way I tried to comply with my correspondents' wishes in this matter, though I often found myself not a little out of pocket by so doing.

The stamps most desired were the "Mafeking Besieged," which, by *The Times* of December 14, I see are the most valuable. Complete sets were sold recently at Mr. T. C. Stevens' rooms in King Street, for prices ranging from

nineteen to forty guineas. The following extract may prove interesting in connection with this subject:

Three complete sets (nineteen in all) of the Mafeking Besieged stamps, issued by "B.P.," £24 8s., £24, and £23 respectively.

Set of 17 rare Mafeking Besieged stamps, and another set of 15, £16 and £14 14s. respectively.

Mafeking Besieged, 2s. on 1s. British Bechuanaland, in mint state, and two others, the latter torn, £5 5s., £4 4s., and £2 17s. 6d. respectively.

Mafeking Besieged, 1s. on 6d.; Bechuanaland Protectorate, unused, £3 10s.

Mafeking Besieged, 6d. on 3d., Bechuanaland Protectorate £3.

Mafeking Besieged, 1s. on 4d., Cape, £2 5s.

Two Baden-Powell, large heads, unused, and Mint state, and another, used on entire, £3, £2 12s. 6d., and £2 6s. respectively.

Transvaal, V.R., in rubber type, issued in Rustenberg, viz., $\frac{1}{2}$ d., 1d., 2d., 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ d., 3d., 6d., 1s., and 2s. 6d., used, £5 5s.

Orange River Colony, rare 1d. error, surcharged V.R. instead of V.R.I., used, £3 5s.

Two Mafeking Besieged, 3d. on 1d. Bechuanaland Protectorate square type, in Mint state, £3 3s.

Baden-Powell Bicycle stamp, light shade; and two others, dark shade, all in Mint condition, £1 10s.

The genuine "Mafeking Besieged" stamps are obviously very rare, and consequently high prices are readily given for them.

This provides a great temptation to produce and sell to the public spurious ones for the same money to supply this great demand.

When for State reasons it is necessary suddenly to increase the revenue, any department may legitimately be called upon to raise public funds and may go the length of creating a fictitious want to fill the exchequer, but when no such need exists then it is quite another thing.

Was a special stamp more required at Mafeking than Ladysmith and Kimberley is a question that my correspondent can answer far better than I possibly could.

JOHANNESBURG,
Sept. 20, 1900.

DEAR COUSIN,

So you want my views on the subject of the "Mafeking Besieged" stamps. Was there any real necessity for them? Well, that depends on so many things, interests, and ways of viewing matters. Let me see, how many sieges have we had during this war? There was the siege of Ladysmith: some 10,000 troops were engaged in the defence of the town, and there was also a certain civil population in the place during the siege. The defences, I believe, were constructed on a radius of some three to four miles from the centre of the town, and therefore enclosed a tolerable area. Well, the good people of Ladysmith are as affectionate as most others, and therefore during the siege were anxious to communicate with dear relatives outside the besieged area, yet Sir G. White did not consider it necessary to overprint his postage stamps "Ladysmith Besieged" to facilitate the postal communication between Ladysmith and the outside world, nor did he appear to think that there was any demand for a local postal service requiring the use of a special stamp with his own effigy thereon to ensure safe delivery within the area under his immediate control. Then there was the siege of Kimberley: the garrison consisted of some 5000 men, and, be it known, some 55,000 civilians had also to undergo the rigours of a siege in this town. The inhabitants of Kimberley did wish to write to their loved ones outside the town, and every facility was granted them which the circumstances would permit. The Post Office authorities considered that a letter bearing an ordinary Cape stamp without any inscription "Kimberley Besieged" bore sufficient indication that the freightage fees on the same had been paid. The area which Kekewich had to defend was by no means so compact as that under White's care; the perimeter of the defences of Kimberley alone was eight and a half miles, and beyond Kimberley lay the township of Beaconsfield, and still further again, in fact some three and a half miles from Kimberley

Market Square, were our defences at Wesselton Mine. I can tell you as a fact that there was a daily postal service between Kimberley and its outlying suburbs; yet, will you believe it, it was not found necessary to affix a picture of Kekewich's head on these letters to ensure their safe delivery. Further, during the 124 days of the siege not one complaint was made that a letter had gone astray in the post. Do you not think this extraordinary when the absence from the envelopes of the representation of the features of Kimberley's temporary ruler is considered? There were other sieges at Wepener, Lindley, Ladybrand and many other towns, but I am forgetting that the sieges at these places did not last sufficiently long for the besieged to discover what their wants with regard to postal inter-communication were. What a pity this was, for is it not possible that genuine surcharged postage stamps may have been issued had the Boers hung on to the rims of these places for a few days longer? How the heart of the enthusiastic philatelist would have rejoiced at the thought of possessing a very rare "Wepener Besieged" or a "Ladybrand Besieged"; and look also at the possibility of turning an honest penny which would have presented itself to the stamp dealers. But what is the good of moaning over what was not to be? I will now deal with the most important siege of the war, that of Mafeking. I believe that the defenders of Mafeking numbered some 1000 men, and that the civilian population left in the town during the siege was less than 2000 souls. Many letters sent out of Mafeking during the period of October 1899 to February 1900 passed through my hands in Kimberley, but must I tell the honest truth? As you will have it so, I must confess that these letters either had no stamps on them at all, or bore the ordinary Cape stamps without any inscription or surcharge whatever, and as often they were not even defaced with the Mafeking postmark. I forwarded some by runner and others through the post, and no question was raised concerning the simple undefaced Cape stamps which adorned the envelopes. Still, for all I know, a necessity may have arisen to more loudly proclaim the fact that Mafeking was besieged, and that B. P. was the gallant defender of the little town. Concerning the necessities of a local post with a local stamp I can only say that unless Mafeking has expanded some many fold since I was there in

January 1896, I cannot conceive the necessity for any special arrangements to enable the residents to communicate with one another.

If my memory serves me well, I should say it does not require ten minutes to go from any one part of Mafeking to any other part.

Now, my dear cousin, I have said all I have to say.

Yours affectionately,

CLAUD.

It was my intention to go to Bulawayo from Mafeking, but the fates decided otherwise. Instead, I was hustled into a Cape cart with some officers of the Imperial Transport Service, and in a quarter of an hour's time I was proceeding in the opposite direction, and finally landed in Johannesburg.

During the long cross-country drive from Mafeking to Potchefstroom, which covers a distance of 180 miles, I could never have imagined that I was travelling through the enemy's territory, in which British troops were actually engaged in active hostilities, for the inhabitants were peacefully pursuing their daily occupation, surrounded by every mark of prosperity, certainly by those signs of creature comforts that usually greet the eye when one enters a well-stocked farmyard in England. On such a journey there were many occasions when the proverbial hospitality of the Dutch had to be put to a practical test. When there was no place of abode but a solitary farmhouse buried away in the veld we were compelled to seek from the occupants food and shelter for both man and beast for the night, and no instance of incivility or begrudging hospitality could fairly be quoted.

With one or two exceptions the Dutch women seemed only too pleased to do all in their power to promote our comfort during the time we proposed staying under their roof, while the children, as soon as they found there was nothing to fear, crowded round and made their funny little remarks in Dutch, which, when translated, were very amusing.

Perhaps the most difficult article of food to obtain at this present time in the Transvaal was milk. To a stranger this seems very odd, as everywhere there are cows grazing on the veld in great numbers, but the Boers do not arrange such matters on any methodical system. They either have milk in wasteful quantities or none at all. The usual price for it is sixpence or ninepence a pint, and, consequently, when such a sum can be obtained, no butter is made in the country, and most of that which is consumed is imported from Europe or America.

In this particular alone there is a splendid opening for energetic farmers, for there is plenty of land which might be easily cultivated. At first their efforts would be handicapped by the difficulties of transport, but the projected railway from Mafeking to Pretoria is certain to be commenced as soon as this war is over, and other lines of railway will be undertaken in order to open up the country.

From Mafeking to Malmani we followed the road taken by Dr. Jameson when he started on his famous raid. At Ottershoop—or Malmani—we stayed for the night, which was the first that I had ever spent in the Transvaal. It was there also that some of Dr. Jameson's men lost their way and cut the wrong wires, which helped considerably to frustrate the plans of their leader.

A few years ago there was a large mining population at Ottershoop, attracted there by the Malmani goldfields, but now, except for two or three headgears, there are few traces left of the activity which prevailed when the mines were in full swing. Confident hopes, however, are expressed that, after the war is over, and the safety of property and good government have been secured, work on this reef will be recommenced, and that the capital which has been spent and is proposed to be raised to obtain the precious metal out of the bowels of the earth will return a liberal interest and

reward those who desire to develop the district. As to the gold, it is undoubtedly there, but much labour is required to secure it.

When I arrived at Zeerust I was pleased to find several companies of the Australian contingents of Bushmen, whom I had met at Beira, proceeding thence to Marandellas to join Sir Frederick Carrington. I also heard with great satisfaction that 2000 more were expected in a few days as reinforcements for picket duty, which has to be carried out on an extensive scale in this part of the Transvaal, as it is so hilly, and consequently very favourable to the Boer mode of warfare. All the Australians appeared to be in the best of health, and were delighted with their change of locality. They had come from Rhodesia *via* Buluwayo and Mafeking, and seemed to be none the worse for their weeks of marching. There is a magnificent panoramic view from their camp, which is useful as a point of observation for the whole country.

The road from Mafeking to Zeerust is very interesting, and should prove especially so to the travelling public who are ever on the look-out for fresh places of historic interest. As soon as the border is crossed the nature of the country differs entirely from the flat plains of Bechuanaland. After passing the trenches and strategic positions occupied by both attackers and defenders of gallant little Mafeking, concerning which much has already been written, one soon begins to enjoy the beautiful views which characterise all mountainous districts in sub-tropical countries.

As for the village of Zeerust, it is always described by Mr. Kruger as the gem of the Transvaal, though he invariably denounced it as the most rebellious district under the Vierkleur, and had no faith in the loyalty of the burghers. When the hour of trial came his field cornets could have verified his worst anticipations, for the greater number preferred to fight for the Union Jack and British supremacy rather than

for the predominance of Messrs. Kruger and Steyn in South Africa. In fact, the devices resorted to by the inhabitants commandeered to serve outside Mafeking were as curious as they were ingenious. Since I left the inhabitants have had a very chequered life; the village has been taken and evacuated several times.

For a time Zeerust was the headquarters of Lord Edward Cecil, who had gone to Mafeking to fetch his wife, and was expected back on Saturday, June 30. During the short time I was in Zeerust I stayed at the Marico Hotel, which, in a small way, for cleanliness and refinement, combined with good cooking, I have never known equalled either in South Africa or in Europe. In England I cannot call to mind a village inn that can be compared to it. It is not there, however, that Lord and Lady Edward Cecil took up their residence, but at the Central Hotel, which was being prepared for their reception when I left.

The proprietor of the Marico Hotel is a German subject and when the field cornet of the district came to insist that he should proceed on commando without delay he declined, and said he owed allegiance to the Emperor William II. of Germany only. He wrote to inform his Consul in Pretoria of his position, and when the field cornet came the next time he showed him the Consul's reply. However, in the end he promised to take sentry duty just in front of his own hotel, and every night he provided himself and his companion with a mattress and warm blankets, as well as a basket of good things to eat and drink, while they kept watch comfortably in a sheltered spot.

The drive from Zeerust over the mountainous country to Rustenburg was not less beautiful than the first part of the journey, though there were fewer homesteads, and orange groves belonging to such well-known men as De Wet and Botha to give point and interest to the district. Shortly

after leaving Zeerust I felt a little uneasy, for I saw several Boer waggons drawn up among some trees in a hollow, but we were soon assured that it was a women's laager, the occupants of which were seeking protection from the Kaffirs, whom they greatly fear, as their men-folk were either on commando or were prisoners of war.

Travelling through such a long tract of country and coming directly into personal and close relations with the people, I had better opportunities of estimating their character than I could ever have had by going through by rail. The officers who accompanied me could speak Dutch fluently, and a few kindly words soon dispelled the alarm that was only too evident on our first appearance.

Many of the prisoners of war that I came in contact with while in charge of the sick on board the *Manila* (Transport 80) came from this district, though more belonged to that of Potchefstroom, and in a few instances I could give reassuring information to their wives and daughters as to their well-being, and the care taken of them while in our hands. This, of course, soon set up very friendly relations, and the dread of the British and of all the terrible things that their field cornets had told them about when the British came, such as driving them out of the country, taking their sons to England for soldiers, giving their prettiest daughters for wives and the others to the Kaffirs, &c., melted like snow in summer.

I must, however, give a description of our reception in another homestead, where I was not nearly so favourably impressed. We went to ask for some milk for our morning meal. We were met at the threshold by a burly man, who informed us that he had been fighting outside Mafeking, but that he had given up his arms. When we entered the house it seemed full of women and children, and as it is a Dutch custom to shake hands with every member of the family, I

saw I was in for a somewhat trying ordeal. At first we were told there was no milk, and otherwise we were made to feel our presence was not desired. The mother began to tell a piteous tale of the treatment to which she had been subjected, and the conduct of the British troops who had visited her farm to get supplies and transport waggons.

Her story was accompanied by indignant gesticulations, and when she said the soldiers had commandeered all her stock, leaving her and her family of twelve children without anything to exist on, she began to cry, and assured us that it was by the same show of distress she had induced the officers to give back a few sheep and other necessaries to save their lives. We listened to this story of British iniquity for a long time, and then gave her a short description of what the burghers had done to our colonists when they invaded their territory—how they carried away everything they possibly could, and utterly destroyed the rest. As both officers could speak Dutch fluently, and one was well known to her as a Transvaal burgher, they were able to explain things to her in a manner that was quite a revelation. Even while the woman was speaking bags of meal filled the back room, which were plainly visible every time the door was opened, while outside the geese and turkeys, ducks and fowls, guinea fowl, pea fowl, pigs, sheep, and cattle were all greeting the morning sun in varying notes according to their species thus actually belying the story of our soldiers' misdoings.

A drive from Mafeking to Rustenburg will make the traveller thoroughly acquainted with "drifts," which are so often heard of in connection with the passage of our troops.

Rustenburg was, after the siege of Mafeking was raised, for sometime the headquarters of Major-General Baden Powell, and when I was there, July 2, I saw him march out to Wolhuter's Kop with a force of from 1000 to 1200 men, leaving a garrison of only eighty New South Wales Bushmen

and a detachment of British South African Police with a 12½-pounder and a Maxim gun, under the command of Colonel Hore, to guard the town, make trenches, and fix the guns in position in case the place was attacked during his absence, hunting parties of the enemy, which he knew were secreted in small commandos between Rustenburg and Krugersdorp.

Indeed, the very day he left, within twenty-six hours of his departure, General Baden Powell had to send an urgent message to Colonel Hore to evacuate and retire on Zeerust as soon as darkness set in, first destroying all Boer arms and ammunition, of which there were some 2000 or 3000 rifles and many hundreds of thousand rounds of ammunition, which had been surrendered to our troops at farmhouses and brought in. This urgent message contained the further disquieting information that 2000 Boers with four guns and two pompoms were expected to arrive in Rustenburg at daylight on the following morning, July 4. Orders were received at 5.15 P.M., and by 8 P.M. Colonel Hore got the garrison away without being discovered, and that he did in spite of heavy rain and thunderstorms.

By marching all night through the Magliesberg Pass across Selous river to Elands river, a distance of forty miles, with forty-three waggons, was covered in twenty-four hours—not a bad trek considering the nature of the country!

When the native population of Rustenburg saw that the town had been left with such a small garrison a considerable amount of ferment was observable, and it seemed to many that it was a direct interposition of the Almighty for their deliverance in response to their prayers that I had listened to in the Reformed Church on the preceding Sunday morning; the tenor of which was—Wait patiently for the coming of the Lord, who will shortly drive out your enemies from amongst you. At this service I noticed such influential men as Eloff,

Piet Kruger and others, who had surrendered and were prisoners on parole, and consequently were permitted to go about the town as they were disposed. I had a short conversation with Piet Kruger on the Sunday, but, like all English people, I never doubted the veracity of his statements. On the next morning, however, in addition to the numerous knots of Boers that were conversing in a mysterious manner about the town, I noticed that Mr. Piet himself was in quite another frame of mind and was in a state of bustle that looked suspiciously strange.

When the garrison evacuated Rustenburg one of Mr. Weil's (Imperial Transport) agents was left behind, and at 7 A.M. on July 4 was awakened by Mr. Piet Kruger coming into his room! However, Mr. Piet allowed him to clear off after selling him a horse for £30!

On the 6th Colonel Hore received another urgent message, this time from Major Hon. Hanbury Tracy, asking for reinforcements, as he was in Rustenburg, and the Boers were occupying the hills around the gaol. In response, Colonel Hore at once sent off two squadrons of New South Wales Bushmen, a Maxim and a 12½-pounder, under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Airey and Lieutenant-Colonel Holdsworth. They travelled forty-eight miles in twenty-four hours, reaching Rustenburg in time to aid Major Hanbury Tracy's men, who had been fighting for hours and had succeeded in temporarily driving off the Boers.

The enemy were not slow to perceive how the British generals were careering about large tracts of country with the most insignificant number of troops, and occasionally took advantage of their absence, though not nearly so frequently as they might have done had they not feared the extraordinary bravery in the face of overwhelming numbers and superior artillery of those left in charge of important posts.

When Colonel Hore was attacked on August 4 he had

500 men, one 7-pounder and one Maxim. General De la Rey, the Boer commandant, had about 2500 men, with four guns, three pompoms, and one Maxim. A report was circulated that Colonel Hore had surrendered, but in spite of De la Rey's invitation to do so, he held out until Lord Kitchener with a force of about 8000 men came and released him. The defence of Elands river has been described as one of the finest performances of the campaign. Lord Kitchener gave the Colonials the highest praise for it, and was astonished at the great amount of defensive burrowing work they had been able to do with the bayonet. Rumours to the effect that the British had surrendered here, that generals were killed there, and the troops were fleeing in all directions, were spread daily, and at times it was no easy matter to give no credence to the statements that were so emphatically asserted.

In going from Rustenburg to Potchefstroom there was nothing to indicate that the country was at war, and that the two opposing forces were chasing each other round every kopje in the neighbourhood through which we were travelling. The only things that suggested war were the pickets at the foot and summit of every pass, and at the entrance into every hamlet. As the British army now in South Africa is scattered over hundreds of miles, one meets friends in the most out-of-the-way places, guarding this bridge or that village. Friends from Australia and Canada are encamped with others from England and India; yet, in spite of our 250,000 men and more that have put shoulder to shoulder in this crisis, there are none too many. To those who left the high road, however, it was very apparent that the whole district was in a very unsettled state, and we were informed of it.

At three o'clock the next morning after our arrival in Potchefstroom, instructions were issued by the officer in command to all military men in the town to go at once to headquarters, as 300 Boers were marching on the place, and

were only five miles distant. When all the troops had been mustered, including the scratch police force, the total was only six officers and twenty-four men, and these did not include one regular soldier! This state of affairs produced a feeling of great alarm, especially among the Dutch who had laid down their arms, taken the oath of allegiance, and were in the employ of the British Government. They fully realised the gravity of their position if the town were retaken, and knew only too well how they would be treated by their former friends in such a case.

As time wore on, and the morning sun was getting up, all idea of the nearer approach of the Boers vanished for the time being, as they never attack during the day. The garrison, however, was before mid-day strengthened by the arrival of 700 men belonging to the Welsh and Scots Fusiliers and two guns belonging to the 79th Battery from Krugersdorp.

The original surrender of the town of Potchefstroom was very curious, Major Robertson had been sent with despatches, and came down the line on a trolley. When he arrived at the station he was stopped by the station-master, who questioned his proceeding, he being a British officer. The major at once said, "The country is now in the hands of the British, and the railway is so likewise. Your services on this line are no longer required." In Potchefstroom the magistrate heard of Major Robertson's presence, and sent an order to him to attend the Government offices. On hearing it the major expressed his surprise that the Dutch official did not come to see him, but put it down to ignorance. However, he went to the landdrost and told the same tale, which was fully credited, chiefly on account of the knowledge possessed that the British were just outside, and to the fact that on the previous evening, at a general meeting of the principal inhabitants, it was decided to surrender the town without

reservation. Nevertheless, the ancient capital of the Transvaal surrendered at the demand of one man.

Some towns in the Transvaal and Orange River Colony have gone through the experience of being taken and evacuated and occupied again as often as twelve or fourteen times, the operations varying considerably on each occasion according as the occupying and attacking forces are relatively weak and strong—determined to fight or give up the contest. To be one day under British rule, then a return to the Boer forms of government, and back again, is a very unpleasant process to both the English and Dutch residents, as can well be imagined. Some very interesting incidents have been related to me in this connection, and some very heart-rending ones. Families in Zeerust and Rustenburg have been particularly unfortunate.

CHAPTER XXII

PUT OVER THE BORDER

THE Rev. J. T. Darragh, B.D. of Trinity College, Dublin, has been rector of Johannesburg for the last thirteen years—that is to say, from the time when tents and tin shanties stood on sites which are now broad and important thoroughfares, with public buildings that might do credit to any town in Europe—structures that would surprise not a few persons both at home and abroad as to what can be accomplished in a decade by an energetic and enterprising people when a valuable source of wealth has been unexpectedly discovered. As a clergyman of the Church of England Mr. Darragh has always taken his full share in public affairs as far as these can be described as non-political. In all educational matters and charitable movements he has been well to the front.

In a place like Johannesburg, where there is a large and influential British community living in the midst of a people differing in character at almost all points, and under a system of government entirely opposed to that which a Britisher likes, friction was sure to occur from time to time, if, indeed, it is not constantly present. The principal resident English clergyman must of necessity occupy a conspicuous position in such an environment. Even in time of peace, to say nothing of a time of war, all that he says and does is kept under a strict surveillance. To maintain friendly relations with the local governing powers requires the exercise of unlimited patience and infinite tact. These virtues Mr.

Darragh manifested in a marked degree, but though he was able to hold his own during six months of the war he was, to his great mortification, put over the border six weeks before the entry into Johannesburg of the British troops under Lord Roberts. Most of the other clergy were thus treated at the beginning of hostilities, the Bishop of Pretoria not excepted.

Mr. Darragh attributes his better luck to the fact that during his whole ministrations in the Church, and especially at St. Mary's, Johannesburg, he kept aloof from politics, having a perfect abhorrence of the political parson. To abstain from participation in burning political questions in a place like Johannesburg required a great deal of self-restraint. Mr. Darragh, however, never appeared on a political platform and never preached political sermons during the whole period of the agitation that marked the course of the years preceding the war. But the very name of the Church of England was an offence to the party in power, and as to the prayers in the Prayer-book for the Queen they were a positive source of irritation. The Church of England was, in short, thoroughly disliked by the Boer Government, and in its ministry it was more hampered than any other religious body. Every other religious organisation, including that of the Roman Catholics and the Jews, could get church sites, but the Church of England could not. The Dutch Reformed Church in particular enjoyed valuable grants of land, one out of several being alone worth £100,000, an offer of £70,000 for only a part of this land being refused at a public auction. With the progress of the war, and especially in the course of the months of April and May, the anti-British feeling intensified, till ultimately only fifty-six British subjects remained in Johannesburg out of a total of forty thousand, which was the extent of the British population prior to the exodus which resulted from the strained

relations between the Governments in London and in Pretoria.

Six weeks before the entry of the British troops Mr. Darragh was, as I have said, put over the border, the cause of this being ascribed to his action respecting Field-cornet Lombard's behaviour to coloured British subjects. This official's name will be remembered in connection with the abortive inquiry into his conduct towards Cape coloured people in Johannesburg previous to the war. These people were exceptionally loyal British subjects, and, in consequence, were very obnoxious to the Krugerite officials, who forced them to submit to all sorts of petty persecutions. Nearly all their men and most of the women had been put over the border before the war began. A certain number of the women, however, not being able for domestic reasons to travel at that time, were left behind. Field-cornet Lombard finding these women at his mercy began to commandeered them for unpaid service in Dutch families, and to actually beat with his own hands those who refused to go. As was right and natural, the poor women appealed to the English clergyman for protection. He took the matter up and represented the circumstances to the higher officials in such a manner that they had a stop put to the field-cornet's proceedings, at least as far as British subjects were concerned. But revenge is sweet to the heart of the Boer, and if it is not always swift it is pretty sure to follow. The field-cornet got the ear of a few influential Dutch residents and between them drew up a petition to the Government, with the result that Mr. Darragh was pronounced an "undesirable person," and was put over the border on Easter Tuesday. Possibly, too, the efforts he made to befriend the prisoners of war in Pretoria tended to expedite his expulsion.

Mr. Darragh is an Irishman, and what he says he means. He said on leaving: "I shall come back with the troops

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or be here to receive them on the Queen's birthday." Cape Town is a long way from Johannesburg if the route to be taken must be by Delagoa Bay. But a few thousand miles are not accounted much in Africa. The first thing to be done was to visit the British consul in Lorenzo Marques, of whose diplomatic merits I have already made mention, and get him to find a British ship to convey our refugee to Cape Town. British ships of every size and description have been familiar sights around the coast of Africa in recent times, and an "ironside" was soon found to accommodate Mr. Darragh. The High Commissioner and the general of the lines of communications were equally ready to further the rector's wishes with all promptness and courtesy. Permission was granted him to join the headquarters staff as acting chaplain, and away he started for Bloemfontein, where he was delayed for four days waiting the first train to Kroonstad. From that place he made his way by a construction train to Roodeval, thence by ox waggon and mule convoy to Klip river, where our hero caught up Lord Roberts, one day out of Johannesburg.

On that memorable 31st of May, when Lord Roberts entered Johannesburg with his triumphant army, crowds who had been longing for that happy event were on the verandahs and other points of vantage. Suddenly there was a great noise and much cheering, and everybody, of course, thought the appearance of the Commander-in-chief had evoked these demonstrations. But in a few minutes a solitary figure on horseback appeared. It was Mr. Darragh. He had been as good as his word. He was in Johannesburg to receive the troops, though the date unfortunately was not the Queen's birthday, but a week later. He had come by a shorter route than the army, and was in Government Square two hours before Lord Roberts and his staff. The rector's unexpected return astonished friends and foes, and the enthusiastic

welcome he received fully counterbalanced both the indignity of his dismissal and the hardships he had undergone during his journey of two thousand five hundred miles. But the greatest joy of all to Mr. Darragh was that on Whit Sunday he was able to officiate in his own church to the remnant of his people.

With the occupation of Johannesburg by the British, Field-cornet Lombard found the position of affairs changed, and it was not long before he himself was put over the border.

CHAPTER XXIII

FORCED MARCHING

FOR a civilian to give a description of a great historical march is comparatively an easy task, but to experience it as a soldier is quite another matter.

I will, however, do my best to help friends at home who know less about it than I do, to realise what forced marching really is, together with the inevitable hardships to be endured both by the well and strong, and by those whose health has given out before the desired object has been obtained.

The officers and men of the regular army are more or less accustomed to this form of military exercise, as it is an important part of their training both in India and on home stations, and consequently is far less trying to them than it is to their militia battalions, and to those patriotic volunteer corps that have been got together from all parts of the empire to stand shoulder to shoulder with Tommy Atkins during this national crisis.

All those who take part with an army on active service must fare alike, whether they are "duke's son" or "cook's son," and especially is this the case on the march.

Forced and long-distance marching has been a great feature in this war, attributable to the hundreds of miles that separate Cape Town, Durban, East London, and Port Elizabeth from Pretoria, to say nothing of the nature of the country and the mode of warfare of the enemy, which have occasioned long *détours* from the straight line.

An ordinary day on the march has to begin at 3 A.M., as the order to start usually was at five. The cooks have to be up to prepare the milk and beef tea for the sick, the men of the Royal Army Medical Corps have to attend to them generally, and place them all in the ambulances; the tents have all to be struck, and waggons loaded before they can think of their own coffee and biscuit, supposing there are any.

On the march the R.A.M.C. have a very hard time, for when the brigade halts to rest for half an hour, they have to exert themselves to the utmost to attend to the sick during the interval, which is their only chance of giving them nourishment and making them as comfortable as circumstances will allow. Again, when the column halts for the night the same exertions have to be made; a suitable place found to pitch their tents and the sick moved into them as rapidly as possible, to relieve their sufferings and aching frames aggravated by the fatigues of the day's march.

This process repeating itself every day, with an ever increasing number of patients; difficulties to be overcome, with fewer medical officers and their orderlies, for they too fall ill; fewer and fewer medical comforts and a steadily diminishing ambulance accommodation; marching every day for weeks and months; sleeping out in the open, often in bad weather—and in South Africa there is an immense difference at all times in the year in the temperature of the day as compared with the night: a drop of forty or fifty degrees is not at all an extraordinary variation—this alone is responsible for much sickness amongst the troops, which is augmented by great fatigue, short rations, sameness of diet, and bad water, resulting altogether in an overwhelming number of cases of dysentery and enteric fever, straining beyond endurance the resources of the medical staff.

I have on various occasions made mention of the good work done by the R.A.M.C. and the civil officers assisting them,

and, in spite of all the aspersions that have been made, they have worked like Trojans, and have been as brave as lions.

To say that the Army Medical Department is a good working machine in war time and has during this period of strain proved itself without blame would be absurd. In many important essentials the system could be vastly amended, *i.e.*, raise the age of entry, so as to have men qualified and of larger experience; but throughout the campaign, all things considered, it has done well; it is certainly not behind in the output of work of any other non-combatant branch of the service.

The Royal Commission that has been sent out from England to investigate the charges brought against the corps in their treatment of the sick and wounded and the provision made for their comfort has doubtless been thorough and impartial, though it could scarcely be unless cognisance was taken of the numerous other interests involved.

This commission has in the opinion of some only "white-washed" the R.A.M.C. It certainly has not brought out as prominently as they deserve their heroic self-sacrifice, both on the march and in hospital, in the amelioration of the unavoidable suffering which the war has unhappily occasioned, and the measure of success that has attended their efforts in combating the almost insurmountable difficulties that beset them in the discharge of their very onerous duties. There are, of course, instances that can be brought forward the reverse of this; but much is always heard of shortcomings and a corresponding silence as to the good work done.

A thorough investigation should be instituted into the conduct of all those, of whatever rank and position in the army, whenever there is a grave doubt in the public mind that a due regard of the welfare, life, and limb of the sons of the nation, who so readily come forward to fight her battles

and uphold her honour and prestige, has not been exercised. It is not only right towards the people who send their sons, but is eminently satisfactory to all concerned.

If a misapprehension has grown up, it gives the opportunity to clear it; if this cannot be done, then the nation knows on whom *not* to rely.

Mr. St. John Brodrick gave proof of his determination to act in this manner almost immediately after his accession to office as Secretary of State for War.

To give a description of a great march from a divisional or brigade aspect must be left to more competent hands than mine. Even then, until the official returns are sent in and compiled, it is an almost impossible task, on account of the difficulty of getting accurate data as to the varying strength of the forces composing at different periods the advancing column.

In like manner, a brief account at least should be given of the fights and obstructions encountered, with their casualties, to make a description of forced marching come up to the ideal of a military critic.

My poor efforts are not intended to satisfy such a class of readers. I only wish to interest those who, like myself, desire to know something of our soldiers, and how they have fared in this distant land, without being too technical in matters that must be left to military experts.

We can only judge by results. When they are good we are pleased; when they are not satisfactory we prefer waiting for an impartial inquiry before condemning those whom we fully believe have done their best in their respective commands and positions of confidence in which they have been placed by those charged to act on behalf of the nation.

It is a well-known fact that an ordinary individual *can* know but little of the dispositions of the troops in any given battle; and as for the doings of other regiments but the

particular one to which he is attached, he has absolutely no knowledge.

As an instance of this I will repeat the story told by the late Lord Albemarle of what he saw of the Battle of Waterloo, as he told it to my late husband's first wife, when they were all together one season at Homburg.

The late earl was a courtly gentleman of the old school, a type that has nearly died out in this hurrying age. He began: "So, my dear Lady Briggs, you want to hear about the Battle of Waterloo. All that I know of what took place is that I was ordered with my regiment to a certain sand pit, and to stay there until we were wanted. We stopped in it all day. We heard all the sounds of battle going on around us, but saw nothing but a few stray bullets. Late in the afternoon we were ordered up, went through one or two marching evolutions, and then we were told we had won a great battle. Now, this is all *I saw* of the Battle of Waterloo, and it is about as much as many others saw who give wonderful descriptions of the whole day's work."

Men on the march can each and all say more than that, because they all must tramp, tramp along; and the conditions of marching prevailing in South Africa cannot be imagined by those who have never crossed the silver streak and penetrated into the African continent.

The C.I.V.s are dear to the heart of Londoners, and how they spent Easter Sunday in the year of grace 1900 out on the veld in the Orange River Colony may be pleasant reading for those who have not heard from some dear one giving his own private account.

We were told in church one Sunday by the chaplain that khaki has a demoralising influence in this particular, and he gave a large congregation of "absent-minded beggars" to understand that letters in England, or to whatever part of

the empire they severally belonged, were even more appreciated than mails that arrive from home.

Well, on Easter Sunday these C.I.V.s were spending their time reading their letters and papers, three mails having come in all together. The weather did all that was possible to destroy the pleasure which is inseparable from such an event. All day the rain came down in torrents, fairly washing them out of their tents and making their clothes and papers wringing wet, and everything thoroughly uncomfortable. In the midst of it they were told to prepare for marching on the morrow, and at two o'clock they started from Springfontein on what is now regarded as an historical march.

The first part was to Bloemfontein, where they were equipped with their tents, and had a good number of waggons. Pitching tents at night after a march of fifteen to twenty miles is a duty to which our civilian soldiers greatly objected, they being dead-beat by the fatigues of the day. Then again, striking camp in early morning and rolling up and packing away the tents in the waggons was an extra labour that they gladly dispensed with later on when they left their tents and heavy baggage at a place called Glen.

The troops marched continuously to Bloemfontein, and arrived there in seven days, a distance of eighty-eight miles. Roads in South Africa have certain points of difference that could not be imagined by those who are accustomed to travel in the country by road in England.

To give an idea, whole companies were told off to drag waggons up the steep banks of the drifts, which are often thirty to fifty feet deep and at an angle of thirty to forty-five degrees at frequent intervals right across the road. To see these awful holes causes a feeling of grave uneasiness as to whether the opposite bank *can* be reached without an accident.

Our City Imperial Volunteers were at this time disposed to regard with contempt bully-beef and ration biscuits, and draw very freely upon their private stock of potted meats and other good things; but the day was not far distant when they could say, in the words of the nursery ditty, "Oh! how I wish I had the bread that once I threw away." Quarter rations, or a biscuit a day on a long day's march, soon produced a longing for the "flesh-pots of Egypt." Were it possible, some very valuable information could be obtained from statistics as to the men's weight before starting on a long forced march in a country like this, and the difference in it at the end of it.

It is indisputably necessary that the greatest care in weeding out the ailing should be exercised before starting, as it is merely a question of the survival of the fittest.

I could cite several instances of both officers and men that lost in weight from three to five stones in the Winburg march, that is to say, in four or five weeks. Their tunics, that would barely meet when they left, hung about them like left-off clothes belonging to men double their size.

It is a fact that requires no observation of mine to show that hardships which can produce such results are a great strain on a man's constitution, and it is not surprising that when the advancing column arrives it has been considerably thinned, and there must be a good deal of work left about for the good Samaritan to perform.

This study might be extended *ad infinitum* by including the brute force that have taken part in the forced marching during this campaign.

Heart-rending tales might be related as to the sufferings of our noblest animal, the horse, of which some of the most beautiful have been landed in South Africa since October 1899; of the invaluable mules that have come across the sea in thousands, and of the patient ass, to say nothing of the

hundreds of oxen that do so much of the overland transport for the field force. To follow the road taken by an advancing column and see the poor brutes strewn dead on all sides is anything but a pleasing sight, and cannot fail to inspire a feeling of sympathy, and enable the observer to appreciate at their true value all the horrors of war as experienced by the unfortunate animals.

Up to the present over 200,000 horses and 50,000 mules and oxen have been employed in this campaign—a serious charge to those concerned, especially in a country where, at certain seasons animal disease, both equine and bovine, is so rife; and this is felt to be so by commanders of cavalry and by the veterinary staff.

General French's brilliant and effective *coups de guerre* have necessarily been costly to the nation; but that they have more than repaid the expenditure is readily admitted, and its corollary of human and animal suffering must be accepted, though with the reservation that perhaps in a small degree some of it might have been preventible by a reduction in the weights carried by the British soldier and the troop horse. Were the accoutrements brought more within proportional limits to capacity a marvellous economy might conceivably have been effected.

When our civilian soldiers, the C. I. V.s, arrived at Bloemfontein they had the gratification of listening to a complimentary speech from Lord Roberts, who was accompanied by Lady and Miss Roberts, when he inspected the regiment.

At Bloemfontein the forces were reconstructed, and the C. I. V.s were attached to the 21st Brigade, commanded by General Bruce Hamilton, which at this time comprised, amongst other troops, the Cameron Highlanders, the Royal Sussex and Derby regiments, and the C. I. V.s. There was a force of artillery and mounted infantry, but I have not been able to ascertain their names and strength.

The C.I.V. Field Battery consisted of four guns of the Vickers-Maxim quick-firing type, manned by men from the Hon. Artillery Company. The battery proved itself very effective on many occasions, the long range and rapidity of fire being a great factor of success. These guns, as manned by our citizen soldiers, proved themselves capable of a rate of fire of at least six aimed rounds per minute, under active service conditions, up to a range of 6000 yards. This extraordinary rapidity was obtained by the fact that there was no appreciable recoil, the shock of discharge being taken up by hydraulic buffers on the carriage, and to the fact that the detachment serving the gun carried out their duties in a kneeling position, with the gun layer sitting on the trail, making the target exposed quite fifty per cent. less than with the service type of gun.

After their arrival in South Africa, the first engagement in which they came into action was under Colonel Brookfield, with whose force they formed an escort to a convoy of provisions for General Paget, who was locked up in Lindley.

The first action in which the battery was engaged was at Liebensberg Drift, where they were opposed by De Wet's column. On this occasion De Wet sent a message through the ambulance to the effect that he would do everything in his power to prevent the entry of the convoy into Lindley. However, the next morning at daybreak the battery came into touch with the enemy, and in the space of one hour and a quarter fired 240 rounds of ammunition. This was one of the occasions on which the rapidity of fire showed itself to its fullest advantage, as the battery had to come into action under very heavy rifle fire.

The next day the battery was opposed by three of De Wet's long-range Krupp guns, but having in view the safety of the convoy, it was deemed advisable to avoid an artillery duel. Two guns were sent with the advance guard, the remaining

two being ordered to hold the drift at all costs. This they did with the aid of one Maxim gun, holding a force of 4000 Boers in check for the space of three or four hours.

On the following day these two latter guns relieved the 38th Royal Field Artillery on the fortifications at Lindley, where they did some extremely pretty shooting at ranges over 5000 yards.

Two days later the whole of the forces at Lindley moved out to act in conjunction with Generals Clements and Hunter in the combined movement which ended in the surrender of Prinsloo. During this movement two guns of the battery took part in the action at Barking Kop, the other two being engaged simultaneously at Pleiscrifontein. In the former engagement, as the reader will doubtless remember, the 38th Battery got into very serious difficulties, and, had it not been for the opportune intervention of the Australian Mounted Infantry, and the two guns of the C.I.V. battery, things might have been a great deal worse than they were.

The next serious engagement in which the battery took part was the storming of Bethlehem, under Generals Paget and Clements. It was after this fight that General Paget complimented the artillery of his force, remarking that it was in a great measure due to the extreme accuracy and rapidity of their fire that the casualties in his brigade were so light.

The hottest fight in which the battery was engaged was the attack on De Wet's rear guard at Bulfontein. This engagement was entirely an artillery duel, and the first point that the battery had as an objective was the extrication of Roberts' Horse. In attaining this they came under a very heavy fire from three long-range Krupp guns, which were in position on a hill some 3000 yards away, the C.I.V. battery being in the plain absolutely without cover. The splendid training which the battery had undergone in their previous engagements prepared them for this very trying

mands, but one is sufficient to serve my present purpose. The performances of our infantry are admired by the whole world, and could not have been excelled by any Great Power in Europe.

In regard to this great historical march, which in the opinion of military experts is considered equal to that of Kandahar, much comment is made as to the little resistance made by the Boers at Winburg, it being a mass of fortifications, and 2000 men could have held it against an army corps.

At Zand river the enemy made a stand. The column marched out of camp at the early hour of 3 A.M., and crossed the river just as it was getting light. They had to wade through the water, which came up to their knees, and on the other side were subjected to a severe pom-pom and big-gun fire, but luckily, then, none were hit. This form of attention, however, followed the force until they got into the open veld. Similar civilities to Brother Boer produced the usual effect when he can be coaxed out into the open, viz., flying helter-skelter like sheep before steady, fair and square rifle fire or a bayonet charge.

The difficulties of transport and the real hardships of forced marching were now beginning to be felt.

The troops had frequently nothing but two biscuits a day, often not that; just a handful of flour, then, later, only mealie meal, and nothing else, fresh meat excepted; but in spite of all, the men kept up their spirits, pushed on with their march, and thought of home and England, and longed most of all for one real good pipe! Presently biscuits and flour came to an end, which put a very serious look on affairs, for fresh meat without bread soon nauseates; but the want of *good* water was the greatest trial of all. Many of the men too were getting very footsore. Those who had started from Springfontein had marched 500 miles, but they stuck to it

like heroes. Marching an hour with a halt of ten minutes soon brings the goal in ever nearer view, but the men were getting very thin and fagged.

Everybody has heard of the battle of Doorn Kop, and how the troops were nearly caught in the same trap that did for Dr. Jameson at the time of the raid. Everybody has also heard of the gallant charge made by the Gordon Highlanders on this occasion ; how the Camerons also distinguished themselves on that day, which was the last before the entry into Johannesburg, the chief and most important place in South Africa, and, as such, it is my intention, in future chapters, to say something about its government under martial law.

One of the most satisfactory and important results of this war is the proof given that citizen soldiers can take their place with regular troops, and, whilst together, are good comrades, can fight and march, and are in all respects amenable to discipline.

The C.I.V.s have found war in South Africa a novel experience, and were hardly prepared for such a rough time ; but it is eminently satisfactory to know they do not regret volunteering, and would do so again should their services be required. There is no end to the numbers that would follow the flag. They would come in myriads.

Lord Albemarle, at a dinner given in St. Andrew's Hall, Norwich, to old soldiers and sailors of Norfolk, on January 15, 1901, alluding to his experiences with the C.I.V.s, said it had been a glory and pleasure to the men of the volunteer forces to be allowed to serve beside the regular forces of the Crown, and he gave the regular soldier hearty thanks for the high example he had set them to follow.

CHAPTER XXIV

ENTRY OF TROOPS INTO JOHANNESBURG

It may be a little presumptuous of me to venture on another description of the British occupation of this town, when it has already been done in a manner I could not imitate, and to equal which is quite impossible. Nevertheless, my efforts may reach a few readers that have missed the more elaborate accounts, and a peep from within may not be altogether uninteresting to the general public. The real object I have in view, however, is to bring before kind friends at home the work done by certain officers who have been left behind to carry on the administrative duties required under a *régime* of martial law, in this Aladdin's city—the keynote of the whole situation in South Africa.

In 1897, the last jubilee of our late gracious Queen, I brought before the public my late husband's work on "Naval Administration." Then I prayed of my readers to be "to its merits very kind, and to its faults a little blind." On that occasion I did not appeal to naval critics and the great British public, who are interested in our first line of defence, in vain. They were indulgent to me beyond the power of expression, and to-day I appeal for an extension of their consideration, which must also include the military section, as the subject in hand is the control of the Administrative Departments of an important town by army officers.

The task I have taken on myself may be considered too large for a woman to handle, as the interests involved are

very great, divided, roughly, into two classes—general politics and commercial affairs. When I wrote “Naval Administration” I had the inestimable advantage of the experience of my late husband, who was well versed in Admiralty matters; now I can no longer benefit by his tact and knowledge, therefore the faults will be graver and the results less satisfactory.

The local government of this town under President Kruger’s rule has been the cause of much trouble, and upon its future management much will depend.

Before an idea can be conveyed as to its internal state in time of war, its occupation by the invading army and the feeling anterior must be slightly entered upon.

I am told on the most reliable authority that President Kruger and *some* members of his council had resolved from the first not to defend Johannesburg, and on no account was it or Pretoria to be bombarded. This statement is quite opposed to the reiterated sentiments expressed in the columns of the defunct *Rand Post*, an organ of public opinion heavily subsidised by the governing powers.

It is a fact that a certain section of the Dutch burghers wished no harm to come to the mines nor to these two important towns, with their beautiful new Government buildings, as they were convinced in their own minds that in the end the British would come to terms, and leave them with their independence absolutely free.

This information was zealously kept from the public; and during the months before the arrival of the British troops the inhabitants, both British and Boer, were sorely tried by uncertainty and anxiety. The knowledge that holes had been bored ready for the dynamite to blow up the “Robinson Mines” kept those in the town in daily terror of the frightful shock that must ensue from such an explosion, which was greatly intensified after their experience of the destruction

caused by the explosion of Begbie and Co.'s iron foundry, works that had been commandeered by the late Government for the manufacture of high explosives. But for this deplorable *accident*, which has left its mark on every house and building in "the city and suburban township," there would have been a far larger number of British subjects in Johannesburg to welcome the troops on their entry after its formal surrender to Lord Roberts; for, in addition to the disastrous effects to property, the three to four hundred remaining English people were put forcibly over the border, as the cause of the explosion was attributed to them—done purposely to prevent the manufacture of more shells and ammunition to carry on the war against their people.

When Lord Roberts and staff entered this town on May 31, there were not more than fifty-six men's passes out for British subjects, and very few had been able to hide themselves and so remain without one.

In peace times the number of British subjects in Johannesburg is between 40,000 and 50,000.

The few that remained were getting very depressed, longed for the day of their release, and thought Lord Roberts and his army were a very long time coming. Little did they imagine what strenuous efforts were being made by the head-quarter staff and every soldier on the march to make the advance as rapid as possible, and so relieve the town from its trying position.

The first thing to cheer them was the distant sound of big cannon on the Monday previous. On the Tuesday hope gave place to sight, which was hailed with joy. It was but a straw to show which way the wind was blowing—a poor wounded soldier being taken by a kind-hearted old Dutchman to the Johannesburg Hospital. Later a huge dust-cloud was seen encircling the south side of the town, and through it could be discerned an advancing army from ten to fifteen miles off

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—an impressive and exciting sight at all times, but to those who viewed it under the foregoing circumstances, realising what it meant to them, none but those who witnessed it could give the faintest idea.

With every boom of the big guns, and with every whizzing sound of the pom-pom, the hearts of the inhabitants beat faster, making each individual feel thoroughly excited, though they had by long discipline learnt to maintain a calm demeanour as to their feelings in the presence of their Dutch fellow citizens.

With the exception of a few rifle-shots exchanged between some Australian troops and stray Boers on the Doornfontein kopjes near the waterworks and the fort, there was no fighting or firing in Johannesburg itself, though there had been severe battles a few miles around.

On Wednesday, the 30th, a party was sent from Lord Roberts to demand the surrender of the town. This party consisted of Major Davies (Grenadier Guards), Mr. Douglas Forster, Mr. Emerys Evans, the flag of truce being carried by trooper Curtin, of Remington's Scouts.

May 30, 1900, is a date that will ever be remembered in the annals of Johannesburg. Those in the town will never forget it. The people awoke that morning to find Lord Roberts and 20,000 men encamped around the town. Anything more unexpected by friends and foes could hardly be imagined, and produced feelings of sad confusion in the heads of the latter, which can best be described as "appalling."

The *Standard and Diggers' News* of that morning was full of Boer victories and grandiloquent descriptions of the way in which Lord Roberts' march had been checked at all points. Imagine therefore the surprise of the people to see the town invested by the forces that they supposed were miles away.

Everybody had been anxiously fearing the threatened explosion of the blowing up of the mines and houses filled with dynamite which was to greet Lord Roberts' approach. His rapid march had upset their plans, and now it was too late. The Boers were this time thoroughly out-generalled, and the well-disposed were glad of it; others were galled to the quick by the lying reports which had misled them, and might be seen flying wildly about, utterly bewildered. Only one man seemed to have kept his head and grasped the true state of the situation; it was Dr. Krause, the commandant of the town, who, seeing the inevitable, prepared to bow with what grace he could to the logic of hard facts. He could see it was impossible to defend the town against such a force, and decided to surrender. Strategic consideration alone would have dictated such a course; for it could not have been done with less than 15,000 to 20,000 men, and that would practically have finished the war, as there would then have been no men to carry it on elsewhere; anyhow, Johannesburg must have ultimately surrendered, forced to it by starvation—the course of submission contemplated by Lord Roberts in case of opposition. Dr. Krause from the first adopted the proper plan, and received Major Davies and his party with courtesy, and when summoned to the presence of the Commander-in-chief, begged of him to delay his entry into the town till the next day, so as to prevent useless bloodshed, which would have been inevitable if the entry had taken place on the Wednesday; as certainly there would have been street-to-street fighting and sniping from the houses.

Lord Roberts received the proposal with approval, and consented to wait; thus securing a much-needed day's rest for his troops after their phenomenal march, though many deem the course he pursued as utterly wrong, as it gave the enemy time to clear out of the place, and thus carry on a

warfare that would otherwise have collapsed at an earlier date through want of men to carry it on.

As a matter of fact Dr. Krause issued a proclamation ordering all armed burghers to leave the town and regain their commandoes. Altogether about 4000 withdrew from Johannesburg, vowing all sorts of vengeance on the "rooineks" and those who had taken the oath of neutrality—a difficulty that, at this moment, greatly agitates the minds of those who rule.

On that Wednesday night, Botha the commander-in-chief of the Boer army, passed through the town with a following of not more than 300 men; this small number being attributable to his publicly expressed determination to withdraw his personal influence from the burghers if the mines were destroyed. In the early hours of the morning of the 31st Botha and his men went through the Bezeidenhout Valley, not three miles away from where Lord Roberts had a large force encamped.

The mines were once more threatened; Judge Kock got a band of desperadoes together and made preparations for blowing up the "Robinson" mine, one of the largest and richest on the Rand, and close to the town.

Dr. Krause was once more equal to the occasion, and with commendable promptitude had this fiery "Justice" put under arrest and sent him under escort to Pretoria. During this day of grace an immense amount of looting was done, both from shops and Government provision stores. The precautions that were taken by owners to protect their stock from Boer depredations may be gathered from the fact that all the most valuable stuff was hidden away under floors, and for greater security tons of mine *débris* or tailings was put on the top, and every place of business was barricaded to its utmost capacity; but no barricades could suffice to preserve the properties of

British merchants against Boer looting during this night.

The morning of May 31 broke fine and clear, bright sunshine smiled approval on the surrender of the town, and not a cloud was seen on the skies to cast a shade on the human beings that thronged the streets of the principal town of the Transvaal.

The rumour got abroad that Lord Roberts and his army would arrive about ten o'clock. In spite of the fact that thousands had been put over the border during the preceding three months, and thousands had left the country earlier in the year, crowds, in gay holiday attire that is so remarkable in our colonial possessions, began to assemble as early as nine o'clock in the Government Square, on verandahs and other points of vantage, from whence they could catch the first glimpse of the conquering hero and his brilliant staff.

It was a long wait until two o'clock, the actual hour when Lord Roberts appeared; but the crowd remained very good humoured and congratulated each other on coming events, and upon others that had been so marvellously averted.

At two o'clock there was a cheering, and all exclaimed, "He is coming"; but to their surprise it was not the great general, but their beloved parish priest, the Rev. J. J. Darragh, that suddenly put in his appearance. He had been put over the border with the last batch of Englishmen, as stated in the preceding chapter. His return at this moment gave the people an excellent opportunity for relieving their feelings and at the same time of giving him a welcome that he could never have imagined, popular though he knows himself to be.

The handful of British men, and the larger number of British women, who had risked the stay in the town during those terrible eight months held up their heads once more, and noticed with some amusement, mingled with a good deal of

scorn, the smart *volte face* of the foreign population, who were all for the Boers yesterday, and were ready to cheer Lord Roberts and the British army to the echo to-day.

It was funny to observe how the number of British subjects went up by leaps and bounds. Crowds, who had been Russian subjects, German subjects, Portuguese, or what not up to that day suddenly remembered they had once upon a time sojourned in the salubrious streets of Shoreditch or White-chapel and were as British as the best.

The waiting-woman of this room at Heath's Hotel, where I am writing these lines, is an example: for a time she hid herself, then she took service under a false name, but the joy her employers experienced at the reports of British reverses and full retreats was more than her heart could stand; she was found out, her clothes were taken to the railway station, when she suddenly remembered her mother had been born in Cadiz, and she determined to claim her maiden name and became a Spanish subject. She desired above all things to remain in Johannesburg to be there when her husband arrived, who was fighting with the "Duke of Edinburgh's Own," and had been for twelve years instructor to various volunteer corps in places like the Paarl and Wellington. He came out to South Africa with the Wiltshire regiment and fought in the Zulu war of 1879.

Mixed with the rejoicing multitude various signs of danger were not wanting. Boers, sullen, truculent, and menacing caused a feeling of great anxiety to those who could see below the surface.

The hoisting of a conquerer's flag must always be a great event in the history of nations, and one that cannot fail to produce conflicting feelings in varying degrees in the breasts of the spectators.

On this occasion one quite dramatic incident lighted up the hours of waiting. The Transvaal flag had been hauled down

from the flagstaff in front of the Government buildings. When Dr. Krause went out to meet Lord Roberts, a certain commandant, Van Aswegen, and one Gannon, a member of the Irish Brigade, with a number of young Boers armed to the teeth, came into the square and ran up the Transvaal flag again, and swore to defend it until death. Attorney J. J. Raaff began a fiery speech, but the aged Landdrost, Captain von Brandis, put an end to this dangerous performance; the young firebrands and their commandant withdrew to rejoin their commandoes outside the town, Gannon and Raaff remained and, some time after the British occupation, were put over the border.

The Government buildings, in the centre of Government Square, which was the chief scene of this historic day's proceedings, form an irregular square of a two-storeyed nondescript unimpressive style of architecture, and inside is a perfect rabbit warren of courts and offices, into which revenue to the amount of between two and three millions sterling used to be paid in annually to swell the coffers of the Kruger oligarchy (certainly little enough went towards sanitation and street paving) and to pay for the huge armaments, which have indeed "staggered humanity," to adopt Leo Weinthal's swelling Hebraic translation of Mr. Kruger's unpretentious Dutch phrase for "astounding the world."

After five weary hours of waiting to see the raising of the Union Jack of Old England, at last the cry went up "Here they come," and Lord Roberts, accompanied by Lord Kitchener and a brilliant staff, rode into the square. They were cheered on all sides, and when the Commander-in-chief dismounted he was presented with a handsome silk flag with a tiny harp worked in the corner, by Mrs. Murray, wife of Dr. Murray, in the name of the British residents. Lord Roberts graciously accepted the gift and promised that it should presently float

from the flagstaff, but the one to be actually raised first was the one worked by Lady Roberts herself—the same that had done duty at other points of conquest on the march through the Grange River Colony.

Incidents with flags were not wanting in connection with the entry of the troops. It would hardly be in strict accordance with the truth to say that this flag was the *first* Union Jack to float in Johannesburg after its occupation. Mr. Murray Guthrie, M.P., appropriated that honour to himself, when he got into the tower of the fire station and “jumped” the Transvaal flag that was there and unfurled the Union Jack in its stead.

All eyes were strained to get a good look at Lord Roberts as he entered the Government buildings to complete the preliminaries of the surrender of Johannesburg with the late Government officials. He was looking in excellent health, in spite of the hardships of the march and of the whole weight of the responsibilities of the campaign. He seemed not more than fifty years of age. The youthful effect depended mainly on his eyes, which appeared to radiate a sapphire light. Seeing them, one wondered what they were like thirty years ago. They still possess an extraordinary fascination for the people which, combined with his promptitude, insight, and benevolence has rendered him the most popular hero of the century. After signing the necessary documents, Lord Roberts rejoined his staff at the foot of the flagstaff, and amid breathless silence the Transvaal flag was lowered.

As the Union Jack was run to the masthead a deafening cheer saluted this symbol of freedom, the National Anthem was played by the band, and thousands of voices filled with emotion joined in the singing of the words. All heads were uncovered; and when Lord Roberts called for three cheers for the Queen they were given with a will and a sincerity only to be experienced by those who have been for

months deprived of the liberty of speaking of their beloved Sovereign.

Then commenced the march past of the troops, which was not over till after dark, and many had to bivouack in the main streets of the suburbs for the night—the body of men being so immense that they could not all pass through the town before nightfall. The men came along with a swing, and every face looked bright and cheery and ready for anything, exchanging cheers and *badinage* with the crowds. But their torn and stained uniforms told their own tale, and under the circumstances they were more honourable than the spick and span regimentals of regulation parade; the horses, too, looked in poor condition, which was only natural after their hard work and privations.

From the first the troops behaved well, and gained the hearts of many an old Boer man and woman. They say the “khakis” are “lekkere kerels” (good fellows); the march past and their subsequent conduct produced an excellent effect. Bread was the luxury they chiefly craved on arrival, though the townspeople thrust all sorts of good things into their hands as they passed, perhaps with more kindness of heart than discretion, which resulted in a few cases of tip-siness, and brought about the order “No liquor for the troops.”

A train-load of provisions for the troops arrived on the night of the occupation and was greatly needed, as some of the men had had only a couple of biscuits during the preceding twenty-four hours.

On June 1 the price of bread was 1s. 6d. a loaf, about 1s. a pound or more; but our soldiers readily paid any price for it, and for fresh vegetables likewise.

After weeks on a forced march through a country that produces nothing beyond the simple food required by a scattered population of poor farmers, finishing up with a

long and trying day's work, even a great general and his staff, however brilliant they may be, feel well-disposed towards a good lunch, on a clean tablecloth, in a first-class hotel; and Lord Roberts, Lord Kitchener, the Duke of Norfolk, the Duke of Westminster, the Duke of Marlborough, and all the other military grand seigneurs that composed the headquarter staff were in their inclination no exceptions to these natural instincts.

A good lunch for sixteen had been ordered for Lord Roberts and his staff in a private room half an hour before he entered Heath's Hotel, which, in spite of many difficulties, such as getting something to cook, somebody to cook, and somebody to serve, a fairly good meal was got together for them, thanks to the foresight and energy of Mr. Heath, as well as for a crowd of lesser shining lights that clamoured for food in the dining-room.

It is needless to say when these famished officers saw the good viands spread out before them, and beheld the choice wines that had been unearthed from some unknown hidden depths, rendered more secure by reason of the tons of rubbish that had been secreting it, they made small work of helping themselves (with the proprietor's sanction) and going to fetch whatever they fancied from the serving-room.

Owing to there being no staff to work the hotel, all the servants having been put over the border, Lord Roberts was the only one to receive any personal attention, and that was given him by Mrs. Heath herself, which she regards as the greatest honour and privilege of her life.

In the early morning the desks, &c., belonging to the mine police, who had been in possession of the lower part of the building for months, were turned out; and when the officers came at the usual hour for business, they found their things outside, and the tables laid out in the beautiful dining-room, as if ready for a great banquet.

Up to the month of August 1900, 360 officers have slept in this hotel, so the proprietor can claim to have done something to change the dull monotony of hard fighting and life on the veld of our dear absent-minded beggars.

Many curious incidents occurred during the days before and after the occupation. I will recount one or two in regard to Press correspondents. Mr. Buxton, of the *South African Review*, an old resident of Johannesburg, came into the town with Mr. Battersby, of the *Morning Post*, the day before the troops, and, as they stood at the door of the hotel talking to some of the officers of the mining police, the chief detective, Menton, arrested the correspondents, and, but for Mr. Brakhan, a well-known gentleman, with whom they were actually conversing at the time, their position would have been a trifle uncomfortable, as he then and there stood sponsor for them as prisoners on parole.

Mr. Hutton, correspondent for the *Times*, to escape a similar fate, entered the town dressed up as a Malay driver, but even in the garb he was recognised, though, luckily for him, by the owner of friendly eyes, who hustled him with all speed into Mrs. Heath's private sitting-room, entreating him to remain quiet until Lord Roberts arrived.

At lunch, an American correspondent who, like the rest from the veld, came in very hungry, and finding the omelettes very good, asked for a small addition, and in a twinkling for a third; but when he came for the fourth Mrs. Heath really had to refuse, as she wished to keep the last bit for Mr. Murray Guthrie, who had, either by his manners or his manly form and fine face, gained a warm place in her heart. About three weeks later, this same American correspondent came again to Heath's Hotel, and inquired for an "omelette," but through the impossibility of obtaining eggs and milk he could not be gratified. "Never mind; we shall be able to do you better on the whole this time than when you

came in with the troops," consolingly replied Mrs. Heath, "for now we are in 'apple-pie order.'" "Apple pie, apple pie," cried this hungry penman, "I love apple pie." An apple pie was made for him for dinner, which he ate up all by himself.

Heath's Hotel is a first-rate house, and on one important particular I cannot do better than quote the words of an officer in the Black Watch when he was paying his bill. Seeing Mrs. Heath going upstairs he stopped to bid her adieu. In a tone of badinage she said, "Well, have we been robbing you again?" "I can hardly call it robbing me, but, dear me, you charge; why, you charge like the Gordon Highlanders."

The troops that came in with Lord Roberts had to be on the march again early the next morning, at least all those that were able to continue on their way to Pretoria, the great objective of the entire war. But, alas! many of those brave fellows had to give up, being too sick with fever to march another step, finding what shelter they could on the verandahs and spots out of the wind, until the ready hands and willing hearts of the civilian doctors and nurses left in the town could be got together to organise something more in accordance with their needs, until the arrival of the proper military hospital; but more of all this anon.

After the departure of the main column, half of the 15th Brigade, under the command of Major-General Wavell, were left to garrison the town, and do police duty in it. The troops in Johannesburg were:—

Artillery: A Howitzer battery of four guns, commandeered by Major Balfour; two pom-poms, Lieutenant Hardwick.

Cavalry: Prince Alfred's Guards (Port Elizabeth), Nesbit's Horse (served with General Wavell twenty years ago in the Tam-bookie rising and in the Basuto war of 1880), Compton's Horse.

Infantry: 2nd Cheshire, commanded by Colonel Curteis,

and stationed in the fort; 1st East Lancashires and the 1st North Staffords, commanded respectively by Lieutenant-Colonel Wright and Lieutenant-Colonel Bradley; all furnishing big police detachments for the town and environments; the other battalions, as well as the South Wales Borderers, being on the lines of communications.*

Johannesburg fort was put up by the Dutch after the Jameson raid, as a menace to the English residents. It stands on the crest of Hospital Hill, and dominates the whole town, which lies stretched beneath it. My military friends informed me that for all defensive purposes from an invading army it is of small value except as a look-out. It is in an ideal position. From the parapet there is an uninterrupted view of the whole country round, so that it would be impossible for the enemy to approach unobserved. It also commands the level summit of the hills to the right and left, and a distance of a couple of miles of level ground at the back which lies between it and the hillside, and which abruptly breaks away into a valley nearly a thousand feet below. But they say a few shells from a siege gun or a naval 4.7 would soon destroy it.

There is a gaol inside the fort, but is separated from it by a high wall. When I was there I saw several prisoners that had been confined there by the Boer authorities.

The secret and bomb-proof chambers, with their large store of guns and ammunition, interested me very much, and also showed me how much warlike stores the Boers had left behind in this place.

The 15th brigade assembled at Green Point, Cape Town, the beginning of February, took part in the flank march on Bloemfontein, but was diverted to occupy Jacobsdale, the

* The force employed to garrison and police Johannesburg varied continually both as regards strength and composition according to the action of the enemy in the neighbourhood or further afield east or south.

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first Free State town taken by the British troops, during the operations connected with Cronje and his force at Paardeberg. Afterwards the brigade rejoined the division and continued the march to Bloemfontein, remaining there but a few days, as the division was sent to hold the Boers in check around Karrie siding until the final advance across the Vaal and into Johannesburg.

CHAPTER XXV

THE MILITARY HOSPITALS IN JOHANNESBURG

THE 15th Brigade Bearer Company arrived in Johannesburg with the troops on May 31, its strength being forty-three non-commissioned officers and men. It was ordered to take over the duty of providing for such sick as came into the newly occupied town.

The information spread amongst the inhabitants that there were a great number of sick lying outside, and, as the Boer lines were open to Mr. Bension Aarons, who had rendered the Dutch great service with his complete system of ambulance accommodation, he was permitted to pass into the British camp at Elandsfontein to offer his services and those of his staff to Lord Roberts, who gratefully accepted the same for his sadly overwrought men ; and but for this welcome aid Major College, the officer in charge of the 15th Brigade Bearer Company would have been completely overwhelmed in his efforts to carry out the General's orders.

As can be readily imagined, the hospital accommodation in a young country like the Transvaal has not attained to the high level of European countries, nevertheless, had there not been a certain amount existing, and willing hearts and hands available to supplement it, the troops which had just arrived in the Witwatersrand district would have suffered very severely, and a far larger number would have succumbed or would have been permanently maimed than those that unhappily lost their lives, or had them saved by surgical operations. Every-

body in South Africa, as well as in England, read with deep concern the charges brought by Mr. Burdett-Coutts against the War Office and the Royal Army Medical Corps in regard to the management of the sick and wounded both in hospital and in the field.

The various remarks I make in connection with the subject are not intended to condone the sad state of affairs described, but to point out the fact that the Commander-in-chief, the general commanding in Cape Town, and the surgeon-general in charge of the Medical Department, and the officers under them appreciated the situation fully, and did all in their power, as far as their resources went and a state of war permitted, to relieve it.

Every ship from England was boarded by the staff officers, and the one representing the Royal Army Medical Corps directed every medical man and every lady fit for hospital nursing to proceed to Woodstock, where Colonel Supple at once posted them, many proceeding on the very day of their arrival in the Cape, up-country or to Natal, for duty. At the time when the state of affairs at Bloemfontein was causing so much anxiety, Surgeon-General Wilson and Surgeon-Colonel Supple were straining every nerve to send medical aid to this fever-stricken city. They even made it known to the local practitioners that their assistance was required until, at least, help could arrive from England, to meet this great and unexpected epidemic of sickness amongst the troops. Almost every man responded, until the capital of Cape Colony was practically destitute of doctors.

About this time the Welsh hospital arrived in Cape Town. All the men were at once despatched to Bloemfontein, but the nurses attached to it were not permitted to proceed likewise. In answer to their entreaties I heard General Wilson say: "I have an order from the chief of the staff that *no* ladies are allowed up country; and sad as the conditions

of the sick are in Bloemfontein, I *cannot* let you go at present."

The strictures made by Dr. Treves and others on the ladies, such as "the plague of women!" "the women are a blot on the campaign," &c., were in a great degree responsible for this military dictum, and, naturally, the first to suffer were the sick. The fact that these strictures were misconstrued is attributable to their sweeping nature—taking in all women, which did not in the least convey the sentiments Dr. Treves wished to express; but there is no doubt that these unflattering remarks led to the lack of nurses complained of by Mr. Burdett-Coutts, though they were not the only reasons why *no ladies* were to proceed up country. Other weighty ones can be conceived which the chief of the staff had in his mind when issuing this order, food and water amongst them; and when there were no beds and blankets for the sick, how could more be found for a couple of hundred women with the railway blocked with material for the fighting force?

How could women have taken that march which brought the troops to Johannesburg in such a collapsed condition? Much suffering had to be endured on the occasion which would have shocked the heart of any one unaccustomed to the sight of the inevitable consequences of war.

The Johannesburg civil hospital, which had been kept open during hostilities, had, owing to the disinclination of the Boers to entering a hospital, never been half full until the "Begbie" explosion, but luckily most of the injured people had recovered sufficiently to be dismissed to their homes or to the French ambulance (of which I shall speak in another chapter) before the British troops arrived.

This civil hospital was therefore the first to be utilised by the military. From May 31 to June 3, Mr. Aarons' ambulances were kept terribly busy in bringing in the sick from

Elandsfontein, Doornfontein, and all round. The maximum accommodation of 300 beds was stretched to receive 800 patients, whilst five other temporary hospitals were being fitted for another 700.

Most of the medical and nursing staff of the Johannesburg hospital—which is one of the best equipped institutions in South Africa, and would compare favourably with any county hospital in England as regards staff, buildings, and grounds—had been put over the border by the Boers, but when those that remained were informed that the hospital was needed for military requirements, all were ready, even the Dutch, to do their best, and that with courtesy.

Under the most favourable circumstances it is very trying for sick people to be transported for miles in numbers together over a bad road, the jolting being not less injurious to the wounded than to the sick.*

Mr. Aarons' ambulances were the best I have ever seen. Each ambulance contains six stretchers, three on each side, each suspended and on springs, thus allowing each sick man to lie at full length in transit; the springs avoiding much of the jolting.

Were it not that the Royal Army Medical Corps have been held under such very severe criticism as to call for a commission of inquiry, I should not have gone so fully into the management of military hospitals and the care of the sick in war. The report of the Commissioners to Parliament and the country has now been presented, and, as far as the evidence they have taken was unprejudiced; still, it was difficult for them to form an opinion on a state of

* The subject of field ambulance waggons engaged the serious attention of the Hospital Inquiry Commissioners, with the result that better arrangements may be made than those used by the Royal Army Medical Corps; and it is satisfactory to know that the War Office authorities will ere long devise a conveyance that will reduce jolting to the lowest minimum, and at the same time be servicable and strong.

affairs that had passed away before their arrival on the scenes.

The 15th Brigade Bearer Company had tramped along with the troops from Graspan—a good 800 miles with the *détours* that had to be made—not the best of preliminaries for exertions such as were required to comfortably locate 15,000 sick in a town that had, until the day before, been thoroughly hostile. It is but natural that for a few days a great deal of suffering should have had to be endured in such a rush, and for several nights numbers of invalids had to rest where they could find shelter—on verandahs, in lobbies, out-buildings, anywhere and everywhere—with only such wraps as could be found for them from the inhabitants, nurses, and doctors; many having nothing at all to cover them.

The hostile and distrustful feelings of the store-keepers in the newly occupied town showed themselves the next day, when a visit was made to the various firms to purchase beds, blankets, sheets, and other indispensable articles, which they declared had been *all* commandeered by the late authorities, and consequently their stock was completely cleared out.

A difficulty arose in regard to every article required for the troops. Between June 1 and 24, in addition to the existing Johannesburg hospital and the French ambulance, five other hospitals were equipped for the reception of the sick in this town.

The Victoria Hotel	.	.	.	200 beds
The Jews' School	.	.	.	100 „
The Wanderers' Hall	.	.	.	170 „
The Jewish Ambulance	.	.	.	30 „

The nucleus of the medical staff for all these new establishments were furnished from the 15th Brigade Bearer Company, the officers, non-commissioned officers, and men

being divided up among them ; they being assisted by able civilian doctors, both local and those that had come in with the troops, all working with a sustained energy for weeks that was extremely trying to the health of doctors, nurses, and orderlies.

In the turmoil of a military occupation no one could ascertain where different corps and different staff officers were, and consequently the usual routine could not be followed.

There is a great deal heard of the *red tape* in the army, but in ordinary times much of it is indispensable. It would never do for a big machine like the army to have every one independent. Who would pay the bill ? Still, on occasions like this, what is to be done ? Food and medical comforts had to be provided for the sick without delay.

The few tradespeople that had kept open their shops were afraid to part with their goods for fear they might never be paid. One man was found to supply milk at 9*d.* a pint, but when he saw the official list of prices he got panic-stricken, and it was with the greatest difficulty he was induced to continue the supply.

What the military medical authorities would have done at this juncture but for Mr. Aarons it is difficult to say. He allayed the fear of the merchants by guaranteeing the payment of their accounts himself, and at one time the Government were indebted to him for the sum of £13,000, all the tradespeople insisting on ready money—an inconvenience occurring in connection with all head supplies. Had it not been for Mr. Aarons' knowledge of local affairs the military could never have unearthed the food-stuffs, &c., that had been hidden away, often under concrete floors, and the hospitals must have waited for the transport of actual necessities, perhaps for weeks, from the base, a thousand miles distant, if indeed not eight thousand, from England. Lord

Roberts, hearing of much of this, expresses his thanks in the following letter :—

ARMY HEADQUARTERS,
JOHANNESBURG,

June 2, 1900.

SIR,—I am desired by the Field Marshal Commanding-in-chief to tender you his best thanks for the assistance given by your corps in moving our sick and wounded from Elandsfontein to the hospital in Johannesburg, and also for the service the ambulance rendered to Private J. A. McArty of the King's Own Scottish Borderers, who was shot in the town on the evening of May 30.

His Lordship much appreciates the courtesy you have shown, and the willing assistance you have given to the principal medical officer of the British forces.

Believe me to be,

Yours faithfully,

(Signed) NEVILLE CHAMBERLAIN,

Colonel.

Private Secretary.

B. Aarons, Esq.

Civil assistance came to the military on all hands, and greatly they needed it. The especial thanks of the service are due to the resident medical officer of the Johannesburg Hospital and the whole staff, and to Dr. and Mrs. Murray, who succeeded in getting together a small band of devoted nurses to assist in the work the Royal Army Medical Corps had before them.

For three days and nights no one connected with the medical staff could think of taking any rest. The heavy duties in the early days of the occupation defy description, and to their self-sacrifices many brave soldiers at present fighting in South Africa owe their lives.

Owing to the administrative defects consequent in the under-estimating of the strength of the enemy and the foreign aid they had to back them, there was a deplorable loss of life, and more suffering in the fighting line and

marching columns than need have been had there been a more adequate medical staff, and possibly a more judicial distribution of that actually existing.

It certainly is disappointing to those who have given so lavishly their family and their fortunes to defeat the King's enemies to be told that their beloved ones have been neglected when ill, after weeks of fighting and marching; and a thorough investigation into the grave accusations was most right, and not only brought to light instances that might have been better managed, but set forth the heroic conduct of the Royal Army Medical Corps, thus bringing a public recognition of their work that otherwise would have been merely taken for granted. In this respect Mr. Burdett-Coutts has done good service.

The Royal Army Medical Corps has never been popular amongst the combatant ranks of the army, and the reason of it is not far to seek. The best medical students do not gravitate towards the service. The age of entry alone prevents the most promising from joining the Royal Army Medical Corps, because they have no time to go through the various phases of their profession to become thoroughly efficient. No period in a medical man's career is so beneficial to him as the few years he spends as a house surgeon in large hospitals. The responsibility settles him and gives him confidence. Now, all this has to be sacrificed if he is going to be a medical man in the army, as he must enter by a certain age.

In regard to the cadets for the combatant ranks, just the reverse of this is observed. Only the best enter, as their entrance examinations are severe and their professional education is continually progressing.

With an army doctor his professional knowledge is, from the lack of practice in peace time, always retrograding. The great majority of cases they are called upon to attend are

small ailments or climate fevers; the serious cases being generally sent to a civil hospital in the district in which the regiment happens to be stationed. This lack of practical experience in both medicine and surgery was not felt, however, during the present war, as our most up-to-date London physicians and surgeons volunteered for service in South Africa, and the Surgeon-General had, or could have had, as much assistance as he required, which the Government gratefully accepted as soon as the need for it became apparent. Many have commented on the bad feeling existing between the military and civil doctors, but this has been exaggerated. With few insignificant exceptions they have made common cause together and maintained an excellent comradeship.

Of one thing I am certain: when civil help is brought into a military hospital, the army doctors should take charge of the administration; see to the returns, accounts, and those duties which it has taken them nearly their whole time in the service to learn; the civil surgeons being charged only with the professional part of the work, and on no account should they be asked to perform such military duties as parading convalescents to church or elsewhere. When this division of duty is mixed up chaos reigns.

The civil surgeons cannot deal with these complicated returns, which are indispensable, and must be forthcoming when asked for by members in the House of Commons, who often consider they have done a great public service by requesting them, though it frequently happens they never trouble about them any further when once they have been placed on the table.

On July 25 No. 6 General Hospital arrived in Johannesburg, and on August 15 had taken over most of the military patients from the various temporary hospitals in the town—two months and a half after the entry of the troops.

It can be readily imagined that in this time the worst cases

had been dealt with, the principal difficulties surmounted, and that things were being conducted in as orderly and regular a fashion as "scratch" arrangements would permit.

It is also readily conceivable that the sick are better off in a properly established military hospital equipped with every appliance science can suggest to relieve suffering humanity than they can be in hotels, schools, and chapels scattered about a town. Neither can it be denied that the military should take over their own work as soon as they are in a position to cope with it; but in doing so it should be remembered that the civilians volunteered their services out of sheer patriotism and great pity for the sick soldiers, and did their work well when the general hospital was miles away. In asking the civilians to resign their duties, which they were willing to do—though not without a pang—a little grace and tact would not have been out of place, and a veneer of gratitude would have obviated bad feeling, and established instead a good understanding and a hearty co-operation.

Want of tact is a fruitful source of false reports that spread in ever widening circles, and may even cause the overthrow of a strong Government by disturbing public confidence.

CHAPTER XXVI

THE FRENCH AMBULANCE, JOHANNESBURG

At a time when the management of our sick in hospital in South Africa was agitating the public mind in England more than any phase of the administration of this war, it is not only right, but it is a great pleasure to direct attention to the help rendered in this particular by the well-disposed French residents in this great cosmopolitan gold-producing town, and also to bear grateful testimony to the financial assistance that has been sent to carry on the work by our neighbours on the other side of the channel.

All the continental press have been more or less unsympathetic to the British nation in this hour of national distress, so a practical proof to the contrary will be gratifying to those on both sides of the dividing line that the great French nation, at least, is more friendly than her public press would have us believe.

At the beginning of October 1899, Madame La Comtesse de René de Ferrières informed the Superior of the Marist Brothers of her intention to found in Johannesburg a French ambulance should war be declared between England and the South African Republics, to help the general hospital of Johannesburg in the nursing of the sick, be they Boer or British.

The Superior, a Frenchman, heartily concurred in the Countess' philanthropic intentions; discussed the ways and means to establish a French ambulance on a sound financial

footing, so that its cost would fall entirely on French finances. As most of the scholars had been removed from the school, or had at the termination of the ultimatum been put over the border, the Marist Brothers had certain class-rooms which they offered to Madame de Ferrières for her hospital scheme.

The Marist Brothers approached the Government Committee of War through the medium of the French consul in Johannesburg on the subject, and explained that they were able to assist them to the extent of equipping and maintaining six wards, containing forty beds for ambulance work, which was gratefully accepted.

The work of preparation then proceeded ; in the place of desk and chairs, copy books and maps, and such instructional means of torture, beds and charts, medicine bottles, and bandages, and surgical instruments that so greatly impress the sick with the immense cleverness of those who use them and instil a fear of consequences that needs no description.

When all was in readiness an official visit of inspection was made to the French ambulance. The party consisted of the French consul, Mons. Colomies ; Dr. Pierce, resident medical officer of the Johannesburg Hospital ; the lady superior, Mother Adèle ; the matron, and the rooms decided on were regarded as eminently suited for the object in view, and were supplied with every appliance likely to be needed, and an investigation showed there was no lack of medical comforts and hospital necessaries.

At an earlier period the consul had cabled to Paris to the " Association des Dames Françaises " to ask for their co-operation, and having received satisfactory assurances to help to carry on the work, means came in rapidly. The committee consisted of : Mons. Colomies, French consul ; Madame la Comtesse de Ferrières ; Mons. Henri Duval, manager of the

French Bank; Brother Frederic, director of the Marist Brothers; the Rev. Father Bandrey, O.M.I.; the Rev. Mother Felicité O'Miere (superior of Doornfontein Convent); the Rev. Mother Adèle, superior of the Sisters at the Johannesburg Hospital. The French ambulance was now *un fait accompli*, some 600 cases of drugs, provisions, and clothing were received from the "Association des Dames Françaises"; in addition to a large sum of money raised locally, a further amount was collected by the French bank of the South African Republic in Paris.

But there was a great disappointment for the generous founders of this philanthropic work. They were in the position of the man who had prepared a great feast and found he had no guests. The Boers would have nothing to do with hospitals of any kind. They preferred being nursed by their "vrouws" on their farms, so, until the British occupation of the town of Johannesburg, the beds in the French ambulance remained practically without occupants until May 22, when a few cases—the result of the "Begbie" explosion—were brought in, Dr. Kanin attending to them, and later, after the occupation, was assisted by Dr. Mangiamarchi, who remained attached until it was closed at the end of August 1900.

After the arrival of the troops the beds were increased to fifty-six, and were occupied by a cosmopolitan crowd, consisting of English officers and men, Russians, Italians, Germans, Austrians, Swiss, Portuguese, Greeks, Dutch, Belgians, Boers, Afrikanders and Americans.

When the "Begbie" Ironworks explosion took place most of the wounded were taken to the Johannesburg Hospital, but were removed again when the British came in, some to the French ambulance and some to the French Asylum for the Deaf and Dumb, so as to make room for the sick and wounded belonging to the army of occupation. Thus it

was Madame de Ferrières had such a polyglot community under her charge.

I have often visited the sick in the French ambulance, and a more perfect establishment of its kind I have never seen.

The last time I visited it there were six British officers benefiting by the devoted care of Madame la Comtesse de Ferrières, and the able French ladies she had to assist her ; and all the sick that have been treated in this hospital speak in the highest terms of praise of the skill of the doctors, and the care and attention they have received from the Nuns of the Doornfontein Convent.

Two officers, one in the Royal Engineers and one in the 18th Hussars, recommended all their friends to "go sick" and come to the French hospital to be looked after! I had the satisfaction of seeing Captain Murray, 1st Gordons, who had left his post as Consul-general at Warsaw to take special service with his regiment, leave Johannesburg for the Cape *en route* to resuming the duties of the Consulate. He had been severely wounded by the explosion of a shell near him, which took him and the ground upon which he was standing and sent them into the air for a considerable distance. By this his spine was injured ; and though I saw him lying full length in a railway carriage, he was quite cheerful and spoke in the most eulogistic terms of all the kindness he had received at the French ambulance, where he had been for the previous three weeks. His words were: "I shall never forget it, more especially as it was so unexpected. Whoever would have thought of finding in the centre of this vast continent, and in the most money-making town in the world for its size, a home-surrounding that transplants the fortunate inmates to all that was best, most refined, most courtly in Paris, in the days when the old noblesse flourished in La Belle France?"

The Marist Brothers, in whose buildings the ambulance was established, showed by every means in their power their feelings of friendship and sympathy with Madame de Ferrières and with the sick and wounded.

Brother Frederic organised evening entertainments for the amusement of the convalescents, which were given in a fine gymnasium attached to the school; and to show their appreciation, the French consul, the general in command (Wavell), Major the Hon. Thomas Cochrane (Provost-marshal) and a distinguished company, both English and French, honoured them by being present.*

* This account was inserted in the columns of the *Morning Post* of September 20, 1900, and was written about seven weeks before that date, but the corroboration of the facts are none the less satisfactory because the "Soldier" who sent the following letter to *The Times* was unaware that a description of the French ambulance in Johannesburg had appeared :

SIR.—It is probably not generally known to your readers other than those who have lived in Johannesburg since the occupation on May 31, what invaluable aid was rendered by the French Hospital in supplementing the work of the greatly overtaxed military hospital here for more than four months after the troops marched into the town. It was a time of great stress, when civil hospital and hotels were all utilised, and were even then barely sufficient to provide for the numbers of wounded and sick who were brought in here from every part of the theatre of war.

During this time the French Hospital established in the Marist Brothers' school more than held its own in ceaseless devotion to sick and wounded, Briton and Boer alike.

The hospital was started by subscriptions in Paris in September 1899, and even if its origin sprang from sympathy with the Boer cause, as possibly may be the case, this should not make us blind to the benefits conferred on us since we occupied the town.

The staff of nurses—a cosmopolitan one—was drawn from the Convent of the Sacred Heart, the *Dea ex machina* being Mme. de Ferrières, wife of M. le Comte de Ferrières, who is a resident in the town.

The whole garrison here will gladly testify to the good work done by Mme. de Ferrières, and any of your readers who have had, I may almost say, the good fortune to have been a patient in the French Hospital will, I know, fully endorse my remarks as regards the self-sacrifice and gentle kindness of Madame and her staff of nurses.

In asking you to publish this letter in your columns, I am prompted by the feeling that it is only right our country at large should know how much we are indebted to France and Mme. de Ferrières for the invaluable

The *London Gazette* of February 15, 1901, contains the following :

The King has been graciously pleased to confer the decoration of the Royal Red Cross upon Madame de Ferrières, Superintendent of the French Hospital at Johannesburg, in recognition of her services in nursing sick and wounded soldiers in South Africa.

This is satisfactory evidence that the King is not less likely to do the right thing and that which is kind than was his beloved mother, whom we all mourn.

aid rendered to our troops during this phase of the war ; and I would urge that, as her Majesty the Queen is always the first to encourage and praise all who help the afflicted, the name of Madame should be submitted to her as a most worthy recipient of the Victorian Order, which would be a graceful compliment and, in my humble opinion, by no means too great a national recognition of her services to our sick and wounded soldiers.

I am, &c.,

Johannesburg, November 27.

A SOLDIER.

CHAPTER XXVII

THE MILITARY GOVERNOR OF JOHANNESBURG

BEFORE Lord Roberts left Johannesburg to continue his march to Pretoria he appointed Colonel Colin Mackenzie, 2nd Seaforth Highlanders, to be military governor of the district, giving him powers to administer justice and maintain order under a system of martial law, which for the time being suspends all other laws and regulations.

As far as possible, the British authorities adopted bodily the laws of the country *ad interim*, or, to suit exceptional difficulties, have issued proclamations which have the same effect as the laws, or are intended to have.

Colonel Mackenzie, though quite young and only the junior major in his regiment, has seen a great deal of active service and has occupied several important positions.

He served in the Egyptian war, 1882; was present at the battle of Tel-el-Kebir and seizure of Suez Canal and Cairo. Medal with clasp and Khedive's star.

Served in Burmese expedition, 1886-1887; in transport as embarkation officer, Mandalay, and subsequently with mounted infantry. Medal with two clasps.

Served as adjutant 2nd Seaforth Highlanders in Hagara expedition (Black Mountain, N.W. Frontier, in 1888). Clasp; mentioned in despatches.

Served in Hunza Nagar expedition (Gilgit, N.W. Frontier) in 1891-92; Commanded expedition on Colonel Durand being

wounded ; annexed states of Hunza and Nagar. Mentioned in despatches. Clasp. Brevet of Major.

Served as D.A.A.G. 2nd Brigade Waziristan Field Force, 1894-95, under Sir W. Penn Symons. Mentioned in despatches. Clasp.

Served with 1st Seaforth Highlanders in Nile expedition, 1898 ; battle of Omdurman. Two medals and clasp.

Served in South Africa, 1899-1900, as D.A.A.G. Western lines of communication ; D.A.A.G. headquarter staff intelligence ; director of intelligence, and military governor of Johannesburg.

Passed the Staff College.

Perhaps the experience he gained whilst Director of Intelligence during this war has best fitted him for his present responsible position, which none but an able and tactful man could fill so as to give the satisfaction he does to the vast and conflicting interests that hourly come up for settlement.

It is no easy matter to take up the reins of the different governing and controlling departments and see that the heads of the various offices do not come into conflict. It obviously requires a strong hand to hold, and a steady head to direct so many interests and deal out even-handed justice to all during a period of active hostilities. A mere enumeration of these departments will give an idea of the weight of responsibility that rests on the shoulders of the military governor of Johannesburg. To the best of my knowledge, I give them in the order of their importance, and in succeeding chapters will deal with each separately. Meanwhile I will merely enumerate them :

- (1) The policing of the town.
- (2) The mining industry.
- (3) Native affairs.
- (4) The financial adviser's department.

- (5) The municipality.
- (6) Supplies.
- (7) Customs.
- (8) Marriages.
- (9) Relief.

It is only necessary to see a copy of the *Johannesburg Gazette* to appreciate the importance of these various offices and form a conception of the work that has to be done daily by the military governor. With the exception of half a column, this, the only newspaper published, is filled with proclamations and Government notices. After those from Lord Roberts and Sir Alfred Milner come the military governor's, bearing upon every conceivable subject, from going in and out of doors to the price of food. Even now that there is scarcely any trade done in the town, the restrictions of martial law are very trying to all those engaged in commercial enterprise of any kind, but the friction is not aggravated by any high-handed, overbearing manner; on the contrary, all receive that courtesy from the officers in charge of the various departments which reduces the grievances of the inhabitants to the minimum point. This is especially so in regard to the Imperial officers and those drawn from the colony, as compared with the two or three that are known locally and have private interests in the district.

In the former case everybody is treated alike, all being equally unknown; but when local men are at the head of departments there is a feeling of jealousy and a suspicion that some applications are more favourably received than others, whether an equally even balance is maintained or not. As far as has been possible, Imperial officers, who have no connection whatever with South Africa, have been, most wisely, placed in charge of all important offices; the only exception being Mr. Wyberg, mining commissioner, appointed on account of his high scientific attainments; Mr.

Hamilton, the financial adviser; and Mr. Monypenny, in charge of civil supplies.

There has been a feeling in regard to the war and the present administration of the country that the capitalists have exercised an undue influence on the Imperial authorities, and that they will do so in the future.

The appointments of those interested in the gold mines, or in some way connected with the capitalists, are referred to as indications of Imperial intentions, but it is a mistaken notion. It was absolutely necessary for the military governor to have at first expert aid in the management of the several departments that are worked under a *régime* of martial law, until he had time to acquire the special knowledge necessary to grapple with the various and conflicting interests of such a community, all of which are very intricate and sensitive, and the consequences of one mistake might be fraught with danger and most difficult to remedy.

It is no secret that those appointed to Government departments from local sources are only intended to meet a temporary emergency.

A man in a responsible position, having the direction of public affairs, whatever his own abilities may be, will not succeed as an administrator if he is unable to surround himself with competent assistants to carry out his intentions for good government with equity, sense, and discretion, all working harmoniously together.

The great test of time has not as yet left its mark on Colonel Mackenzie's services as military governor of Johannesburg, but so far as it has gone he has done well, giving satisfaction to the mining, banking, and other important sections of this energetic town, that is shut out from the rest of the world, and forcibly kept in idleness.

CHAPTER XXVIII

MILITARY POLICING OF JOHANNESBURG

THE first and most important step after the entry of the troops into Johannesburg on May 31 was the preservation of order in the town and the protection of the surrounding mines. When the Kruger forces left on the preceding evening, according to the arrangement made by Commandant Krause, the native population thought their time had come, and as the British were in power, they could do as they liked, which ideas they had acquired through reports of proceedings from Exeter Hall and elsewhere. No words can describe the rioting, looting, drinking, and wrong-doing that took place in this town on that night! The departing Boers determined to carry away everything they could from shops, stores, and private houses; furniture, silks, and curtains not being spared. The Kaffirs, relieved from the restraint of their accustomed check, did the same, with the addition of cattle stealing.

When Lord Roberts had received the surrender of the town, he appointed Major Davies, Grenadier Guards, to be chief commissioner of police. For the proper administration of justice under martial law, the municipality of Johannesburg was divided into six districts, and for the outskirts a seventh was added, which latter embraces the small towns outside the municipal area to the south of the mines, and reaching as far as the Klip river, some thirteen miles distant. Each district is presided over by a district commissioner, who

has power to deal with offenders, and punish with fourteen days' imprisonment with hard labour, inflict a fine of £5, or order lashes to the number of fifteen.

The purely civil cases must, however, wait for their settlement until civil courts are established.

The district commissioner is in all cases an officer of his Majesty's forces, who is responsible for the maintenance of law and order. When I left Johannesburg, in October 1900, they were for districts—

- No. 1. Captain Carey, Worcester regiment.
- No. 2. Captain Copland, Leicestershire regiment.
- No. 3. Captain Marquis, South Wales Borderers.
- No. 4. Captain Canon, King's Shropshire Light Infantry.
- No. 5. Captain Luard, Norfolk regiment.
- No. 6. Captain Peel-Yates, South Wales Borderers.
- No. 7. Major Hon. Thomas Cochrane, Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders.

To administer justice, without fear or favour, is the most important pillar in a well-governed state, and in a community like that which is usually to be found in this cosmopolitan mining town, where *most* things anterior to the war could be managed for money, it is beyond all question the cornerstone of success, and on it the Imperial Government must stand or fall.

In regard to British officers in his Majesty's service, they are above suspicion, whatever other shortcomings may be accredited to them. They are not to be bribed or "got at," no matter how cunningly and perseveringly they may be tempted to depart from the straight path of strict fairness. Fully 600 men of the 15th Brigade who were left in Johannesburg for garrison duty were employed in police work, being aided by the Railway Pioneer regiment and by details from other commands, as well as by a certain number of civilians. These latter, from their local knowledge, are

able to render valuable assistance, as in many cases they are also able to speak both English and Dutch, and know something of Kaffir, Basuto, and Zulu. In this way the natives frequently confide to them the particular spots in which arms or ammunition are concealed, or where Kaffir beer is being illicitly brewed; but for the duties the force was totally inadequate, as subsequent events have proved. The duties of a district commissioner are many and varied, and require the exercise of much tact and good temper, as well as great firmness.

The Dutch pride themselves upon their "slimness," and are experts in the art of *suppressio veri*. The Kaffirs do not appear to realise the necessity of going anywhere *near* the truth when giving their evidence. If they are asked to repeat any statement they may have made in the course of examination, the second edition, as a rule, differs *in toto* from the original.

Then there are the Peruvians, not the inhabitants of Peru, but the men of the Russian Jew type, who have gained the *soubriquet* from a story current in Johannesburg which runs: A rich philanthropist of the Jewish persuasion taking pity upon the sad condition of the pauper Jews in Russia, framed a scheme to deport some of them to Peru, but these Russian Jews, having thus got hold of the money for their journey, came to Johannesburg instead, and "here they are now." Whether this story is true or not, it is a fact that this class of people form a strong element in the place, and are very troublesome to the district commissioners and their staff. These "Peruvians" arrive on the Rand, as a rule, penniless, and not infrequently gain their livelihood by very questionable means. They pander to the vices of all classes of the community, and are generally responsible for much illicit traffic in liquor and gold. They are adepts at every means of evading punishment; they are ready to bribe right and

left, and loud are their lamentations that, under British administration, they are no longer able to avail themselves of this means of escaping the just rigour of the law.

In a district commissioner's court there is every opportunity for the study of character, and perhaps a description of a typical morning at one of these courts might interest the reader in England. The district selected lies in one of the suburbs, in a fairly populous neighbourhood in the close vicinity of the mines. It is situated some three miles distant from the centre of the town. On arriving at the court-house a motley throng meets the eye. Here are gathered military police, natives of every race in South Africa, coolies from India, Chinese shopkeepers, children, and dogs. The court-house itself is an ordinary dwelling, bare of furniture, except for the table behind which the commissioner sits, and another for his clerk. It is Monday morning, and there is therefore a long list of cases for hearing. Sunday being a day of idleness at the mines (which are not working at present more than just pumping to keep the water from rising), the particular spirit which represents the evil one to the Kaffir finds mischief in abundance. *Cherchez la femme* holds good also when translated into Kaffir. The chief source of wrongdoing arises from the brewing and drinking of Kaffir beer. The whole of the brewing and some of the drinking is carried on by the women—the rest by the men. The first case called had such an unexpected *dénouement*, that it is perhaps worth relating. Annie (all black) is charged with brewing Kaffir beer, and supplying it to the natives—a second offence within a short period. Annie is escorted into court. She is very tall and upright, and is completely enveloped in a blanket, which conceals her mouth, and only leaves her eyes exposed to view, which look very brown and rather appealing as they shine from their well-polished orbits.

The evidence is overwhelming—Annie has been at the

game for some months, and her hut has been the resort of disorderly Kaffirs for some time. She had been so artful in her methods that previous raids by the police had failed to secure sufficient evidence of her guilt, and although tipsy Kaffirs have been found on her premises, no beer was discovered. This time, however, the raiders had been successful and the *corpus delicti*, as the brewing materials and the products are called in legal parlance, are produced in court. Very uninviting the Kaffir beer looks, as it is seen in every variety of utensil. In appearance this horrid stuff is like weak skilly, with malt floating thickly in the muddy liquid. It is a potent drink, and a Kaffir intoxicated upon it frequently becomes a dangerous animal; the native population are very fond of it. It is thoroughly demoralising, and its use cannot be too rigidly prohibited. The police captured in Annie's premises gallons of Kaffir beer, and a crowd of Kaffirs, more or less intoxicated. Being called upon to give explanation, Annie mutters something beneath her breath, which was rendered further inaudible by the blanket which she kept over her mouth. Finally she was requested to remove it a little, so that the commissioner might be able to hear her defence. This order she obeyed with every appearance of bashful modesty, and her words were then interpreted to mean that she hoped the officer would take the fact into consideration that she is a woman, and deal mercifully with her. But Annie's character is too bad; a previous abortive attempt at conviction tells against her, and she is remanded to a higher court, whose extended powers make it possible to inflict a sentence worthy of her crimes. It is not till after her arrival at the cells to await trial that subsequent search reveals the fact that Annie is after all a man, and not a poor misled woman at all!

In the meanwhile, the victims of Annie's brewing Kaffir beer are marched into court. They number about fifty, and

are brought in in batches of eight at a time. A queer crowd they are to look at : some tall, with splendid physique ; some short and stout, but nearly all with beautiful teeth, which show up against their dark skins, the exceptions being the representatives of a particular tribe who consider it an adornment to have their two front teeth knocked out. The finest men are the Zulus, with frank and cheerful faces, black as coal, and smiling in a depreciatory sort of manner, as if they knew they had been naughty, but had been so more from mischief than from vice. Then there are the Basutos, with a more refined cast of features ; the Shangans, a race despised by other Kaffirs : the Hottentots and other nondescripts complete the tale. Some appear in court dressed quite nicely—these are mostly the kitchen boys from private houses—some with rather ragged shirts and trousers, and some without either one or the other. These latter are from the mining compounds, where native dress or the absence of it is permitted. In the towns some approach to European dress is obligatory. The prisoners being duly arranged in a row, the examination begins. The police first give evidence as to the arrest ; the first boy (they are all called boys, no matter how advanced their age) on the list is asked his name, and he rolls out something, which turns out to be his tribal name. This does not correspond with the charge sheet, and the interpreter tells him to give his “ Christian ” name, which is quite often “ Sixpence ” or “ Fifteen,” whilst “ Cigar ” or “ Up-side-down ” appear in the list, and are replied to quite as a matter of course.

A strange lack of originality appears in the answers they give as to the reasons they were found “ *en cette galere*.” The most common excuse is that they went to see a brother, or to get medicine ; and these are repeated all down the row with but slight variation.

This class of cases being disposed of, the next to appear

are the Boer farmers—some tall and well built, others short and shaggy. Two such lived in the same farmhouse together, and were charged with the concealment of arms and ammunition. They showed no signs of courage and defiance, but turned white and trembled all over as a bag containing over 100 Manser cartridges was produced, dug up within fifteen feet of their front door; some of the cartridges bearing a murderous look, and some loaded with a soft-nosed expanding bullet. As prisoners of war they go off to the fort, and a further search for arms is instituted, which secret information says are still concealed on or about their homestead. These cases will have to be again considered, and that in the light of Lord Roberts' various proclamations and the attitude the British Government are going to adopt towards the Boer prisoners of war on the cessation of active hostilities.

For the next case the court is cleared, and evidence is taken in private. A respectable middle-aged woman, whose husband is away fighting against us, and a pretty little daughter of thirteen years have walked as many miles to give evidence to bring to justice two villainous-looking Kaffirs on a charge of the grossest outrage. The mother is all shame, and admits to the full extent the suffering and degradation she has endured. The little girl gives her evidence up to a certain point with minute and painstaking accuracy, and then the little head drops forward till the big hat completely covers the tear-stained face, and not another word can be extracted.

A military district commissioner is, after all, an amateur, and it must require a good deal of case-hardening to get used to this sort of thing.

With the next and last case he is more at home. A "Peruvian" is brought up by a fresh-coloured Anglo-Saxon private soldier. The charge is one of cruelty to a horse and

attempting to bribe the police. The horse is inspected outside and found to suffer from a frightfully sore back. Evidence is then taken in regard to the bribe, when the prisoner interjects that he did not offer the soldier half a crown to let him go, but gave him half a crown to get some lotion to put on the horse's back.

The more serious work of a district commissioner is interrupted by a string of applicants who wish for a pass to permit him or her to ride, drive, or bicycle beyond the municipal limits of Johannesburg, or for residential permits that have been lost, or fresh ones for new comers. Then ladies come to complain that their Kaffir servants are lazy, and require fifteen minutes to say so, that the power of summarily punishing them with a sjambock is taken from their masters, but for which they would not be troubling the district commissioner. Another fifteen minutes is taken up explaining that there is a special court elsewhere established to deal with all cases between master and servant.

Applications by dozens have to be considered before permission can be granted for the removal of furniture, to purchase and keep a revolver, to sell a piano or drive a cab.

Not a minute's respite for the poor district commissioner until a cessation of the shuffling feet on the bare wooden floor of the passage outside tells him that work is over, which is confirmed by a gnawing inside. A peep at his watch acquaints him with the fact that he has been hard at work from 10 A.M. to 3 P.M.; then he realises he has had no luncheon, and the club is three miles away. The district commissioners living in the town have much longer hours.

Colonel Davies, the chief commissioner of police, has a most onerous and responsible task in regard to the effective policing of Johannesburg; and were he not assisted to the utmost by the district commissioners, and by the co-operation of Captain

Barnett, of the North Staffordshire regiment, and by all who work with him and under him, the result would not be so eminently satisfactory as is happily the case. But he is one of those who do all things well.

When the town was formally handed over by Commandant Krause, certain of the special police who had control of various wards were kept in their posts until the military authorities had time to organise a military police to safeguard the town and mines. They were not superseded a day too soon, for their conduct was far from loyal and nearly resulted in grave consequences to the whole military staff. They connived at all sorts of devices to assist the enemy and were engaged in an extensive system of secret service; but, in spite of all the "slimness" of the Boers, very little happens that is not known to Colonel Davies before it is too late to avert the mischief. There is not a person, there is not a house in his district that is not known, and if anything suspicious is remarked, an investigator soon finds out all and takes steps accordingly.

From a military point of view the troops have a poor time. Police work is not exciting to soldiers in South Africa on active service, especially to officers commanding when their troops are sent out in companies, and are for the time being under the orders of district commissioners.

One section of the 15th Brigade (General Wavell), however, may be regarded as an exception. Compton's Horse are stationed on outlying farms as piquets, some seven to twelve miles around the town, where they perform the double duty of acting as policemen in suppressing native outbreaks, destroying the illicit liquor traffic, and in the prevention of cattle stealing, also performing the duty of military patrols to protect the town from any sudden advance by the Boers, with whom they have had more than one brush. This corps is one of the many patriotic endeavours of individual men in

the cause of Imperialism, and was raised by Lord Alwyne Compton, M.P., at the same time and under the same conditions as the Imperial Yeomanry. Recruiting was commenced in Bedfordshire according to instructions from the War Office, there being no yeomanry corps for that county. Sufficient recruits, however, did not come in, so the ranks were opened for any suitable candidate that might come forward for service in South Africa. The result of this was that there were 600 applications for 116 vacancies. The selection being wide, it was possible to make choice of good horsemen, good shots, and of only young men who had seen the world and, consequent on their experience of other conditions of life, were well adapted for an irregular force of mounted men, destined to fight such a crafty enemy as the Boer in his own country, and beat him at his own game. If a history could be written of each individual man in Compton's Horse as they sailed from South Africa, some very interesting and remarkable information might be compiled, illustrative of the vicissitudes of life in all parts of the world: young and stalwart men from the backwoods of Australia and Canada, from the tea plantations of India, the Royal Navy, the Metropolitan police, the artist, the barrister, and the engineer—representatives of all were found in Compton's Horse; even jockeys and trainers from Newmarket are included, and ride in hot pursuit after De Wet whenever there is an inkling that he might be caught in the neighbourhood of their patrols.

To capture an enemy so mobile as a Boer commando generally is, a strong force, well mounted, is absolutely indispensable, and the horses Lord Alwyne Compton provided for his corps will, for strength and endurance, bear comparison with any in South Africa. The majority are fresh young half-bred animals, measuring about fifteen hands, and when the exigencies of war require sustained efforts both men and horses realise what is demanded of them, and they

work until they drop. The gallant corps is commanded by Lord Alwyne Compton, M.P., the other officers being Hon. F. Stanley, Grenadier Guards; Hon. Gavin Hamilton, Scots Guards; Capt. G. Dundas, late 20th Hussars, and Earl Cowley.*

* Since writing the above most of the officers and many of the men have returned to England.

CHAPTER XXIX

MILITARY OFFICERS AS ADMINISTRATORS OF JUSTICE

THE duties that military officers are called upon to discharge in war times are often very extraordinary, and under a *régime* of martial law soldiers of all ranks frequently find themselves in charge of civil offices which have to be carried on somehow. Young subalterns and captains are placed in positions that are generally filled by men many years their senior ; but, in spite of that, the result is that they need not be ashamed, though they have had no previous experience whatever of the responsibilities devolving upon them.

In regard to the military officers appointed to administer the law in Johannesburg this remark does not apply, because a judicious selection was made from amongst those who had acquired previous knowledge.

At the date of the British occupation of this town there were 180 untried prisoners in gaol ; about 50 whites and 130 natives.

A military tribunal had at once to be constituted to deal with these cases and others that were hourly occurring. When established it consisted of Major O'Brien, two subalterns as assessors, with Captain Ferguson as chief magistrate, having power to try and settle all except the most serious cases.

At first the prisoners were simply brought up with a slip of paper stating with what offence they were respectively

charged; the evidence against them being contained on affidavits previously sworn to by a justice of the peace.

It was, however, found on investigation that the offences turned out to be something altogether different from what the prisoners were charged with on their slip of paper.

When this loose method was represented to the legal adviser of the Government, he recommended that a separate department should be constituted to prepare proper indictments against prisoners before they came to their trial before the military tribunal, or before the chief magistrate.

Ordinary courts-martial in times of peace give, to a certain extent, to military officers an insight in law procedure, but that is quite a different thing from being Crown prosecutor, and all the paraphernalia of civil courts of law.

At first Major O'Brien and the district commissioners had great difficulties to contend with, and especially was this the case as regards those prisoners left at the fort by the previous Government, as no witnesses could be found. Many departed before the British troops entered, and many more were put over the border by order of the new authorities.

This state of things, however, was not altogether to the fancy of the prisoners in gaol; some fourteen whites and thirty coloured found themselves at the end of seven weeks still awaiting their trial.

To prove that the military authorities exercised sound sense and discretion when making their appointments for the judicial posts in Johannesburg, I will mention that Major O'Brien, the president of the military tribunal, was a magistrate in India for two years; Captain Victor Ferguson, South Wales Borderers, chief magistrate, is a distinguished linguist, a

valuable qualification in such a cosmopolitan community. The Crown prosecutor, Lieutenant Bates, Volunteer company Cheshire regiment, is in civil life a fully qualified solicitor. The assistant Crown prosecutor, Lieutenant Moseley, of the C.I.V., is a barrister; and Captain Thornley, the Crown solicitor, and the three indictment officers are all lawyers when pursuing their ordinary avocations.

The district commissioners of police are also men who have had some judicial experience; so in this town, at least, criminal offences are dealt with according to law; and in justice it might be said that the duties of the bench are very satisfactorily performed by our soldier-judges and advocates.

The laws of the previous Government were chiefly the Roman-Dutch laws, and are in themselves excellent, but it was in the administration of them that so much was left to be desired.

Under a military *régime* many cases come up for settlement that do not occur at all in times of peace, such as the contravening of the various military proclamations relating to passes for riding, driving, &c., in regard to all of which Lord Kitchener has made far stricter regulations than those existing when Lord Roberts was commander-in-chief of the forces in South Africa; the surrender of arms, ammunition, the manufacture of Kaffir beer, selling articles of food above schedule prices, and offences of a similar nature, are all peculiar to a state of things existing in a period of war and under a *régime* of martial law.

The difficulty of meting out justice to the various offenders is much increased by the polyglot character of the criminal classes of this community, and a few hours in court show the advantages of linguistic attainments. Frenchmen, Germans, Italians, Russians, Greeks, Dutchmen, Portuguese, Indians, Chinese, Malays, Zulus, Basutos, and Kaffirs of varying

dialects follow each other in rapid succession, either as prisoners or as witnesses, to say nothing of the English-speaking defaulters of unintelligible accents. Even fully qualified interpreters to the British army could not unaided cope with such a babel of tongues without local aid, which after delay and much vexation is forthcoming—aid that not infrequently is found to make confusion more confounded, as the translation given by the interpreters is more in accordance with their idea of what was meant, or should have been said, than what was actually stated.

As far as possible, the meaning of what the witnesses have to say is made out with more or less success at the Indictment office, thus facilitating considerably the work in court. Yet, in spite of this, the hearing of eighteen to twenty cases a day is a tedious process, and makes military officers long to be on the veld with their regiments.

There is no want of variety in these two courts of justice, for those who are called upon to answer for their misdeeds not only differ from each other in creed, colour, and language, but the charges range in seriousness, from murder and high treason to the possession of a couple of gallons of Kaffir beer, or from the theft of a herd of oxen to that of 100 rounds of ammunition.

Whether it is from the imperfect knowledge of the various languages, or due to the utter incapacity of Kaffirs to realise what truth is, of one thing there is no doubt, that there are often surprises in court which show that the sentences have not been given in strict accordance with the crimes committed.

A further difficulty is experienced with the detectives. From long habit, under Dutch administration, they up to a certain point assist the ends of justice, then for a consideration they throw in their influence in the opposite direction.

They bring a case forward to a certain stage, and then refuse to carry it to its final conclusion ; but as fast as these gentlemen's services can be dispensed with, they are put over the border, and their places filled by more trustworthy detectors of wrong-doing. Before quitting this subject entirely, I may mention that when they have not had a case for some time, they set to work to make one, lest the authorities should regard them as wanting in zeal !

The laws of the country that are most frequently violated are : the pass law for natives, the liquor law, and the gold law. As I have already said, the laws of the Transvaal are in themselves excellent.

Every native is provided with a travelling pass before leaving his own country, and on coming to a public digging this is then exchanged for a district pass, with the number for the current year, giving likewise full particulars as to the name and tribe, chief, country, and appearance of the native. Natives *must* possess district passes, which are kept in the custody of the employers, the natives having a smaller one for constant use. For being without a pass a native may be fined a maximum fine of £5—as an alternative or addition to the twenty-five lashes.

As soon as a native finds employment his employer takes out a monthly pass for him, which shows who he is and how he is employed.

If, however, he fails to find work in six days, his district pass may be taken away, and another travelling pass given to him, that he may go and try his luck in another labour district or return to his home. It is an offence to use a pass belonging to another, or to lend a pass. Per contra, it is an offence to engage a native who has not a district pass, or whose pass has been registered for more than six days, and does not show that he has been duly discharged by his last

employer within six days ; or not being an employer to engage natives for others, or act as agent for issuing and promising passes to native labourers.

Any employer having in his service twenty or more natives has to keep a register of them, and make a return monthly to the pass officer, showing any who have died, deserted, been discharged, or fresh ones engaged during the month. Any employer having in his service less than twenty natives is obliged to notify the pass official whenever he employs a native, and his residence and address whenever a native deserts his service.

Non-compliance with these stipulations lays householders and others open to a minimum fine of £5, or an alternative of three months' imprisonment.

On the Rand there are waiting-houses at the principal pass offices, where natives found without a pass are taken, and kept until they are claimed by their employers, or, if not claimed within six days, they are free to engage for other employment. A register of employers, with the number of natives they require, is kept at the Pass Office for the purpose.

Mr. Hugo, before the Mining Commission of Inquiry, says, in regard to the pass law : " It is a good law, but badly carried out." For, since it came into force, until the sitting of the commission in 1897, the " Robinson Company " had over 1600 boys desert from their service, and not a single one recaptured.

In theory the penalties for the sale of strong drinks to natives are very severe—*i.e.*, first offence, maximum fine of £75, or imprisonment for a term of six months ; second offence, minimum fine of £200, or minimum imprisonment of one year ; third offence, two years' imprisonment, and no option of a fine.

At one time I gave credit to the Transvaal Government

for administering the liquor law with the strictest vigilance, to check drunkenness, but, reading through the evidence before this commission, and a further study of the subject, proved I had come to a wrong conclusion. A consensus of opinion by those who have had to deal with this subject declares it was more defective in its administration than the pass law, because, unfortunately, its infringement in the past has been lucrative, not only to those who manufacture the beer and spirits for natives, but also to the police, who so vastly increased their incomes by overlooking grave contraventions of this law. Mr. Brakhan in his evidence on this question says: "One of the greatest difficulties the mines experience along the line of reef is the illicit liquor traffic, whereby a large number of natives are incapacitated from work for a third of the week." Provided the provisions of the law were carried out these mines would have the services of the boys for full time, and the natives themselves would be all the better for the restrictions imposed on their taste for poisonous liquor.

From the foregoing it will be seen that this law is both stringent and workable, and the best testimony in its favour is the fact that it has been taken over in its entirety and enforced by the military authorities under martial law.

Powers of administration are vested in a Liquor Commission, under the military governor. The commission consists of Major Macpherson (president), Captain Astell, Captain Baldwin, Mr. Brakhan, Mr. Pierce, and Lieutenant the Hon. Gavin Hamilton (secretary). These officers sit as often as is necessary, to consider applications for licences, wholesale, retail, and beer-hall.

The revenue of the Liquor Commission is derived from the payments received from these licences, which, on the following scale, are obviously too small:—

Wholesale, per month	.	.	.	£15	0	0
Retail,	„	.	.	10	0	0
Beer-hall,	„	.	.	3	0	0
Billiard table,	„	.	.	1	16	0

Each application for a licence being accompanied with £1.

All moneys received and required for expenses are dealt with by the financial adviser.

Some 300 applications had been received, out of which about forty had been granted up to the end of September 1900. In granting licences the commission has first to inquire into the character of the place and the applicant, and, that being satisfactory, to decide whether there is any necessity for a licence in that particular locality.

The question of stopping the illicit liquor traffic in the district of Johannesburg is one of the most important that will arise.

The liquor laws of the South African Republic can hardly be improved on, and had they been honestly and sufficiently administered, the traffic in liquor would have been in a very different condition to what it was before and during the war. The lower class Jews are practically all illicit liquor dealers, and are very clever in dealing with the natives; and it seems a pity that so many of them and suspicious foreigners of all sorts have under various pretexts been allowed to stay on in Johannesburg ever since the British occupation.*

The fearful and wonderful concession for distilling strong drink, which is really raw spirit, I give below *in extenso*; it being the first time it has been published, and it may be regarded as one of the most extraordinary ever granted by a Government.

* Since Lord Roberts' return to England all have been deported, a feature of the war that is now providing material for another Royal Commission. What is the position and responsibility of the British Government to these deported persons are questions that will prove most difficult to answer.

Extract from the *Government Gazette* of the African Republic of July 15, 1885 :—

DEED OF CONCESSION (MONOPOLY)

Granted and assured by the South African Republic Government to Alois Hugo Nellmapius, Esq., from the district of Pretoria, in consequence of and by power of certain resolutions passed by the Honourable Volksraad of the S.A. Republic on October 4, 1881 (Article 52), June 21, 1888 (Article 404), and June 17 (Article 464).

The Government of the South African Republic grants and assures to Alois Hugo Nellmapius, Esq., the sole and exclusive right for a period of thirty (30) years from the 1st day of July, 1882, to the 30th day of June, 1912, to make, distil, or manufacture within the S. A. Republic spirituous or intoxicating liquors from all kinds of corn, grain, potatoes, or other herb or produce growing in the country, with the exception of grapes and fruits from fruit trees. Alois Hugo Nellmapius shall sell or trade in the article manufactured by him to his own advantage or on his own behalf, with this provision, that he will do so as wholesale dealer, and he will not sell without the (proper) licence any quantity smaller than a hogshead, or, as far as "liqueurs" are concerned, cases ("Kisten") all on the conditions hereafter stipulated, to wit :—

That he pays to the Exchequer (or the country finances) £1000 (one thousand pounds sterling) per annum, on the 1st of July each year and every year.

That the last payment shall be on July 1st of 1912, with which the thirty payments of £1000 annually shall be paid off. If the aforesaid stipulations and conditions be not complied with, the granted concession, stated (described) by this present deed, shall be cancelled, lapsed, and revoked. The Government of the S. A. Republic pledges itself to and warrants that during the period (term) of the concession, *i.e.*, thirty years, as aforesaid, Alois Hugo Nellmapius, Esq., shall not be liable or subject to any other or further taxes with regard to the herein-stated monopoly (or concession) for the manufacturing or making of spirituous liquors.

Alois Hugo Nellmapius, Esq., shall be personally responsible and bound for the proper execution and compliance of the

conditions, but he retains the right of taking partners in this business.

Thus done and granted at Pretoria Government Office, South African Republic, this twenty-second day of June, 1885 (One thousand eight hundred and eighty-five).

(Signed) S. J. P. KRUGER, President of the State.
 „ W. EDUARD BOK, Secretary of the State.
 „ DR: W. J. LEYDS, Attorney General.
 „ A. H. NELLMAPIUS.

A True Translation.

(Signed) JOHNS. J. C. LEYDS, Sworn Translator.

Extract from the Government Notice, dated 29/6/85 (No. 132), published in Government Gazette of the S.A.R., dated 15/7/85.

Now, therefore, the Government of the South African Republic has, in consequence of and by power of Volksraad Resolution dated 17/6/85 (Article 464), divided the aforesaid monopoly or concession for the manufacturing of spirits or intoxicating liquors and of sugar, and has granted instead two separate concessions (monopolies), which are stated below, and which, after being issued, shall be ceded to the aforesaid company The First Factories in the S.A.R., Limited."

By order,

(Signed) W. EDUARD BOK, Secretary of State.
 Government Office, Pretoria,
 June 29, 1895.

A True Translation.

(Signed) JOHNS. J. C. LEYDS.

The late Mr. Nellmapius made over the concession to Messrs. Lewis & Marks, who have found it a veritable gold mine. The name of the distillery is the "Eerste Fabriek," or "First Manufactory," and is situated at Hatherley, a station on the Delagoa Bay line, about ten miles from Pretoria.

The connection between this pet concession of Mr. Kruger and the illicit liquor trade may not at first be obvious; but it must be borne in mind that no European would drink the

crude product of this distillery till it had matured for eight or ten years, and that if large profits are to be made the raw and fiery spirit must be sold to somebody or other in the early years of its unripe potency. The only person who would buy this “chain lightning” was the Kaffir, but the Kaffir was forbidden by law to purchase liquor of any sort. Hence the illicit trade and the shekels handed in by the concessionaires.

It is not for a moment to be imagined that the concessionaires sold direct to the Kaffir. That part of the business was carried on by their Peruvian friends, who bought wholesale from the distillery agencies, and before retailing it was further rendered more poisonous by additions of vitriol, cayenne pepper, &c. The reason why Mr. Kruger was constantly trying to have the prohibition law abolished will be more readily understood when it is remembered that the chief concessionaire, Mr. S. Marks, was one of his most intimate friends and advisers—one ever ready to give a helping hand to the coach of State when a little financial help was needed to grease the wheels.

Under a *régime* of martial law, with all the mines at a standstill, there are very few cases of contravention of the gold law to be dealt with by the military officers sitting in the seats of justice, though in times of peace it is a law that ought to be strictly enforced and somewhat amended, if this great gold mining industry is to be carried on with equity and upon a sound commercial basis, and be protected from unscrupulous buyers and illicit gold traders. There is no doubt that in the past the law was most inefficiently administered; attributable to a great extent to a defective detective system, and to the *lax morale* of almost all concerned. The truth of these remarks is proved to demonstration by the very few convictions, as compared to the large thefts of gold amalgam. What would South Africa be to the British nation, or what

would any other nation care for South Africa, were it not for the gold and precious stones that are to be found deep down in the bowels of the earth all over this vast sub-continent ?

The right of mining for and disposing of all precious metals and stones belonged to the State.

Prospecting, digging, and mining work was carried out on *claims* or *Mijnpachten* under the late Government. A tenth part of each farm thrown open for prospecting or mining was granted as a *Mijnpachten*, the owner's portion of the ground thrown open by Government, which must be held under a mining lease, which was issued for periods of not less than five years or for longer than twenty.

By legislation anterior to the war it was enacted that the surveyed claims thrown open as public diggings should be given out *by lot to the public*, on the day of throwing open to the public.

A curious point of law may possibly arise after the political settlement in connection with the claims on Government farms. In the early part of 1899 these farms were duly proclaimed, and in April and May the public drew their lottery numbers. The actual allotment was for some reason or other postponed until October. Up to the date of closing the lists it was estimated that the Government had collected from all sections of the public something between £20,000 and £30,000 in lottery fees. The public that had drawn lottery numbers were awaiting the official drawing, but in the meanwhile hostilities broke out, and the point of law arises as to what position the British Government will take up in regard to the existing gold law and their responsibilities to the public in regard to the circumstances narrated, and that in view of the terms of the published proclamations of the late Government. The taking out of the lottery numbers was characteristic of the cosmopolitan nature of this community. Various nationalities (British predominating) made

up the lists, and the rich capitalists' names appear side by side with those of the humble clerk and artisan. At the time speculation ran high as to whether the drawings would take place in a *bonâ fide* manner, but the outbreak of the war completely diverted public attention from the subject.

Another point of law that will arise in connection with these goldfields, but one that will not have to be settled by military officers during a period of martial law, and therefore finds no place in this chapter, but is nevertheless one of far greater importance than the lottery question, is referred to below.

In the early days of these goldfields the mining companies were granted certain surface rights for erection of machinery, storage of tailings, and so on. At a later stage it was found that as the “deep levels” proved successful those sites became most valuable as mining ground. But to whom should the underground rights be given? That became the vexed question. In 1897 the law provided that the underground rights to these grounds should be put up to sale by public auction, and that half the proceeds should go to the State and half to the owner of the farm; but in 1898 this provision was eliminated altogether from the law.

What the future destiny of these “Bewaarplaatsen” (literally storage sites) may be it is impossible at the present to say. Their commercial value, however, is estimated at several millions sterling! Some are of opinion they should be sold to defray the cost of the war. In the meanwhile it is costing the country a million and a half a week, and the British public are being taxed to pay the bill!

CHAPTER XXX

MINING

THE control of the mining industry in South Africa is a matter of great responsibility and bristles with difficulties. It should be regarded in the light of a great public department, and the Secretary for Mines or the Mining Commissioner should find his place in the front rank of colonial statesmen.

At present the control of the Mining Department is vested in Mr. Wybergh as commissioner of mines for South Africa, who is also the acting principal Government mining engineer. Assistant mining engineers, and inspectors of mines have also been appointed to other districts of the Transvaal. Formerly everything connected with mining was managed by the Chamber of Mines, a committee of gentlemen with much the same functions as the Chamber of Commerce in London or Liverpool.

Since the British occupation until quite recently *all* the mines have stopped working; and as the duties of the Commissioner and his officers are chiefly administrative, no revenue is being collected.

In the past the local commissioners had many duties to perform besides those connected with the mines, such as chairmanship for the Sanitary Board, local administration of native affairs, &c., but these questions now fall under the jurisdiction of officers set apart for the purpose, or they

come under the administration to which they severally belong.

In the technical branch, or Mining Engineers' Department, the Commissioner is assisted by the Inspector of Mines, Captain Beachy Head, who is doing the work of five inspectors in ordinary times, which of course would be impossible if the mines were working.

His principal duties are to see that the mining regulations are carried out, that the mines are kept in repair and quite safe.

The Mining Commissioner is the medium of communication between the mining industry and the Imperial Government, and has to supervise such things as the coal supply for pumping purposes, the provision of stores, food, and labour for the mines, and the granting of permits of any description for the mining area.

The granting of permits under martial law is a great feature and one that has to be met at every turn.

Those mines that were kept working during the Boer occupation of Johannesburg, and those that were allowed to pump right through the war, are practically ready to commence operations as soon as the political state of the country and the labour market will allow; whilst permits have been granted to unwater other mines, whose managers were put over the border, all of whom, and thousands of others, are beseeching Sir Alfred Milner to permit them to return to their usual avocations, offering their services for garrison or police duties so that they may return.*

The wisdom of withholding this permission was very apparent to those entrusted with military operations and

* Since writing the above, to a limited extent their prayers have been granted. The mines are recommencing work gradually; the miners are employed to protect the mining area, and activity and prosperity are reappearing.

with the direction of civil affairs in the earlier stages of the war.

It was with the greatest difficulty food and coals in sufficient quantities could be brought into the town to meet the requirements of the military and the handful of civilians that were in it.

As a proof of this I may mention that the proprietor of Heath's Hotel was, when I was staying there, obliged to draw the officers' rations and allow for them on their account, and this he certainly would not have done if the meat and other eatables had been obtainable for money. Then, again, the question of coals was one of great difficulty. The Netherlands Railway Company having removed about 8000 trucks and, roughly speaking, 180 locomotives to the neighbourhood of the Portuguese frontier, trucks for the transport of coals for the use of the mines on the Rand were very scarce, especially as the military demands on the rolling stock were large and had first claim. Since these trucks and engines have been released transport of every kind has been of far easier accomplishment. (See the despatch at the end of the volume.)

The military director of railways did all in his power to meet the various claims that were made upon his resources, but he could not make trucks and engines, neither could he guarantee the safety of the coal mines.

To exemplify of what magnitude the industry is on these goldfields, 40,000 tons of coal a month will be required for pumping purposes alone to free the mines from water, and thus place things once again in a working condition. When the batteries are all at work, approximately 100,000 tons of coal per month will be needed east and west of Johannesburg.

Some few weeks ago twenty engineers representing the large firms and financial companies were permitted to pro-

ceed to this town to report on the state of the mines, &c., and when this was done to return again to Cape Town. They were unanimous in their verdict that the damage done was surprisingly small, owing to the firmness of the rock of the workings and the precautions taken to prevent the deterioration of the machinery.

The buildings were also found in good condition owing, in no small degree, to the vigilance of the International mining police, which have been guarding the mines until recently.

When more normal conditions obtain again, that is when peace in South Africa is restored, and the workmen, white as well as native, are allowed to return to their labours, no time will be lost in putting the batteries on the Witwatersrand to work and swarming the mines with a busy hive of human beings numbering about 80,000 white men and about 100,000 natives.

What this means to the money market of the world can be easily gauged by the fact that the production of gold during the nine months January to August, prior to the war amounted to £12,485,032, produced by an average of 5672 stamps and from 5,556,317 tons of ore.

With the return of peace, and ameliorated conditions for commercial enterprise under the British flag, a vast expansion is in store for the goldfields of the Witwatersand, and the general development of the whole country, both in mining and agriculture.

The conditions of mining, so far as they can be, are favourable in this part of Africa; there is but little water to contend with, the temperature even in the Deep Deep levels are quite normal, the hanging walls are firm and safe. Coal to any amount is obtainable in the immediate neighbourhood, and at moderate cost.

There is no doubt that had it not been for the close proximity of the coal deposits to the gold deposits it would have

been impossible to have worked some of the mines, on account of the cost of fuel. The total coal supply for the mining industries coming into Johannesburg amounted to over 100,000 tons per month, and practically the whole of this came from a district some twenty to thirty miles to the east of the town.

These mines are chiefly responsible for the output of coal, and the deposits are so extensive that at the same rate there is no fear of a cessation of their capabilities for the next half-century.

The second and third, also the fourth row of deep level (4800 feet) will be exploited, and the gold-bearing areas in the eastern and western extensions of the Rand, where the reef has been proved to exist and to carry gold in paying quantities, and where, as yet, but little work has been done, will be developed, and the output of the yellow metal on this vast goldfield will swell the total and make more capitalists. These advantages, and the liberality and consistency with which nature has deposited the gold among the pebbles forming the conglomerate, must necessarily tend to attract capital seeking investment. In addition to the prospective expansion of the mining industry itself there will be the indirect impetus given to all kinds of industrial enterprises that are closely connected with gold-mining; for instance, mechanical engineering, extension of building operations on mining properties and for residences; supplies of lime for the extraction by the cyanide process; afforestation; import, export, and trade generally. There is no end to the possibilities of development in South Africa. Each succeeding year will bring more and more responsibility for the British Government. So much will this be the case that a seat in the Cabinet will have to be created for the Secretary of State for South Africa, the same as exists for India, if the administration of the country is to be carried on according to its

needs and importance. There will then be plenty of hard work left for local statesmen.

Under the Secretary for Mines there will fall the administration of the large number of permanent offices connected with the leading industry of the country.

Government Mining Engineer with his staff of assistants, surveyors, and inspectors.—The department of geological survey will have to be developed and receive a good share of the Government's attention, as not only the local geological areas are imperfectly surveyed and mapped out, but the geological features of the country as a whole require to be scientifically examined and reported upon.

Hitherto almost all reliable geological reports have been made either at the instance of financial bodies or individuals, for the purpose of investment, and could not be presumed to be free from bias, as they have been the outcome of the work of certain enthusiasts who have favourite theories to expand, which detract from the merits of the report as independent investigation.

What is required is free information *ad quorum* as to the geological character of the country by impartial Government scientists. Some maintain that the reef runs right through the whole continent of Africa, though the vein is lost for a space, including even the goldfields of Rhodesia, which others again deny.

Certain geologists of great reputation have given it as their unbiased opinion "that the wealth of gold has hardly been discovered yet, as the deeper the level the richer the ore." As for Pretoria, it will rival even Kimberley in its diamonds.

Doubtless there will be a considerable expansion of small townships outside Johannesburg, such as Krugersdorp, Roodepoort, Germiston, &c. In these mining towns and villages it is highly probable that under a more settled Government

the miners and citizens may be inclined to bring their wives and families from England and the colonies and to make South Africa their permanent home.

Oom Paul would have no interfering with Pretoria in this connection. He used to say, "I will have no Uitlanders here; my hands are full enough with those in Johannesburg." This leads up to the highly important question of education.

Before the outbreak of hostilities a scheme was on foot to establish a system of subsidised schools along the Witwatersrand for the benefit of the children of the artisans and miners working on these goldfields. The mining companies had promised to subscribe liberally, and, in fact, a council of education actually existed, with a constitution and functions similar to those of an English School Board. The obstacles in the past to the fulfilment of such a good object would be removed if the working man on the mines would settle down to a regular domestic life. This would enable the new generation of miners to acquire the technical knowledge necessary and at the same time to learn the Kaffir language, without which their value as superintendents of native labour is of comparatively little account. As for those that have been born in the country they have hardly any practical experience in mining.

One great want which is evident to all who have been to this country, no less than in the Witwatersrand district, is that of good roads. Some time ago a main road was commenced along the line of reef, and a number of indigent burghers were employed in its construction. The completion of this necessary work will no doubt be undertaken by the new Government at an early date after peace and order are restored. When I left Johannesburg, in October 1900, 400 men, chiefly burghers, were being employed on the "relief" road which leads to the municipal sewage farm; the construction of further large dams and reservoirs will also in

time be a necessity to the district, where, although the maximum rainfall throughout the year is a good one, there occur long spells of drought, extending over many months.

In 1895 no rain fell for over nine months; indeed, a good and regular supp'y of water is one of the most vital elements of existence, and the question of irrigation on a large scale will have to be considered if there is to be a large permanent white population resident in South Africa.

CHAPTER XXXI

NATIVE AFFAIRS

THE officer in charge of native affairs is Captain Baldwin, R.A. It is only those who have some experience of the native of South Africa, his importance in the labour market, and some knowledge of the burning questions that rage in regard to him, who can form any idea of the difficulties and complications that beset this department.

The conclusion of peace will see the re-opening of the labour question throughout the country, but more especially on the Witwatersrand, when those mines which have continued pumping throughout the war will be, more or less, ready to commence work at once.

The question of the relations of the native labourers towards their white masters will be one of the most difficult problems of the future in this great African continent.

As a subordinate race, mentally and morally inferior, the natives must of necessity bear the chief part of the manual labour of the country. But there is no doubt that they should benefit by the blessings of civilisation that follow the Union Jack ; that they should be protected in their work, receive the due reward of their labour, and be secure in their journey from and to their kraals.

Since the opening up of the Witwatersrand the natives have migrated gradually towards the gold mines for the purpose of earning sufficient means to meet their current expenses and to increase their stock of cattle.

Previous to the outbreak of hostilities these goldfields employed close on 100,000 natives, exclusive of the numbers employed in domestic service in the town of Johannesburg and surrounding districts, and on the neighbouring coal mines.

After the declaration of war in October 1899, the great bulk of the natives were, with great tact and care, deported from the country without any disturbance, loss of life, or damage to property. During the progress of hostilities some 10,000 to 15,000 remained to work those mines the Government kept going, and to pump some others that were shut down, but they were perfectly orderly under the firm control of the Boer authorities. Those working on the mines had their pay reduced by Government proclamation to a maximum of £1 a month; nevertheless, they continued working at the reduced scale, without resistance or any attempt at an industrial strike. The Government endeavoured to enact a regulation compelling private householders to pay no more for native domestic servants than the sum of £1 a month; but as this was an infringement on the liberty of the subject, the authorities were forced to withdraw their proclamation.

It must not be supposed, however, that although the natives continued to work on during the period of the war at their reduced wage they were satisfied. Far from it. On the day that the Field Marshal's forces entered Johannesburg, thousands of the natives along the district were excitedly discussing amongst themselves the probability of fairer treatment being meted out to them, of higher rates of pay being given, and even in some instances it was confidently anticipated that the British Government would redress all their grievances, and pay up all the arrears between their reduced wages and that they had been accustomed to receive prior to the war. Thus, a native stable boy received £3 a month before the outbreak of hostilities. His pay on January 1 was

reduced to £1 a month ; he therefore flattered himself that the new authorities would cause him to be paid £2 a month to May 31, *i.e.*, £10 arrear pay, besides an immediate increase of wages. Furthermore, those amongst them of a bolder nature became exceedingly insolent and offensive to white residents—a sort of rebound towards political equality. The natives soon found out their mistake ; and under martial law, at all events, the British could be just as strict and firm in enforcing order and obedience to regulations as the former Transvaal Government had been. More than once they discovered that the military authorities dealt even more severely with the actual loafing and thieving class than the Boers had done. All “ boys ” found without a master or fixed employment are immediately taken to a central depôt, where they are fed and sheltered until work can be found for them—a wise and admirable scheme ; one that answers well in practice. An official petty court, presided over by military officers, was established for the trial of all disputes existing between master and servant. The existing pass law was maintained provisionally, to secure identification of the natives and to minimise desertion from service. Taken as a whole, it may be safely said that the military treatment in regard to natives from the time of the British occupation is regarded by the various sections of this cosmopolitan community as most wise and judicious, but the fear is in many quarters expressed that after the cessation of martial law, when the civil government will be renewed, that the errors of British authorities in dealing with the native population may be repeated.

The separation in locations from the white people of the Kaffirs, which are again subdivided into quarters for the natives from India, is right and most necessary. It may seem harsh, and putting the natives on too low a level, to those who advocate equal rights for all ; but it is the best way to keep the blood of the nation pure, which is the

primary cause of our success as a colonising power. An abhorrence of intermarriage with a native should be assiduously inculcated in the mind of every British man and woman.

The department as at present constituted has control of the supply of native labour to the Imperial Railway and other departments in the proclaimed districts in the neighbourhood of Johannesburg. The difficulties of competition, desertion, high pay, &c., encountered by the mines in the past have all arisen from the inadequacy of the supply of labour, and there appears to be a widespread feeling that it will be the duty of future Governments to remove these obstacles from the path of the directors of mines; but however benevolent the British Government may be, they can hardly deal with such difficulties of commercial enterprise, nor allow any section of the people (white or black) to be coerced into a service, and on terms they are not disposed to accept voluntarily. There is nothing like competition and difficulties to bring to light the sterling qualities of a community. In the way of affording protection to the natives travelling to and from the mines, of seeing that contracts freely entered into are observed on both sides, of making arrangements with neighbouring States, and of facilitating and encouraging immigration generally, there can be no doubt that it is the duty of the Government to assist the industry of the country to the best of its ability, and then it is practically certain that by such means the supply itself will increase to a given point. Nevertheless, it must be remembered that the same causes will attract more capital to the country, and that the investment of it will increase the demand for labour, so that on the whole it may be a moot question whether the increased supply will be more than sufficient to meet the increased demand, thus leaving the deficit much the same as it was before.

The best statistics available place the native population south of the Zambesi at 6,000,000 souls. If from this number be deducted the women and children, old men, inaccessible tribes, domestic servants, and those who, from various reasons, do not desire or are not suited to mine work, it would still be a high estimate to place the number of men available for work on the mines at 750,000, and it would be most difficult to say what proportion of these natives has been educated up to the industrial requirement, but certainly it is not a large one.

The education of the native is a *questio vexata*. It is one that has puzzled the brains of many able statesmen and generous-hearted philanthropists. That the native subjects in his Majesty's dominions should reap the advantages of his beneficent rule is most right, and is a policy to which the Government (whichever side is in power) is committed. But civilisation makes slow strides with the native races in South Africa. They entirely differ from the natives of India. Their minds have never come under the refining influence of high art, such as bear testimony to the Indian's intelligence; specimens of whose beautiful workmanship, in gold, silver, ivory, wood, and stone, may be seen any day in our museums all over the country.

To lead the native gradually onwards to a higher destiny and habits of civilisation is a task worthy of the energy and purpose of thoughtful statesmen; but it is well, considering there is no substratum of cultivated intelligence to work upon, that the steps taken should be slow; and any attempt to span the centuries too quickly would be as devoid of good results as suddenly to replace the present members in the House of Commons by a Parliament of agricultural labourers and citizens of the east end of London.

The mental characteristics of the natives show a marked difference as compared with those of the white man. As a

savage he may at times compare favourably, from a moral point of view, with certain deteriorated and depraved types of white men; he is nevertheless still a savage. Experience has proved in the past that the best educated natives remain more or less true to the savage instincts of their race when put to the test of temptation, just the same as a tamed lion or tiger.

The native mind is in a state of transition. The native, in his relations to the white people, is like a child, without originality or power of conception, possessing, nevertheless, a dogged sense of independence and freedom of action—mental qualities acquired by a long series of influences extending over many centuries, and consequent on being subject to a purely military despotism; as one may say, body and soul the slave of his chief. In war the native embodies to the full the militant idea of tribal rights and tribal warfare. It is only the presence of the regular Government of the white peoples in South Africa that has restrained the native tribes from internecine struggles. In their tribal life there are great points of resemblance to that of the ancient Hebrews: the same patriarchal control prevailing. Especially is this observable amongst the Zulu tribes.

The native is to a great extent a fatalist. At the present stage of his development it seems an utter impossibility for him to realise the idea of individual effort towards progress, but it is absolutely necessary for him to be so far educated that he knows *how* to earn his living and the *obligation* he is under to do so, and to respect *contracts* or any kind of agreements of service. But at present this is most repulsive to him. What he likes when his master displeases him or treats him badly is to walk off at a moment's notice. Such a method results in obvious disadvantages, and, if universal, would create endless disturbance and inconveniences. It not infrequently happens in this town of Johannesburg that

a lady proposes to give a dinner-party for such and such an evening, but perhaps an hour or two before the guests are expected she finds her staff of native servants has *all* gone!

Under an industrial form of society this should be impossible, therefore it is essential that one of the first elements of the native's education towards civilisation should be to teach him to *respect all* contracts of service in common with other agreements which he is keen enough to abide by.

To this end, however, something more is required than the loose methods hitherto in vogue of entering into verbal agreements. Both employers and employed should obtain some means of preventing either side from arbitrarily breaking away from their undertakings.

The native population being such an all-important factor in this country, an able and experienced man should be appointed as Secretary for Native Affairs when the military *régime* gives place to civil administration. All officials under him should be carefully selected from those who have intimate knowledge of the working of the native mind. In a large industrial district like the goldfields of the Witwatersrand, an official should be appointed as "Protector of Native Immigrants," in whom they would have absolute confidence. Such an official, if the right sort of man were secured, would be regarded by the bulk of the native labouring population—always more or less floating—as the substitute, for the time being, for their own chief, which would, in a measure, maintain the native in his customs, his laws, and in his beliefs, and keep him in subjection to the same idea of tribal authority in which he and his forefathers have been brought up. Where white people, kindly disposed, attempt to influence the native mind and mould it after their own, the result is often most disappointing. By virtue of circumstances, the militant habits of the past, and the insecurity of human life

that formerly prevailed, the natives are naturally extremely cautious and suspicious in all their dealings with the white people and even amongst themselves; otherwise one may say he is loyal and faithful to authority. It is seldom he is known to betray his trust or break confidence. It was one of the greatest difficulties the late Government had to contend with in connection with the illicit liquor traffic that the natives would never divulge the names of the dealers that supplied them with those pernicious drinks that so utterly demoralise them.

Generally speaking, too, the natives are free from petty jealousies and small-minded reprisals. Nor are they revengeful by disposition; but in some of the other higher qualities that make up the civilised man they are positively deficient. They have no sense of gratitude for kindness rendered them. They have in a mechanical way acquired in the towns the habit of repeating "thank you" for services rendered, but of gratitude in the ordinary sense they have none. In this respect they show their spirit of fatalism. The benefits they receive from the benevolent and through the Church they accept, and in regard to the donors they feel no gratitude, as it has nothing to do with them. If persons like to be good to them, that is their own affair.

They are (in a certain sense) fond of their children, but of the actual sentiment of love of their womankind, as understood by European races, they are nearly devoid. Except for a preference shown for certain damsels of their tribe, the young men do not cherish the tender emotion towards the weaker sex that European society has for centuries encouraged and cultivated.

The natives are wonderfully close reasoners; their mind has a subtlety of its own, and the exceptions are rare when a person direct from Europe can thoroughly comprehend their sophistry in matters of dispute. They are born sophists,

and no rhetorician is more adept at using paralogisms than is a native chief or head man.

As a civilising and commercial power this question of the natives is very important, and in South Africa it is focused chiefly in Johannesburg and its surrounding districts.

In the course of a few years, under the new conditions of security of contract and increased confidence resulting from British government, the number of natives on the Rand at any given time will not be less than 150,000. The average period of service is about six months, so that the total number of natives required for a year would be 900,000. Now, if these figures are correct, it will be seen that a little less than one half of the total number of natives available must pass annually through the Rand to supply the demand. To all those who will give the subject a moment's thought this will at once appear as impossible, and the real solution of the labour market for the South African goldfields is as far off as ever.

To 80,000 natives the sum of two and a half millions is annually paid in wages, exclusive of the board and lodging which is found by the company employing them: an average scale far beyond anything paid in any other mining country in the world. The native's whole object in coming to the goldfields is to earn high wages, that he may return to his kraal, often hundreds of miles away, a rich man, and there purchase cattle to enable him to barter for wives, who will do the work whilst he sits down, or hunt when he feels inclined, or go on the warpath at the bidding of his chief.

Thus, the Kaffir has just the same thought as the white man when he starts on his long and weary trudge of a few hundred miles to the goldfield of which he has heard glowing descriptions from the mining agent: that is, go away for a few years, get rich, return home, marry, and live at ease, and enjoy his hard-earned wealth. But this does not tend

to the supply of the labour market, nor to the ideals of civilisation.

In the commission of inquiry on the mining industry, the South African Republic sought the advice of the most experienced men on the Witwatersrand as to how best to solve this great difficulty, and their evidence is compiled and published for the future guidance of those who may have to deal with the natives, how best to attract them to the mines, and keep them when once in the district.

Many suggestions to increase the labour supply have been made, such as the establishment of large locations near the mining centres, the importation of coolies, Chinese, West Coast Africans, Abyssinians, &c.; but the disadvantages inherent in each and every scheme of this description have, up to the present, been strong enough to prevent a serious attempt to carry them out.

That the best methods of attracting the available supply have been practised in the past appears doubtful; in fact, to an inexperienced observer it would seem that every means had been employed to discourage the immigration of natives to the mining areas.

A complicated and inefficiently administered pass law, indifferent compound management and food (as demonstrated by continual outbreaks of scurvy), fines, deductions from pay to cover the expense of importation, bad treatment by compound managers and individual miners, robbery on the road home, and many other examples of cruelty and want of consideration, which when related in their kraals do not lose in the telling, nor encourage those who have never left home to do so to try their luck on these said goldfields. That they do come is attributable to the high rate of pay promised by the labour agents (but not always received at the day of reckoning by the natives); to the pressure brought to bear by the chief at the instance of the agents, to exert his paternal

influence, and, perhaps to the knowledge that drink was abundant and fiery.

Those entrusted by the British Government to administer native affairs will no doubt honestly do all in their power to remove these and other abuses as they appear, and assist the great industry by efficient laws and equal justice, by vigilant inspection of compounds; and the Government will hold itself responsible for the general good treatment of the natives, assist them on their way to the mines, and protect them when returning to their kraals.

The following original letter signed by five Indian natives will show what unbounded faith the natives have in British justice, and is an indisputable proof that the empire's greatness rests on moral no less than material foundations.

Transvaal, South Africa,
30/5/00.

GENERAL MASTER TO TROOPS.

I have the Honour Respectfully to your sir, please. I am the Indian boys, the Queen Victoria is bring me from Indian Cutta. I working to my belly and I get my food in the Country, sir, the Dutch people before 3 Months the Boer take mine 2 oxen and 4 horse, and yesterday the Dutch man take my 1 oxen, when the Englishman come in the Transvaal is make many trouble with me, and the british government is want the Indian thinks is can take all my thinks, and the English can take me to work, please the Queen Victoria is it Indian people mother and fathers, your obidiently,

- (1) SUNKURSING.
- (2) SOOKRAM.
- (3) GANGATHEEN.
- (4) SEYAMBUR.
- (5) CHATHY.

Elsburg Farm
30/5/00.

The one great need on this Witwatersrand is to have

honourable, honest men to regulate and carry on public affairs—men who would scorn bribery, or be in any way open to corruption. What neither this Government nor any other can do, is to make men honest by law, though something may be done through fear of it. In many cases the men to be made honest are not only the Kaffirs: it is they who have sat in high places.

One of the inducements held out to the natives to come to work on the mines was the facility for obtaining drink, but it must not be assumed that any encouragement was directly given by the previous Government to this end. On the contrary, the authorities professed to exercise the strictest vigilance to check drunkenness, and so prevent the demoralisation of the natives; still, it was held out as a promise to them by the agents, and a feeling of broken faith is the result, though their efforts to obtain the "chain lightning" fluid have generally been only too successful.

There are but few people who take exception to the policy of total prohibition of liquor to natives, and some maintain that an honest administration can absolutely prevent the sale of drink to them, though they deny the possibility that any future Government will be strong enough to compel the fulfilment of contracts, and check desertion.

With all due deference to the opinions of others, the enforcement of sobriety is the more difficult problem to solve; on one hand there are 150,000 Kaffirs, a large proportion of whom want drink, and a large number of white men, mean and otherwise, who, in view of the enormous profits to be made by the sale of illicit liquor, are determined to supply the demand; and when these two factors are taken in conjunction with the fact that the native can never be persuaded to betray the man who sells the drink, the difficulties connected with this illicit trade are not easily overcome. There is but one way to do it: prevent these two parties from coming together.

Whatever salary the Government can afford to pay an official to see that the law is carried out, the illicit dealer can afford to give him ten times as much to wink at its infraction ; and even the best police are human and will at times yield to the temptation money offers.

Those who do not believe in the possibility of effectual total prohibition to the native population advocate a permissive system. They would grant licences only to respectable dealers, who would be required to deposit a heavy security as a guarantee, both for the quantity and quality, also as to the method of serving it to their customers. That is to say, the quality would have to be up to a certain standard, and the drink consumed on the premises. The advocates of this system admit that a certain number of natives *would* get drunk, but under the law of total prohibition it is contended they would not only do so, but become mad with the poison they are supplied with : and increasing the severity of the penalties for this illicit traffic does not suppress it, but merely tends to raise the price and lower the quality of the article sold. Another suggestion is : keep the law of prohibition in full force, but allow a ration of good wholesome liquor to be served out to the mining Kaffirs under Government regulations and supervision. The natives who come from the east coast are accustomed to liquor, and feel the loss of it considerably. Underground mining work at such deep levels is very exhausting and disagreeable, and no one but a fanatic will deny that the working men would be all the better for a certain amount of wholesome stimulant. When this principle is admitted the quantities and times can be regulated according to their shifts, or if they prefer they could have the equivalent in money, much the same as sailors who have their rations of rum. Under this arrangement liquor would be strictly forbidden to the town Kaffirs, who are well fed and housed, and live under altogether healthier conditions.

There is another great question in regard to the native—his wages. His employers think them too high (did an employer ever exist who thought otherwise?). What the native thinks is not so clear, but a vague conception might be formed by reducing his wages until it was found that none would come to work on the mines for the amount offered. Even at their high rate of pay the supply is always inadequate.

A visitor to the Transvaal is at first impressed with what appear to be high rents, handsome salaries, and extravagant rates of wages paid to artisans and labourers of every description; but a little investigation shows that the whole basis of remuneration for labour comes down to the cost of labour of the natives, and that again is regulated by the cost of living, which is higher than anywhere else in the world.

If the native carried back all his earnings to his kraal he might then be able to buy cattle and wives, and live in comparative idleness for the rest of his life; but he finds, like a good many white men, that there are a great many deductions to be made before he can realise his dream of exalted Kaffir-dom amongst his own tribe.

A native from Portuguese territory earns say £3 a month on a mine, and also receives his food, but with its quality and lack of variety he is dissatisfied, and spends at least another £1 a month at eating-houses, and drink costs him 5s. more, which leaves him £1 15s., so that at the end of six months he will have saved £10. From this, however, he must deduct £3 to cover the expenses his employer has been at to bring him to the mines. Then again, if these natives escape being robbed by the Boers, they probably have to disgorge on their return to their own chiefs; so in many cases they are in the same position as if they had never been to the goldfields at all. In many other directions they have also to run the gauntlet before they can buy their cattle and secure their

wives, especially as the price of the former has greatly advanced since the outbreak of the rinderpest, and that regulates the latter.

In spite of the fact that two and a half millions sterling are annually spent on native labour in this Witwatersrand district, yet it can hardly be stated that the natives are getting rich too quickly, as, when he enters the town, the native must be properly dressed, and many articles which were formerly luxuries are now necessaries; showing that by degrees he is being raised from his original state of barbarity, and will learn to profit by the advantage of being a subject of an enlightened monarch, and is progressing gradually towards civilisation.

Another difficulty which is ever before the large employers of labour is that of desertion; and it is one that comes constantly before the administration of native affairs. The origin of the trouble lies as much with the contractor of native labour or their agents as with the Kaffirs.

An agent arranges with an employer for a thousand natives, and agrees to pay them £2 10s. a month and food, in addition to paying all their expenses from their kraals, free drinks, &c.; a bonus of £1 a head being given to the agent on delivery at Johannesburg.

Under British rule such like corruption will cease, but the chiefs will not only demand what they are used to obtain, but more, since the agent will have to be a more respectable and honest man, and the "presents" offered to the chief for "persuading" natives to come will be of less value. It will be the duty of the Government to see that whatever inducements are held out to natives by employers are strictly adhered to, and all promises fulfilled.

The only way to check desertion is to do away with its causes; the most glaring of which are: (1) The misrepresentation by agents; (2) The action of touts; and by better management of the compounds.

The great evil of desertion, however, requires no heroic remedies ; it can be dealt with by a properly conceived and honestly administered pass law ; by the appointment of qualified officials in native districts and on the main routes of entry into the country. Then the employers themselves have a great deal in their own hands. Without their connivance the tout would not exist, and, consequently, the natives would not be lured away to other employers who promise them superior advantages ; and, certainly, it is within their competence to see that the managers of the compounds do their duty to the natives in their charge.

CHAPTER XXXII

JOHANNESBURG MUNICIPALITY

DURING the period of martial law under the Boer authorities the town of Johannesburg was extremely quiet.

Most of the English people had been put over the border, and most of the Dutch were on commando.

Here and there in the streets one came across a bit of a boy with a rifle, looking like a country lout going out for a day's shooting. He might occasionally ask a question in Dutch, but as to the answer he did not appear to be particularly interested.

After the occupation by the British martial law was found to have quite another significance, though it was by no means as strictly enforced in Johannesburg, until quite recently, as it was in Pretoria.

The taking over or the modifying of the obligations of the late Government in regard to the following proclamation has agitated the minds of the few remaining residents and the refugees in the colony not a little, caused by the meetings that were called together to discuss the no-rent question. The apprehension got abroad that tenants of houses might after all be compelled to begin the payment of their rents before the means of earning the wherewithal was possible. The fear of the edict being also retrospective also made them feel most anxious. It would have spelt ruin to the majority of households who had been depending on the terms of the proclamation.

PROCLAMATION BY HIS HONOUR THE PRESIDENT.

Translation.

BE IT HEREBY MADE KNOWN THAT

Since the proclamation of martial law (L w No. 20, 1898) and the stoppage in consequence to a large extent, or wholly, of the earnings of the public in general, it has been found necessary to make certain provisions with regard to the collection of moneys for rent of dwellings, business places, farms, or portions thereof under contract of hire.

So it is that I, STEPHANUS JOHANNES PAULUS KRUGER, President of the South African Republic, with the advice and consent of the executive council, according to Article 966 of their Minutes dated October 24, 1899, do hereby proclaim and make known:—

(1) From the date of the proclamation of martial law (Law No. 20, 1898) until the same is withdrawn, the owners or agents of dwellings, farms, or portions thereof, will in no case have the right to demand rent moneys from their tenants, nor will the owners or their agents after martial law is repealed have any claim on the rent for the period during martial law.

From these provisions will be excluded all who have rented buildings used as shops, or where any other business is carried on. For such buildings, however, only half the usual rental can be collected during the time martial law remains in force, and neither owners nor their agents will be allowed, when martial law is repealed, to demand more than half-rent for the period during the operation of the said law.

Lessees of houses, or portions thereof, in which a spirit merchant's business was carried on, and whose business is at present closed by order of the Government, according to executive council resolution, Article 907, dated October 2, 1899, will fall under the same provision as the lessees of dwelling houses aforementioned, as long as the last mentioned executive council resolution remains in force.

(2) Private loan entered into by means of bonds on ground or other fixed property, shall not during the period aforementioned be liable to interest, and no recovery of interest can be made by the bondholder after repeal of martial law for such period. This

stipulation shall also apply to loans granted under the amortisation fund.

GOD SAVE LAND AND PEOPLE.

Given under my hand at Pretoria, on this the 25th day of October, 1899.

(Signed) S. J. P. KRUGER,
State President.

„ F. W. REITZ,
State Secretary.

It is a well-known fact that the municipal government of Johannesburg under the Boers was most corrupt.* If a burgher did not want to pay his rates and taxes he wrote to Mr. Kruger, and an authorisation was given exempting the objector from liability, not only on that particular occasion but also for the future. Out of the forty-five thousand inhabitants of Johannesburg there were only a thousand burghers who had a property qualification to vote. Yet one half of the management of the town's affairs was in their hands.

It requires but a short residence in Johannesburg to find out that it is a heavily taxed place. It costs more to live here than anywhere in the world. Double the income is required to provide a far lower standard of comfort than prevails in any other quarter. Had the Boers been successful and realised their aspiration for a United Dutch Republic for all South Africa it was their intention to make Johannesburg pay the £50,000 promised to Mr. Steyn for his co-operation to secure the closer union of the two Republics, as well as the additional £100,000 to be given to him when the consolidation had been accomplished. A further inducement was that he should eventually become President in place of Mr. Kruger, who would in the nature of things retire, or depart this life. The Boer forecast, happily, has been falsified by the result.

* Loans and concessions are dealt with in a separate chapter. The municipal accounts were so managed as to provide large sums for the secret service, and irregularities appear under almost every head of expenditure.

The upshot of the war has been most disastrous for Mr. Kruger and Mr. Steyn, as well as for the poor burghers, who were deceived by the grossest misrepresentations. Until time has proved how terribly the people were misguided much bitterness of feeling will remain, though, to speak from my own experience, I saw nothing of it when in their houses. The first duty of the Government is to place thoroughly honest and honourable men at the head of departments.

In a letter which I have received from a burgher, who cannot be described as satisfied with the turn of events, there occurs the following statement: "As a citizen I heartily endorse the golden opinions you have formed of the tact and judgment of the Military Governor and the military officers under him—an opinion entertained by all civilians who have any business relations with the Imperial authorities." This is as it should be; but it is obviously not easy for men who are military and not civil administrators to give satisfaction to all who have important interests in this hurrying mining town. The post of burgomaster is at present held by Major O'Meara, an officer in the Royal Engineers graded as D.A.A.G. The major's valuable services as chief staff officer to Colonel Kekewich during the siege of Kimberley will be remembered. A brief acquaintance with him leaves the impression that the ruling thought of his life and actions is equity. Constantly one hears him ask whether a certain thing is right, or whether it is the best that can be done in the circumstances. When military rule has to give place to civil control it is earnestly to be hoped that such an official as Major O'Meara may be found to hold sway in this town, where heretofore anything could be managed by a bribe.

On June 1, when the British occupied Johannesburg, the jurisdiction of the Town Council extended over only the twelve wards proper of the town. Outside the limits on the north and the east were the townships of Parktown, Berea, Yeoville,

Lorentzville, Bellevue, Bertram's Town, and Troyeville, which managed their own municipal affairs. The work of the municipality was, during the Boer dispensation, arranged under the following heads: Secretary's Department, Town Treasurer's Department, Lighting Department, Town Engineer's Department, Sanitary Department, Medical Officer of Health's Department, Fire Brigade, Traffic Department, Inspector of Locations' Department, and the Assizer's Department. After the British occupation one of the first acts of the new Government was the inclusion of the outlying townships in the municipality, so as to put the whole inhabited area under the jurisdiction of the military officer detailed to take charge of municipal affairs on the goldfields. The duties of the Town Treasurer's Department under the Boers were as follow: to collect assessment and sanitary rates and keep a proper record thereof; to collect licence fees and preserve proper registers; to collect amounts, fines, dues, and sums accruing from other sources of revenue, and to properly account for the same; and to conduct the finances of the Town Council and especially regulate the expenditure of the various departments.

Some idea of the magnitude of the operations of the Treasurer's Department may be gathered from an examination of the statement of income and expenditure published by the late Town Council for the year 1898. In that year a revenue of £498,110 2s. 8d. was collected from all sources, against a total expenditure of £419,527 11s. 1d. On December 31, 1898, the liabilities of the municipality were £458,657 11s. 7d., and on the same date the assets were valued at £445,254 15s. 7d. Naturally, the war adversely affected the finances of the town. Certain expenditure had to be incurred in connection with the street lighting, street scavenging, sanitary services, &c., but at the same time there was a considerable loss of revenue. In consequence the town debt to the banks increased from £108,521 13s. on October 1, 1899, to £126,120 18s. 2d. on

June 1, 1900. On May 31 last the liabilities of the municipality amounted to £440,215 12s. 8*d.*, while the assets were valued at £581,184 19s. 6*d.*, so that the financial position of the town is really sound. No licence is now granted to any trader unless he first produces a receipt that he has paid up all arrears of sanitary fees, charges for gas and electricity, &c. The adoption of this measure was found necessary to protect the revenue.

Since the British occupation a municipal pound has been established, owing to the large number of stray animals wandering about in the streets, while the registration of bicycles has been also taken in hand. The revenue derived from these sources has exceeded the expenditure incurred in connection with both measures. The municipality is compelled in the meantime to proceed in a hand-to-mouth fashion, but it is able to meet all its current liabilities. Between June 1 and August 31 the various amounts paid into the Treasury totalled some £30,000, and a further sum of £10,000 was due from the Imperial Government for services actually performed. The street lighting of a large town such as Johannesburg is a most important matter during a critical period, the question of cost has been laid aside, and despite the fact that only about one quarter of the normal population is at present in the place the lamps are kept burning in the thoroughfares throughout the night. A matter which also required attention was the system by which stores needed by the several departments were obtained and issued. No ledger accounts appear to have been kept for some time past. The heads of departments purchased in bulk whatever was wanted. Now, however, all purchases are made under the authority of the burgomaster, tenders being first obtained whenever possible. Issues have to be certified to by chiefs of departments, and a receipt is obtained from the person actually using the stores.

CHAPTER XXXIII

THE FINANCIAL ADVISER IN JOHANNESBURG

At one time this office in Johannesburg was not filled to the entire satisfaction of the civil population and even caused the military element some annoyance.

In the opinion of many, military men have a monopoly of imperious stand-offishness, but not a few will agree with me that it is a failing occasionally found in civilians that from one circumstance or another are placed in positions of authority or attached to some Government office, and especially is this observable if they have rapidly acquired great wealth in their walk in life. It has been my happy fate whilst in South Africa and journeying in transports to and fro, covering altogether the great distance of 36,840 miles by sea, rail, road, and river, to have met with great courtesy and much valuable assistance, without which I could never have accomplished the task set before me.

Without seeking and obtaining that reliable information which the public offices alone could furnish, this work could never have been published. Though I would not, however, be supposed to have received information or assistance that was not open to anybody else who might desire it, and take the trouble to obtain it.

I, therefore, in common with the other officials at the head of administrative departments, visited Mr. Hamilton, who was then acting as financial adviser to the military governor,

with the object of obtaining a few facts in regard to the working of his office.

By name I was no stranger to him; he was likewise fully aware of the nature of the work I was engaged upon, and also that other offices had made no undue difficulties in the granting of my requests.

I was received by Mr. Hamilton in the most uncivil manner, and the following statement, which was sent to me a few days later, given under his own hand, shows the spirit of ridicule in which, as a perfect stranger, I was treated, and the caricature he made of his own office. It began:—

This is more or less an ornamental department, and is a popular one with the public, perhaps because they have comparatively little to do with it. It is nominally under the charge of Lieutenant Daniell, of the Seaforth Highlanders, A.D.C. to the military governor, under whose general supervision and guidance the actual work is done by Monsieur Leopold Bourdais. This gentleman's intercourse with the public, sometimes under difficult circumstances, is marked by that grace and urbanity which are characteristic of his nation. His appointment, which was made out of respect to the French residents in Johannesburg, is another evidence of the tact and good feeling shown by the military governor in all his arrangements. As I have said, the department has little to do except to assist the wives and children of burghers and others still at the front who have left bank balances behind them, and to arrange remittances for Hollanders, Greeks, Italians, and other deported persons. There is no financial question or difficulty in Johannesburg, the Government coffers being amply supplied from the revenue, including the specially large receipts of the liquor commission, under Major Macpherson, and of the criminal investigation department, under Captain Astell, from confiscated gold.

There being but little financial business to advise upon, it follows that the position of adviser is a very nominal one, but were it otherwise the governor is himself more than able to cope with any question which may arise, and it is more than likely that this appointment will follow that of legal adviser to the

military governor, which has quite recently been abolished. The appointment of financial adviser to the military governor of Johannesburg is not to be confused with that of financial adviser to the field marshal commanding-in-chief in South Africa, which important position is held by Mr. Emrys Evans, late British vice-consul in Johannesburg.

Neither the cleverness nor the insolence of this document can be readily detected without the explanation that Monsieur Leopold Bourdais is the small boy that ran the lift up and down to the various floors for the officers attached or visiting the building. The ironical remark in reference to the aide-de-camp is self evident. The observation as to the burghers and their wives has no point but of sarcasm, and so on to the end of this literary production. With the exception of Mr. Money Penny, formerly the editor of the *Johannesburg Star*, who was in charge of civil supplies, and who also refused information in any form, on the grounds that he was "in the same line of business" as I was, I had no instance of want of courtesy from any staff-officer in any part of the vast area over which I had travelled.

As I have already said, Colonel Mackenzie avoided as far as possible placing local men on his staff, but the vacancies, at first, were difficult to fill with none but military men, and I believe I am correct in stating that neither of these gentlemen is at present employed.

As a matter of fact, the financial adviser's office in a town like Johannesburg, and under the circumstances existing during a period of active hostilities is a very important one, and can be made the cause of great irritation to both the civil and military sections of the public that have business transactions to take them to it. Above all others it requires a double portion of the *suaviter in modo* to work it without friction.

In accordance with a proclamation issued restricting the

cashing of cheques to £20 a week per person, which had further to be initialed by the financial adviser before they were presented at the banks for cash, only two hours a day, three times a week, were allotted for the despatch of this business. I have often seen forty to fifty persons, from Government officials to humble individuals in civil life, waiting, cheque in hand, for the adviser to give them the necessary authorisation, and then, at the end of it all, many were informed, with more clearness than polish, that they must come again another day, as it was then too late for their cheques to receive attention.

It is right and proper that restrictions should be enforced in regard to monetary transactions, and care exercised over the arrangements made for change of hands; but where this principle is admitted, and no effort is made to contravene the conditions imposed by Government on banking operations, then it is due to all that facilities be afforded, and that with ordinary civility.

When this is not done, disgust at a military *régime* that can tolerate it is the natural consequence and breeds ill-feeling, both in the civil and military circles comprising the community.

With all business suspended, the revenue from the various sources of income is almost *nil*, but such as there is has to be collected by the financial adviser, who is also responsible for disbursements on account of all charges against the State in connection with military requirements and civil administration; he further exercises control over all banking accounts, whether between banks and private individuals, or those between banks and public bodies—such as the municipality and the hospital boards. All cheques—be they for £10 or £1000—must be presented to the financial adviser for his authorisation before presentation at the banks on which they are

drawn; no transfer of funds can take place without the special sanction of this official.

It will thus be seen that the financial adviser is in very *direct* contact with the public.

All bankers know this office too well; both those who are permitted to carry on business under the terms of the proclamation, and those who, for one reason or another, have been interdicted.

The financial adviser is in charge, practically, of all their accounts, and their books have to be taken to his office daily to be inspected; the object of all these precautions is to prevent too great a traffic in specie, and protect the interest of individuals and the ultimate welfare of the colony.

The financial adviser to the Commander-in-chief, Mr. Emery Evans, is in the position of State treasurer, to whom Mr. Hamilton and all local financial advisers are subordinate. So long as the army headquarters are in Johannesburg the public will have the benefit of the services of an official whose manners are more courteous, with a temperament more willing to oblige, and who can say "No" when necessary without abruptness.

CHAPTER XXXIV

CUSTOMS, CONCESSIONS, AND LOANS

EVEN in times of peace the officers of the British army have many duties to perform in the course of their military career outside the specific ones their training is intended to fit them for.

Their years of service are spent in many climes, with diverse races and ever-changing social conditions; the same way as naval officers are obliged to take an important share of the responsibilities on distant and isolated stations in the civil concerns of the inhabitants.

During a period of war, when the entire administrative authorities are replaced in a day by a new set, and a *régime* of martial law is to carry on the municipal government of a town, the appointment of military officers to civil posts has to take place immediately. In common with all the other duties of civil administration, the Marriage Office (for people wish to enter the bonds of holy matrimony even in war time), the Relief Office for the indigent population, and the Custom House, have to be taken over on the surrender or capture of a town.

In Johannesburg, Major Cavaye, in his own person, was responsible for carrying on the work of these three offices; and to say he was kept fairly busy would mildly represent the demands made on his time and energies.

It will be generally supposed that those in connection with the Custom House were the most arduous, but in fact

this was not so. During a period of war very few dutiable goods, and in small quantities, are dealt with, for obvious reasons. Yet the nucleus for an entirely new staff had to be formed, and the task of translating the business books and accounts from Dutch into English had to be undertaken, so as to be ready for use when required.

In most countries the Customs dues provide the bulk of the revenue. From the last returns—1898—the Transvaal revenue was £5,438,076, of which Customs dues provided £1,066,994, and the contribution from Johannesburg was no less than £479,127, and the mines as a whole paid over £800,000—no small part of the whole.

Being an inland State, a transit duty of 3 per cent. was charged by the various colonies on all goods except mining machinery, which the Chamber of Commerce tried to remove, and which is needful to facilitate the development of the country. A future effort may prove more successful under the new order of things. Although the flaws and irregularities in the Customs laws and duties have been quite apparent to those who have had to administer them since the British occupation, Lord Roberts felt it best to adopt them *en bloc* for present use, as with the responsibilities connected with the actual state of war, he could not see his way to undertake extensive alterations in the civil departments pre-existing.

Under the Transvaal Government the Customs were collected in two ways. One method was by collecting at the frontier and at the ultimate destinations of the goods. The other was the collection of dues on goods coming *via* Delagoa Bay, Natal, and Cape Colony, which was made by the railway companies, who charged a commission of 15 per cent. upon the money collected. As the Transvaal Government had guaranteed to make up the income of the railway companies to a certain sum, and as the figure to be reached was higher

than the commission realised, the Government had to pay a deficit instead of receiving a revenue from the railway companies.

The names on the books of the Custom House officials in Johannesburg were so numerous (about 180 were employed) that it really seemed to Major Cavaye and his assistants that appointments were made rather with a view of providing salaries for worthy burghers than on account of the duties existing for them to perform.

The question as to the best mode of raising revenue and the extent to which the mines and other industries can bear taxation is being considered, as well as the future treatment of the Kruger concessions; the dynamite concession being the most important of all. The whole prosperity of the country depends on the mines. A hundred and fifty millions of European capital have been sunk in this industry in the Transvaal, and to work the mines 400,000 cases of dynamite were annually required. Dr. Farrelly, in his work "The Settlement after the War," says:—

The monopolists purchase in Europe a 50lb. case of dynamite at a cost of 29s., paying carriage from Europe to Johannesburg amounting to 10s. at the utmost. Their charge is £8 to the mining companies. Even these figures do not represent the whole of the possible loss to the industry. The companies cannot use other explosives which cost less and are more suitable for some descriptions of mining; they are deprived of the benefit of any new chemical inventions as they are compelled to buy from the monopolists whatever the monopolists choose to sell; and as to the dynamite they purchase they have no guarantee that it is of good quality, as the monopolists have no competition to fear.

The holder of this monopoly is Mr. L. G. Vorstman.

The ultimate fate of all the concessionaires will probably depend on the report giving the result of the inquiries made by the commissioners sent to the Transvaal to investigate

the conditions under which the concessions were granted, and all the legal paraphernalia surrounding the circumstances. The commissioners for the Transvaal concessions are: the Hon. A. Lyttelton, K.C.; M. A. M. Ashmore, C.M.G.; R. K. Loveday, barrister-at-law; B. Holland, secretary.

If the decisions ultimately arrived at do not settle the questions, there will be a new road to fortune opened out to men learned in the law, as points of difference in this or that concession will be constantly coming into the courts for adjustment. If, on the other hand, the continuance or nullification of different concessions is really settled on their merits and on the benefits they confer, or otherwise, on the general public, then there will be great heart-burnings amongst some of the holders of these Transvaal concessions.

The policy of granting concessions or monopolies is one which is opposed to all economics and is contrary to the practice of the civilised world. Mr. Kruger, however, found it was a good way to reward his particular friends for the financial assistance they had given him, which accounts for the number of valuable concessions being in the hands of certain few individuals.

The proceedings of the Transvaal Concessions Commission was opened by a notice from the High Commissioner which ran thus:—

Notice is hereby given, that every concession granted by the Government of the late South African Republic will be considered by her Majesty's Government on its merits, and her Majesty's Government reserves the right to decline to recognise or to modify any concession which may appear, on examination, not to have been within the power of the Government of the late South African Republic, having regard to any conventions or agreements made between her Majesty's Government and the Government of the late South African Republic, or to have been granted without proper legal authority, or contrary to law or the condi-

tions of which have not been duly complied with, or which may affect prejudicially the interests of the public.

By order of the High Commissioner,

F. PERRY,

Acting Imperial Secretary.

Government House, Cape Town,

September 8, 1900.

The Chairman then read the following notices given by the Commission, viz. :

The commissioners appointed to inquire into the concessions granted by the Government of the late South African Republic hereby give notice that they will, in the first instance, inquire into the following concessions, viz. :—

(1) Any concession conferring the sole and exclusive right of manufacturing, importing, or dealing in any commodity in the Transvaal.

(2) Any contract made with the Government of the late South African Republic under the scheme approved by the Volksraad resolution, No. 1871, of November 1896.

(3) Any concession to the National Bank, or to any other bank or banking institution.

(4) Any concession or contract for the construction or working of any railway or public tramway, or the public supply of water or light.

The first sitting of the commission will be held on October 1, 1900. Notice will subsequently be given of the place of its sitting. All persons desiring to be heard should communicate with the commission before the above date. Communications must be addressed to the Secretary, Transvaal Concessions Commission, Library Buildings, Cape Town.

Concessionaires should send to the secretary statements of any evidence which they desire to give, and will be required to produce the documents on which they rely, translated into English and notarially certified in triplicate.

Notice of objections to any concessions should also be sent to

the secretary, together with short statements of any evidence which it is desired to submit.

By order of the Transvaal Concessions Commission,

BERNARD HOLLAND,

Secretary to the Commission.

Cape Town,

September 8, 1900.

The Chairman said :

Under ordinary circumstances the commission would have opened in Pretoria, but the commissioners knowing that there were a considerable number of gentlemen down here interested in these concessions, and being as desirous as possible to accommodate those who were able to attend our sittings in Cape Town, especially seeing that the attendance of many of them at Pretoria would have involved great inconvenience, have set aside three or four days in order that witnesses of that character might be accommodated. The notices which I have read show, generally, the nature of the business before the commission. But I think it is well to point out that in each case the burden is upon any party claiming the benefits of their concessions to show that the concessions were within the power of the Government of the late South African Republic to grant, having regard to conventions or agreements made between the late South African Republic and her Majesty's Government. In the second place, it will be necessary for all those claiming concessions to show that they were granted lawfully and with proper legal authority, and in the third place to show that the conditions of the concessions have been duly complied with ; and lastly, to show that the interests of the public are not prejudicially affected by them. As a general rule, subject of course to modifications, the holder of a concession and his witnesses will, in the first instance, be examined. Objectors to a concession will then be invited to give their evidence. The proceedings are not in the nature of a litigation between parties, but of an inquiry, the conduct and regulation of which is under the control of the commissioners. Inasmuch, however, as the pecuniary interests of concessionaires are closely involved, the commissioners will permit them, if they so desire it, to be represented by counsel, and similar permission has been granted to

the Chamber of Mines, whose constituents are closely affected by the inquiry. It is desirable to repeat that any person who wishes to give evidence as to any objections to a concession independently of the Chamber of Mines, should send in a statement of such evidence to the commissioners, who will then call and examine those persons if their evidence, in the opinion of the Commissioners, is material to the inquiry. In general the procedure of the inquiry will be as follows: The commissioners will examine the witnesses, and counsel will, where necessary, further examine or cross-examine them; and at the close of each case the commissioners will intimate if they desire to hear counsel on any point of law arising thereon. That in general will be the procedure adopted, subject to the modifications which the circumstances of each case will demand.

The following concessions affect Johannesburg directly or indirectly:—

Market Concession.—In the year 1887 a concession was granted to Mr. S. Papenfus to erect market buildings and conduct the morning market of this town. This concession was subsequently floated into a limited liability company, and buildings were erected on Market Square on a block of ground representing about twelve stands, at a yearly ground rent of £750. The market company have the sole right to conduct the sale of vegetables and all produce on the market square. They are allowed 2½ per cent. on all sales, 1 per cent. is paid to the town council, and the balance, 1½ per cent., goes to the company, which also has to provide for the services of the market auctioneers and other officials.

The market buildings so erected are divided into the general market and sundry shops, which are let at very high rents, and the stalls which are used in the morning market are, after the business is over, rented for the remainder of the day to various persons.

In the interests of the public at large, surely the market should be administered by the municipality or town council.

Telephone Poles.—A concession is granted to an advertising company by the late Government on terms the details of which I could not ascertain. The late town council protested against this, and were informed that the executive could not see any reason for their objections.

Tramway Company.—The right of running horse trams was granted to the Tramway Concession Company on very low terms by the late South African Republic Government. The supervision of this concession was, as far as I can understand, placed in the hands of the Government local nominee. The trams are in no way subservient to the town council, with the exception of keeping town levels and main ways in order. The tramway company pays no licences for drivers and vehicles, no rent for the use of streets, and the town council have no control over the cleanliness and safety of vehicles; their drivers wear no badges, nor are they subject to any examination as to their driving qualifications, &c.

Water Concession.—A concession has been granted by the late South African Republic Government to the Johannesburg Waterworks Company to lay water-pipes throughout the town and suburbs, and they have, I believe, the monopoly of supplying water to the following private townships: Parktown, Berea, Yeoville, Bellevue, Bertrams Town, Lorentzville, Troyeville, Fairview, City and Suburban Township, Marshalls Town, Jeppestown, Fordsburg, Doornfontein, New Doornfontein, North Doornfontein, Belgravia, Hillbrow, and Houghton Estate, and should any other company be promoted or any other water supply obtained, they would, owing to the present concession, only have the right to supply Johannesburg proper and Ferreira Town with water, and it is very doubtful if even the town council have the right to supply water to any of the above-named suburbs. The municipality have no control over the company, and

cannot prevent the supply of polluted and dangerous water to the public.

Gas and Electric Lighting.—Mr. Cowell, the consulting engineer of the Lighting Department, reports on this subject as follows :—

The gas concession was granted in 1888 to Messrs. Dawson and Hamilton of Pretoria.

It was sold to the Johannesburg Company in 1889, and by them to the Johannesburg Lighting Company in 1892. The electric light concession was granted in 1889 to Messrs. Quin, Holboom and Cousens, and sold to the Johannesburg Gas Company. In 1892 it was sold to the Johannesburg Lighting Company.

In 1895 both these concessions were sold to the Johannesburg Sanitary Board for £82,500, for rights within its jurisdiction.

The Marshall Township Syndicate claimed to have a right in their township for electric lighting, which they transferred before the township was handed over to the town council, I believe, to Mr. J. Paterson and others. No actual use has, however, up to the present been made of this, except to grant permission to cross a street.

The Mayfair township also claimed this right, and I understand it was claimed for Doornfontein.

For the concession money paid the municipality should have had the sole right of laying or fixing pipes, mains, cables, wires, &c., in or over all streets, roads, or other public places within the limits of the municipality, for the purpose of supplying gas or electricity for lighting, heating, or motive power.

In several cases leave has been granted by the municipality to other parties to cross streets for the purpose of supplying electricity from private sources to other buildings. This was partly because the town could not supply enough themselves, and partly because there were difficulties in the way of opposing such applications; it is not being clearly defined that the municipality actually possesses the sole right and proper titles to the street.

Brickmaking Concession.—A concession has been granted by the late South African Republic Government for the making

of bricks in the brickfields, with the details of which I have not made myself acquainted. The brickfields are surrounded by inhabited houses, and the manufacture of bricks on this spot can easily degenerate into a nuisance, over which the municipality would have only a small control. A concession has also been granted for making machine bricks.

Carbide of Calcium.—A concession has been granted by the late South African Republic Government for the manufacture of this chemical. A factory has been established in Johannesburg within the municipal limits.

Weighbridge.—A concession was granted by the late South African Republic Government to certain parties for the sole right of erecting weighbridges in Johannesburg. This concession was purchased by the Market Buildings Company, who are the present holders.

Sewerage.—A concession was granted to Messrs. Mendelssohn and Bruce to construct a general sewage system for the town of Johannesburg, but owing to the action of the town council and the pressure brought by the general public on the Transvaal Government this concession was cancelled.

Bottles.—A concession was granted by the late South African Republic Government for the manufacture of bottles. No factory has up to date been established in Johannesburg, though there is one in Pretoria.

Jams.—A concession for the manufacture of jams and preserved fruits was granted to Mr. Solomon Gillingham by the late South African Republic Government. No factory has up to date been established in Johannesburg. In this respect likewise Pretoria is ahead. Messrs. Lewis and Marks have started one there.

Brooms, Matches, and Soap.—Concessions have been granted by the late South African Republic Government for the manufacture of these articles, which are protected by heavy

import duties, and soap and match factories are established in Johannesburg.

Quisisana.—Owing to the local manufacture of quisisana in the Transvaal a duty of 3s. per dozen has been placed on all imported aerated waters by the late South African Republic Government.

Iron.—A concession for the smelting of iron has been granted in certain portions of the State by the late South African Republic Government.

Government Entrepôt.—A concession has been granted by the late South African Republic Government to Mr. M. A. Zoccola for a Government *entrepôt* for the storing of all unclaimed and unreleased goods received by the railway at Johannesburg. There is a similar *entrepôt* at Pretoria.

Cement.—This local manufacture is protected by a very heavy duty on the imported article.

The famous Nellmapius concession is given on page 329 *in extenso* in connection with the native labour question and drink prohibition.

The report of the commissioners of the Transvaal concessions will exhaustively set forth all conditions that are detrimental to the welfare of the general public, and make suggestions as to how they may be most advantageously dealt with by the governing authorities. To illustrate how irritating some of the concessions are to business people, I will mention the *entrepôt* concession in Johannesburg. In its present form it presses unduly on the private individual and on the merchant: all are compelled to ground their goods in this place, and for doing so have to pay a rental of 1½*d.* per 100 lb. a day. Seeing that the goods have already paid 3 per cent. per 100 lb. per month at the coast ports, this is a heavy extra charge, and in the interest of the development of the country and those engaged in the import trade, it might with advantage be lightend.

The latest returns show a decrease of £1,718,606 in the value of general goods and produce imported into the Transvaal as compared with the previous year, 1897, and a corresponding decrease in the duties collected to the amount of £230,815 4s. 6d.

The receipts of Customs for 1898 were £1,058,224 8s. 11d., as against £1,289,037 13s. 5d. for 1897.

The reason of the decrease may be attributed to the political situation and the apprehension of a war with Great Britain, which naturally led to the disinclination on the part of the merchants to replace their stock as it was sold out.

Under the new *régime*, when the country settles to peaceful pursuits it may be confidently expected that with amended laws and a strict impartiality in administering them the revenue of the annexed territories will mount to dazzling heights : a reflex of the untold wealth that has, as yet, been but barely scratched in this vast sub-continent.

In connection with the Orange Free State and Transvaal loans, the best advice will be supplied to the Government by Sir David Barbour, who has been sent on a mission to these newly annexed territories, to ascertain all the facts surrounding the claims put forward and their guarantees as supplied by the former Governments of these two colonies. The most important of these Government loans are :

Orange Free State Six per Cent. Loan £200,000 (£100,000 issued).—This loan of £100,000 was offered for public tender in June 1884, at a minimum price of par, and the whole amount was allotted at prices ranging from the minimum to 105. The loan is secured on a preferential lien on the general revenue of the State and by the shares held by the Government, to the extent of £70,000, in the National Bank of the Orange Free State, Limited. The London agent for the Government is the Standard Bank of South Africa. The

present outstanding amount of the loan is now only £25,000, the balance having been paid off by annual drawings of £5000 per annum.

South African Republic (Transvaal) Five per Cent. Government Loan.—This loan of £2,500,000 was issued in July 1892, by Messrs. N. M. Rothschild and Sons at the price of £90 per cent. The security for the loan is the entire revenue of the Republic derived from all sources. The redemption of the loan at par (£100 per cent.) was to have commenced in 1903.

Franco-Belgian Company of the Northern Railway of the South African Republic. Four per Cent. Guaranteed Bonds.—A first issue of £500,000 was made in January 1893 by the Railway Share Trust and Agency Company, Limited, London, at 77 per cent., and a second issue of £1,000,000 at 93½ per cent. in 1894. Both principal and interest were guaranteed by the Republic, and the bonds bear the counter-signature of its Minister in Europe. The bonds were redeemable at £100 per cent. whenever the South African Republic thought fit. There were shares to the amount of 12,500,000 francs issued, partly to the concessionaires of the railway, and the remainder privately. The question of the shares having the guarantee of the South African Republic is still *sub judice*. The greater portion of these shares remains in the hands of the original allottees.

Pretoria-Pietersburg Railway Company, Limited Shares.—There are 50,000 shares of £10 each; 30,000 were subscribed for by the Government of the South African Republic, 500 were issued to the concessionaires, and the remainder were subscribed in London. The interest was guaranteed by the Government of the South African Republic, and 4 per cent. interest was paid up to December 1898. The concession bears date November 1895.

Four per Cent. Debentures.—£950,000, all issued. These debentures were offered for subscription by Messrs. Morton,

Rose & Co. as to £250,000 at 98 per cent. in May 1897, and as to £700,000 at 91 per cent. by Messrs. J. Henry Schroder & Co. in February 1899. The principal and interest were guaranteed to the holders by the Government of the South African Republic, and each bond was countersigned by the representative of the Government. The debentures were repayable at par by annual drawings in fifty years, commencing in January 1895.

The dividends on all the loans have not been paid since July 1900 inclusive.

In regard to the final settlement of all the questions connected with revenue, concessions, and loans, it is the generally accepted opinion that in taking over the Transvaal and Orange Free State, the Government at the same time has taken over their assets, at least all those that hold absolute guarantees from the former Governments, of which I am told there is no doubt in regard to any of the above issues, with the exception of the share issues of the Northern Railway of the late South African Republic.

CHAPTER XXXV

PRETORIA AND THE IRISH HOSPITAL

AFTER wandering and journeying over land and sea that covered not a few thousand miles, I arrived in Pretoria.

Although Johannesburg is the commercial centre, and Potchefstroom, a small town situated on the Mooi river, is by constitutional law the capital of the late South African Republic, Pretoria, as the seat of government, is the place to which all eyes have turned, and to reach it many futile efforts were made. The military dictum was enough to deter most people from making the attempt, though there were two ladies daring enough to set all authority at defiance, and up they came to this forbidden land in the hospital train disguised as nurses! These "stowaways" were not found out until it was too late to send them back; and as those who should have reported them decided that discretion was the better part of valour, they maintained silence.

When these sham nurses were enjoying their luncheon in Heath's Hotel, they saw me from their "little corner" and felt an uneasy sensation lest I should recognise them, and in an unguarded moment say something which would expose their true position and lead the staff officers seated near to investigate the "circumstances" of their presence.

It was with a sigh of relief they saw me go out of the dining room by another door at the opposite end from where they were sitting, and once again they felt safe and resumed their lunch with improved appetites.

In this manner these two "good sisters" paid a hurried visit to Pretoria and then returned to the colony in the same way as they came, and, I need hardly say, jubilant at the success that had attended their daring performance. Others of the fair sex had before tried this game, but only succeeded as far as getting to Bloemfontein, and there had to go through the ordeal of appearing before the military governor, being by his order sent by the next train back to the colony.

Many descriptions have been given of Pretoria as it presents itself to the eye of a stranger.

In going the thirty-seven miles to Pretoria from Johannesburg the traveller is under the impression that he is constantly ascending to a higher altitude, but this is not really so, as the former town is about a hundred feet lower than the Golden City.

Pretoria is beautifully situated in a lovely upland valley 4500 feet above the level of the sea, and is surrounded by the Witwatersberg hills, whilst Johannesburg is on a plain of the high veld, a place that was not thought of fifteen years ago. The whole country round might then have been bought up for three or four thousand pounds. It has sprung up, like a magic creation in the wilderness, in response to the wave of a fairy's wand; with wonderful shops, such as are to be seen in East Street, Brighton—fine streets and public buildings, with which this "Queen of Watering Places" has not wherewith to compare.

Pretoria, though quite young, can boast of a somewhat longer historical record. From the time the seat of government was transferred to it from Potchefstroom, in 1863, it has been a place of some importance, and the scene of several political movements. Now the British authorities have most wisely settled that its career is not to be cut short in favour of Johannesburg as a seat of government. At the proclamation of King Edward the Seventh in Pretoria on his accession to

the throne he was made "supreme lord in and over the Transvaal."

Although it is most true that Pretoria has not kept pace with Johannesburg, still the great prosperity arising from the discovery of gold and the coal industries has visibly affected it.

With the extraordinary increase in public finances, which in 1870 stood at £30,000 per annum, and according to the last return, in 1898, was no less than £5,438,000, it would have been odd in the extreme if the capital did not come in for some of the shares of the spoil.

In the march of events and in the race for wealth and power, Pretoria certainly lost many of its charms and most of its characteristics as a Dutch town, without, as yet, benefiting by the exchange. At this moment it is an incongruous conglomeration of the grand and simple.

It strikes the beholder as an overgrown country village which has been to a continental metropolis to borrow fine buildings wherewith to bedeck itself. It seems as if the ambitious inhabitants had dumped down their fine purchases at the corners of the main square, placing the Dutch Reformed Church in the centre; and then with folded hands and looks of interrogation seemed to say in accents full of emotion and satisfaction to all beholders "There! See what we can do! What do you think of our fine town? Have you better buildings than these to show?"

Some of their edifices are really very beautiful, and, naturally, everybody is full of admiration for them; but somehow they seem strangely out of keeping with the swift running streams of clear water that flow on each side of the streets, with hedges of roses, lines of willows and sweet-scented violets that grow in profusion everywhere—the latter like daisies between the cobble stones in the country towns in England.

Near this great square are handsome buildings belonging to large firms like Lewis and Marks, the Transvaal Loan and Mortgage Trusts, the National Bank, the State Mint, and last, but not least, the palatial buildings of the Raadzaal and the new Law Courts, both of which are in the square itself. Indeed, the two last named are called "Pretoria's Architectural Glory." They are buildings that any Government might be proud to possess.

The Raadzaal was erected from designs by Mr. Wierda, the Government architect, at a cost of £138,000. In connection with it the following incident may be mentioned as illustrative of the workings of the Boer mind. At the first quarterly Church gathering for the *Nachtmaal* after the erection of the gold statue representing "Liberty" which surmounts the entrance, the burghers with their families, who had come from long distances in the country in their waggons, were drawn up with their teams of oxen in the square. Many of them were seen to be looking at the top of the new buildings with great dissatisfaction. Scowlings and mutterings with angry gestures denoted their hostile attitude. But what was the trouble? The Executive Council of the Volksraad and Mr. Kruger were soon informed of their grievance by petition. The burghers begged that the woman's figure on the top of the new Raadzaal might be removed, for it could only be intended for Queen Victoria or the Virgin Mary, and both were equally objectionable.

The Executive Council tried to explain to the petitioners that it was only a symbolical statue, and was neither intended to represent Queen Victoria nor the Virgin Mary; it was but an imaginary figure of "Liberty." The burghers, however, shook their heads and would not believe. They remained fixed in their opinions, and, but for the war, the beautiful statue of the new Raadzaal would ere this have been removed from its elevated position.

All the rank and fashion of Pretoria except the President lived in noble mansions in the suburbs, a short distance out of town, the principal being Sunnyside, Heys Park, and Arcadia; but during the past year and a half the majority of the owners have not been "at home," due to the action of either the Boer or British authorities, who have seen fit to deport them to the border.

In the meanwhile their comfortable dwellings have become the happy hunting-ground of, first, the Dutch veld cornets, then the British staff officers, who have been quartered there in great numbers since the end of Roberts' march in June of 1900.

These sumptuous places of abode were a great relief after the tramp, tramp on the veld, and the nights spent out on the open during the preceding four or five months. The picturesque hills surrounding this Dutch town were a pleasant change to the vast expanse of flat country they had left behind them. Besides, the troops were buoyed up with the thought that when they once reached Pretoria and made effective their occupation the war was over; but, alas! weeks run into months and the end of hostilities is not yet.

During the period that I was in Pretoria, life was restricted by the regulations imposed by martial law. A special permit was required for everything—to enter the city, to leave it, to take a house or let it, to drive, ride, or ride a bicycle, or to be out of the house after seven o'clock in the evening; to cash a cheque over £20 a week, to buy or to sell anything; in short, one felt that one had to go to the military governor to breathe. Lord Athlumney as provost marshal had enough to do to sign these passes after the applicants had satisfied him as to their identity and fitness to receive them.

In Pretoria, as nowhere else, one felt one lived under martial law. If any of these dicta were ignored, "Tommy Atkins" had strict orders as to how to proceed. Any one

caught without the necessary pass soon found himself or herself under arrest, and taken to the Court House. Even a general officer had to produce his pass or go through this ordeal.

A naval officer, who had just come from Barberton for supplies, and who had not heard the password for the night, was so detained, though he was in uniform, and had to prove his identity at the nearest charge office, which, luckily, he had little trouble in doing, as he found a friend there to whom he was well known. But for this coincidence he might have had to pass an uncomfortable night.

In spite of all precautions, which were strictly though courteously enforced, the lives of Lord Roberts and his staff were plotted against and actually attempted.

Pretoria has always been a great centre of intrigue and political corruption, and it will take a long time before it can claim a clean bill of health from this disease.

One insensibly feels there is something underhand going on. A sense of suspicion pervades the air, which I have never noticed in any Dutch town except perhaps on the last day I was in Rustenberg.

This is doubtless attributable to the fact that Pretoria was the centre of officialdom, and more closely associated with Mr. Kruger (or, as his family pronounce his name, Creer) than anywhere else in the Transvaal. Another point in this connection which superinduces a feeling of doubt and suspicion, is the continued residence of Mrs. Kruger in Pretoria.

I have heard many comments on the wisdom of allowing her to remain, as a channel of intelligence to the enemy, and of the extraordinary choice she has evinced in preferring to stay in the capital when it is in the occupation of the forces with which her husband and his burghers are in armed conflict.

But, as she says, she is old, she is infirm, she has never been in a train in her life, and she knows she is safe with the

English, so why should she wander over the country and endure all the hardships of war?

On one occasion when travelling from Johannesburg to Pretoria I found that I could not proceed from Elandsfontein Junction by a train that would arrive before eleven o'clock at night, and as I might have found myself in a charge office for lack of the password, I thought it preferable to stay where I was and pass the night on the station than run serious risks of being in such a situation.

I was more readily reconciled to my fate when I was told that Mrs. Eloff, her sister, and her children, were likewise compelled to go through the ordeal of staying all night at the railway station.

Courtesy and good manners are invariably considered as principal attributes of a staff officer, but it is seldom they are so substantially rewarded as they were on this particular occasion.

Major Edwardes, the Railway Staff Officer at the time at Elandsfontein Junction, extended the usual civilities of a gentleman in such a position to Mrs. Eloff and her family; he saw to their comfort as far as was possible to mitigate the tedium of the eighteen hours they were obliged to wait before suitable accommodation could be placed at their disposal to convey them to Durban, thence to Lorenço Marques, to rejoin their husbands, giving them the use of his quarters for the night.

It follows as a natural course that in this time I saw a good deal of Mrs. Eloff, who spoke English perfectly. We encouraged her to give her opinions freely on all sorts of subjects affecting her grandfather, President Kruger.

On many points there was considerable divergence of views, but on the whole it was most satisfactory. Of one thing I was certain, she had no antipathy to British officers!

After a long argument, which lasted till the small hours of

the morning, she said to me, "We shall all have to live together and be happy, and, now, the sooner the better; as far as I am concerned, and as far as my influence will reach, I will, and advise all burghers to submit to the British. My grandmother begged of me not to leave Pretoria, where I and my small children were quite safe, but, of course, I had to join my husband when he sent for me.

"I will give you a letter that will enable you to see my old grandmother; she will be pleased to see you and to hear that the British officers are so kind to us. She will be especially pleased to see you, as you tell me you saw my uncle, Piet Kruger, at Rustenburg"; and turning to Major Edwardes she said, "And if you will accept this box as a memento of me I shall be very happy."

The present offered to this Railway Staff Officer was a beautiful silver-chased Indian box, in weight of metal alone worth from £10 to £12, and rendered still more valuable by the inscription, which, as far as I can remember, was to this effect:—

Presented by the Parsee I. Daorobji,
To his Honour S. P. J. Kruger,
President S.A. Republic,
As a token of undying loyalty.

On arrival at Pretoria I presented my letter of introduction (after first submitting it for the approval of the Military Governor) to Mrs. Kruger, who received me with kindness and great gentleness.

She was naturally pleased to hear about her children and grandchildren, and her one chief desire seemed to be: "Let them all know that things are well with me. Let my son, Piet Kruger, in Ceylon, know that I am well, and that I should like to hear from him."

From my own observation, however, the old lady looked far from well and more than her age. In reply to my

inquiries as to her health, she said she suffered from rheumatism and asthma and longed for the war to cease.

I left Mrs. Kruger pleased with my visit, and glad she had elected to stay in Pretoria under British protection rather than wander about the veld suffering all the hardships of war, a war she had had no hand in bringing about, for she has at all times kept herself aloof from politics.

I went to General Maxwell in regard to her wishes, and he told me that every consideration was extended to her, and, indeed, I had gathered as much from Mrs. Kruger's own words.

Since the British occupation, until quite recently, Pretoria was a great hospital base. There were two or three general hospitals of 1000 beds—the Welsh Hospital, the Langmen Hospital, a branch of the Imperial Yeomanry Hospital—that I can remember, and there might have been others encamped around the town, of which I heard nothing, as well as the Irish Hospital in the Law Courts.

The British nation has ever led the way in all hospital work, and nothing has appealed more forcibly to its sentiments than the care of the sick and wounded who suffer from shot or shell or from the effects of the climate whilst fighting for their Queen and country; and I think I am right in saying that nothing has caused greater disappointment than the aspersions cast on the Royal Army Medical Corps by Mr. Burdett-Coutts in his letters to *The Times*.

As the Irish, or Lord Iveagh's Hospital, stood in the most prominent part of Pretoria, and as Sir William Thompson, the medical officer in charge, and the Hon. Rupert Guinness, Lord Iveagh's eldest son, were fellow travellers with me when I returned to South Africa, after leaving in Southampton as Sister in charge of the sick and wounded in the s.s. *Dunera*, the convalescent officers and men of the Highland brigade which returned in her—some of those that suffered

so severely in the battle of Magersfontein—I will give a short account of it and of their labours.

The Irish Hospital, as all the world knows, was the outcome of Hiberian enthusiasm and generosity, and was despatched on its mission perfectly organised and fully equipped with every medical comfort and scientific apparatus likely to be needed. At the commencement of the campaign the army medical authorities were indisposed to accept extraneous aid, believing they could themselves deal with all the demands that were likely to be made on the resources of the department. The first months of the war soon proved they were wrong in their calculations, both as to the nature of the war and its consequences on the health of the troops.

The Portland Hospital was the first expression of private generosity and public benevolence to leave England for South Africa as a self-contained and fully-equipped civil hospital. And during the six months it was in South Africa most excellent work it did.

The example set by the Duke of Portland has been followed both by private individuals and by sections of the general public, their names and designations readily occurring to the minds of the readers; the War Office then gladly accepting the assistance offered, without which the tale of woe would have been most pitiable.

During the months of February and March the junction of Naauwpoort was a huge military encampment, where there was a large number of sick, and it was to relieve this pressure that the Irish Hospital was first sent. At one time there were over a thousand sick at this station; but it was not there that Sir William Thompson and his staff shone brightest. In fact they had hardly time to settle down before a section was sent to Preiska to join Lord Kitchener's force, which was operating in that district. After going through the expedition and rendering useful service the

section returned to De Aar, and from thence proceeded to Bloemfontein, where the whole hospital re-assembled and commenced work in earnest in that hotbed of fever, of which every person in England has heard more than enough.

Of the thousands that lay sick and dying in that city the Irish Hospital received three hundred, and it is superfluous to say that all that skill and care could do for the unfortunate sufferers was ungrudgingly lavished upon them.

Altogether the Irish Hospital treated 2748 patients and had a death-rate of 3·7. The enteric cases numbered 671, with a death-rate of 11·7. The ambulances carried 882 patients. These figures represent a great amount of hard work for the staff; and though it is painful to think of the many brave young fellows who succumbed, a great many more were spared by the medical skill and appliances that were unheard of in any other campaign.

On May 11 the Irish Field Hospital once more packed up their tents, and with their waggons left Bloemfontein to join Lord Roberts at Kroonstad, where it was attached to the 11th Division, under General Pole-Carew.

Marching has been one of the chief features of this war, and the Irish Hospital had to go through the mill the same as any other section of the advancing army, bearing the hardships and paying its debt to the dread enemy, enteric fever. Out of a medical staff of five, two had to be left in hospital at Johannesburg and Mr. Guinness had to be carried for a considerable distance in an ambulance, suffering from a severe attack of jaundice.

Outside Pretoria the hospital was fired upon by the enemy. About twenty shells fell close to it, but only one man was wounded, just outside the operating-room. It takes a lot of firing sometimes to kill one man.

Sir William Thompson assured me, however, that the hospital was not shelled out of maliciousness, but because it

was in front of the naval guns, that were making themselves felt in a most determined manner.

After the surrender and occupation of Pretoria, a commission was appointed to consider how best to cope with the sickness amongst the troops, and how best to utilise the resources of the town and compel the people to sell their wares.

Sir William was given the Law Courts to convert into a hospital, though Surgeon-Colonel Stevenson had described it as unsuitable for the purpose.

This most sumptuous erection, both inside and out, was quickly turned into an asylum for the sick, who were lying outside the town.

The building being still unfinished, there were no lighting arrangements and such-like internal fittings; but with willing hearts, plenty of energy, and unrestricted resources this vast pile of stone was transformed in four days into the Irish Hospital and filled with patients. Irishmen have left a mark on this war, which proves the kind of stuff Ireland can produce. The greatest number of medical men have been Irish. Look at our generals from the Emerald Isle! Count them!

This Irish hospital had eighty-three wards, all spacious, light, and well ventilated, the principal bearing the names of great generals or benefactors. But the central hall, with its magnificent pillars and colonnades, was the one to make a never-to-be-forgotten impression. This ward was called the Victoria Hall; and gorgeous it was in its grandeur, the colour effects being produced by the stained glass ceiling, by the bright red blankets on the beds, and by the uniform of the army nursing and civil sisters.

To clothe, wash, and feed a thousand sick persons who are gradually admitted into a well-equipped hospital in daily working order is no easy task; but to do the same, when all come in together, bleeding, and in various stages of

collapse, with kitchens and bathrooms to be built, with light and water to be installed, utensils, furniture, food, and medicines arriving in tons, and unable to get hold of anything, herculean labours were required to reduce such chaos into order, and give that attention to the sick that was indispensably necessary, a feat accomplished only by the indomitable energy of Sir William Thompson and those that worked with him and under him, the services rendered by the superintending Sister being beyond all praise.

Look at the amount of work that had to be done to convert the magnificent building into a hospital !

It may strike the reader as very strange that the Irish hospital authorities could make a grand success of a building that was refused by the principal army medical officer. But it must be borne in mind that Sir William Thompson and Mr. Guinness had the control of funds that the army medical authorities had not, nor would they have been justified in expending them if they had had them. Furthermore, the conversion of this unfurnished erection would have entailed a delay that only lavish expenditure abridged.

This is an instance of the advantage of having ample means ready to hand.

The appearance of the Irish hospital in the Palais de Justice in Pretoria was worth paying for !

Government officials, however, are not justified in paying a heavy price for appearance when the same results can be secured for a lower price. The revenue of the State cannot be disposed of in the same lavish manner as a wealthy nobleman may do with his own property.

CHAPTER XXXVI

AUXILIARY AIDS TO THE FIELD FORCE

AUXILIARY aid to the forces in South Africa has taken every conceivable form from batteries of artillery, squadrons of cavalry, regiments of infantry, hospitals, and hospital ships, to additional comforts and stores that would fill a book to merely enumerate, to say nothing of the millions sterling that were subscribed by the generosity of the British public supplementary to the extra taxes that had to be imposed.

After equipping the fighting force with guns, ammunition, and all the rest of the impedimenta for carrying on active hostilities, the next duty is to care for the sick and wounded; and in this connection the auxiliary aid that rendered the most valuable assistance to the medical authorities was the "British Red Cross Society." The chief commissioner and his assistants had their offices in Parliament House in Cape Town, but as the work increased, even the spacious premises that had been put at his disposal became too small, and a large iron shed had to be constructed to receive the various stores that were landed daily in the docks from London and every part of the empire. When Parliament assembled the society had, of course, to vacate them altogether.

Within this shed for many months a busy scene was presented. Lady Furley, who was largely responsible for the receipt and issue, unpacking, sorting, and redirecting of clothing, food, hospital comforts, furniture, games, tobacco, literature, &c., in compliance with requisitions from every part

of the country where the troops might be stationed, had plenty to do, and found ample employment for her fellow lady-workers. Roughly estimated, about 9000 cases were thus treated. One day in the week, on the arrival of the English mail, a certain number of the ladies were specially summoned to deal with the 6000 London dailies and illustrated papers that it had brought in for distribution amongst the troops. A stranger beholding this scene would have imagined that the ladies, British and Colonial—many of them being the wives and daughters of peers—were the ordinary sorters and packers of mail bags employed by the General Post Office, so systematically and attentively did they apply themselves to their arduous duties.

Another valuable branch of the work carried on by the ladies in this shed was the making and filling of kit-bags for soldiers who had either lost or worn out the contents of those supplied to them from the ordnance stores. These kit-bags were neatly made of white canvas, and stamped with the words "A gift from the Red Cross and Good Hope Societies"; both having worked together so closely that it was difficult to distinguish between them, the Durban Women's Patriotic League being likewise in active co-operation and well to the front in the discharge of their useful mission.

About 12,000 of these bags were made, and when filled contained one flannel shirt, a pyjama suit, a pair of socks, handkerchief, a pair of slippers, soap, tooth-brush and a towel, a brush and comb, and a sponge, and were, as opportunity afforded, despatched to the hospital trains and hospital ships. Nothing supplied in the way of comforts was more appreciated by both officers and men, for the former were quite as destitute as the latter when carried off the battlefield. I have seen officers in a sorry plight in regard to their apparel, and but for the ladies at the base much greater discomfort would have been their fate during the past year. In supplementary

aid of all descriptions, in addition to what I have stated, the Red Cross Society spent not less than £1000 a week.

Two excellent pieces of work were done by the Hon. George Peel, who was then acting as one of the Red Cross commissioners, when he ran a convoy of stores to the Kimberley hospitals, directly after the raising of the siege of that town ; and by Dr. Chepmell at Ladysmith, when, notwithstanding many obstacles, he managed to convey by bullock carts a much needed supply of comforts to the hospital of that unhappy place immediately after its relief.

If Mr. Burdett-Coutts had really had the amelioration of the sick in Bloemfontein (and elsewhere) so much at heart, why did he not mention the deplorable state in which he found them to the Chief Commissioner of the British Red Cross Society, who was there at the time ? Mr. Burdett-Coutts knew the society had a large depôt of stores and hospital comforts at Bloemfontein in charge of Colonel Ryerson, the assistant commissioner, and that Sir John Furley had plenty of funds at his disposal with power to purchase anything required by the sick that was obtainable. But no application was made for such assistance except by those in charge of hospitals, which was met as far as possible by the representatives of the society, who then and there did their uttermost to ease the situation. Undoubtedly the strain at this time was very great. Almost all the railway trucks from the base (a distance of 750 miles) were indispensably necessary for actual military purposes, and only one or two in each week could be spared for hospital necessaries.

As a loyal supporter of the Government, and as representing the voters in the constituency of Westminster, Mr. Burdett-Coutts had no right to make trouble for the party he went to Parliament to support, until at least he had tried by private remonstrance with Surgeon-General Wilson, principal medical officer of the field force, and the Commander-in-chief.

Such a course would have been more patriotic, would have evinced a truer instinct of practical sympathy and loyalty to his friends, though it would not have brought notoriety in its train. But great are the uses of advertisement!

The answer to this is, of course, no beneficial result would have accrued from such representations.

Now, I am in a position to prove that they would. I know of an instance where, as far as the sick were concerned, the plan answered far better than the one adopted by Mr. Burdett-Coutts of writing to the papers in the first instance on such evidence as he could scrape together. Without mentioning names and places, I will state the facts. An honest supporter of the Government, though not in Parliament—a position carrying a certain amount of obligation—was dissatisfied with certain arrangements made for the sick. Several complaints had been sent by those in local charge, but no notice was taken. The state of affairs grew worse. The sick were not being attended to as they ought, and those locally responsible for their condition were over-wrought beyond all powers of endurance. Telegrams were sent for increased aid, but officials at the head of Government departments are so accustomed to hear the cry of wolf, wolf, when there is no wolf, that when there is real danger and trouble it is hard to make them believe it. At last a statement of the case was sent to the most influential person then in the locality, begging that pressure might be brought to bear to relieve a condition that was bringing discredit on the responsible authorities. The appeal was not in vain. Within a few days, help efficient and adequate was sent from headquarters, which at once altered the whole situation. The prime mover in the agitation sent a notice to the press that all arrangements for the sick were being conducted in a satisfactory manner, thereby greatly allaying public apprehension, which had begun to take form, and also gave much

moral support to those who were, with unwearied energies, carrying on their gigantic task. The documents in regard to the above circumstances were, later, sent to the Colonial Secretary as a private communication, as one of the workers, a friend of his own, had died in consequence of over-exertion.

From the foregoing it will be seen that in Mr. Burdett-Coutts' case, only his notoriety resulted, whilst in the other the agitator succeeded in securing prompt and efficient alleviation for the sick without inflaming public opinion at home!

I believe I am well within the mark when I say that Mr. Burdett-Coutts caused more real distress than the action of the enemy.

Admitting that through his action an improvement in the Royal Army Medical Corps will result that would not otherwise have taken place—an assumption that some will deny—the *intense mental agony* that he inflicted on the relations and friends of all serving at the front as to the fate of their dear ones, supposing they should fall sick or be wounded, is a high price to pay for it. It has been the reason of many mothers, wives, and sisters going to South Africa.

I have been asked hundreds of times whether the charges of the gross neglect were fairly accurate. My answer has always been: Mr. Burdett-Coutts could not make a false statement, but the way things are described gives false impressions.

A person may call a doctor “an apothecary”; a trained nurse, “a common woman who has to work for her bread”; a clergyman, “a fool of a parson,” and so on.

There is no doubt that there was much distress amongst the troops in Bloemfontein, some of which was preventible. There would have been hundreds of lives spared had the time been shortened anterior to the surrender of General Cronje.

Then and there the seeds of the disease were sown amongst the troops of both the attacking and defending forces.

I am perfectly satisfied all that was possible, under the circumstances, was done by the medical officers; and, as for Sisters, the following few lines written by Major Edwardes, who was very ill in Bloemfontein at the worst period, expresses the sentiments of hundreds of his fellow sufferers:

When war makes havoc in the land,
And dead men strew the ground;
When roof-trees blaze on every hand,
And famine stalks around;
When o'er their dead grey heads are bowed,
And passion runs apace,
One gleam of sunshine breaks the cloud—
The nursing sister's face!

Angels of mercy! Sisters dear,
Who steal from death his dart;
Whose task it is to heal and cheer,
Yours is that better part!

There is yet one more aspect of the case—the unhappiness caused through these reflections to those who have worked night and day to relieve the sufferings of the sick and wounded soldiers.

Had the aspersions been made by those who had been under medical treatment in hospital or in camp there would have been a touch of ingratitude, but, thank God, this has been spared to those who have sacrificed their health and fortune, and that with a lavishness that knew no bounds.

Words fail me! Language cannot convey an adequate description of all that has been done for the troops in this connection, though, of course, there are a few instances of hardship that could be recorded.

CHAPTER XXXVII

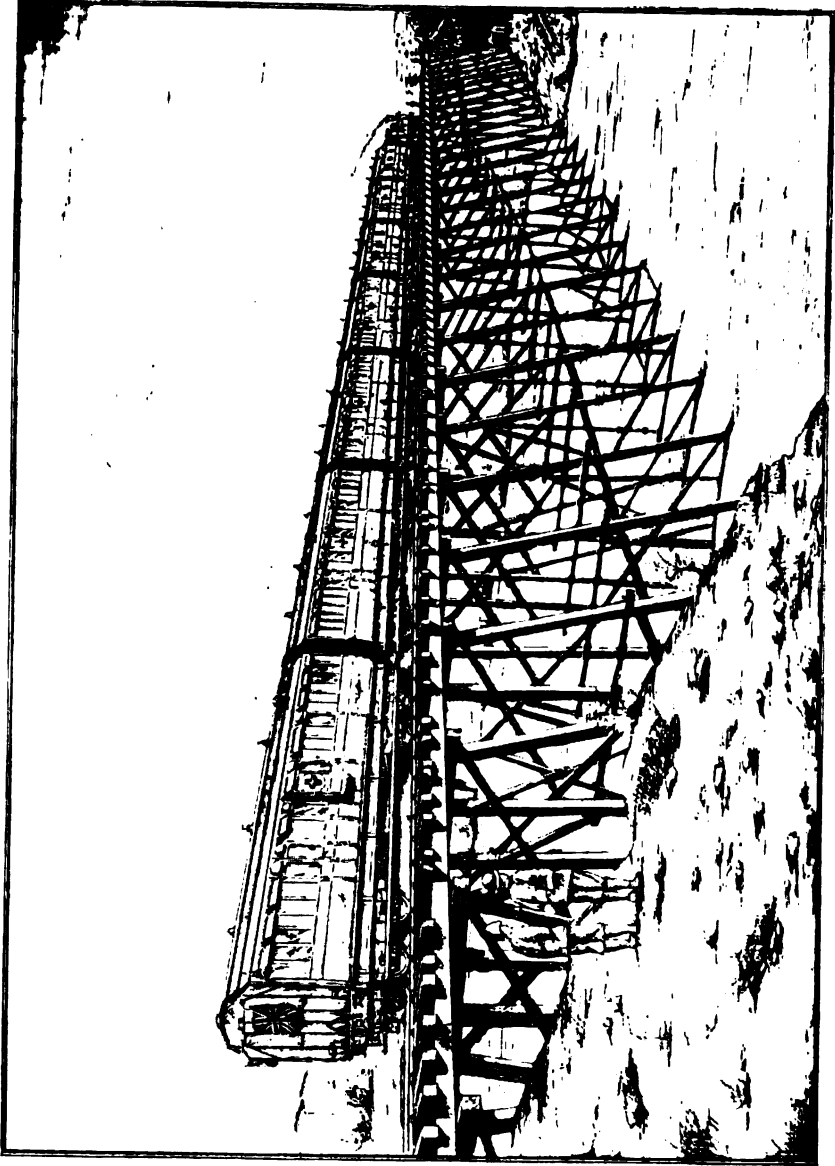
"PRINCESS CHRISTIAN" HOSPITAL TRAIN

HOSPITAL trains in war have been used on the Continent for some years, but it is the first time in English history that they have taken any part in our military organisation, and it is also the first time that the Admiralty have had to provide a considerable number of specially equipped vessels for conveying the sick from point to point as an integral part of their transport system.

The Germans in 1870-71 improvised hospital trains out of luggage vans, which they fitted up more or less satisfactorily to meet their requirements. France, Austria, Russia, and Italy have also trains somewhat similar in character; but those belonging to France and Austria are the most complete.

With our large hospitals and philanthropic institutions thickly spread over the land, it has never been considered necessary to construct such a train for use at home,* though it is a little surprising that in India, where fighting is almost

* This is not so now. I learn that when the troops began to return invalided from South Africa in the early days of 1900, the Marquess of Lansdowne, as Secretary of State for War, gave instructions for five railway ambulance carriages to be constructed for the sole use of military invalids in Great Britain, to convey them from the ports of debarkation to the hospital: these are kept at Netley when not in use. Each carriage will accommodate about twenty-five patients, twelve of them in a lying-down posture. The train began to run in April, and therefore was not the result of the suggestion of the Hospitals Commission Inquiry, as stated in the *Times*.



"PRINCESS CHRISTIAN" HOSPITAL TRAIN

always going on, a hospital train has not been adopted as the result of experience and necessity.

At the beginning of the present campaign the officials belonging to the Cape and Natal Government railways extemporised hospital trains from their limited supply of rolling stock, and very good results rewarded their efforts. Iron frames were used for this purpose, each to carry three stretchers, and when the interior of a railway carriage had been cleared they were placed inside and the patients were conveyed to the base in comparative ease, though differing considerably in degree from that which they experienced who travelled over the same country in the “Princess Christian” hospital train.

Our Royal family has ever been in the vanguard in all good and charitable works, and no members more so than our late beloved Queen, her Majesty Queen Alexandra, and Princess Christian. The personal interest these Royal ladies have taken in the arrangements for the sick is evidenced in a thousand different ways, but in none more than in the hospital ship and train that respectively bear their names.

In regard to the British Red Cross Society, in which the Princess Christian has shown such special and devoted interest, it was but natural that when the difficulty of transferring the sick and wounded from the scene of action to the base increased during the dark days at the beginning of the war, some idea would be evolved to mitigate the sufferings that such long journeys over single lines of rail entail; numerous stoppings, shuntings, and *désagréments* of every description being inevitable. It was very apparent that a train intended exclusively for invalids should be a complete unit—independent and self-supporting; in fine, a hospital on wheels. Many schemes were proposed to carry out this idea, but on investigation with a view to adoption they proved, for various causes, impracticable.

The central Red Cross committee voted a sum of money for the purpose, and on October 18, 1899, the contract was signed by Sir John Furley, on behalf of the society, and by Mr. Fieldhouse for the Military Equipment Company, who bound themselves to build and equip the train that was finally agreed upon by February 13, 1900.

At first it was intended that this train, which was to be called the Princess Christian Hospital Train, should be composed of ten carriages, but owing to the steep gradients and narrow gauge, it was found absolutely necessary to limit the number to seven. At this time the whole heart of the nation was in South Africa, and every subject of the King eagerly did all in his power to forward the Imperial cause, which was by no means confined to those men who were under arms.

But for the hearty co-operation of the managing director and his colleagues, even to the humblest mechanic in the employ of the Birmingham Railway Carriage and Waggon Company, this train could not have been delivered within ten weeks—two weeks sooner than the contract time.

Under ordinary circumstances such a train would have required eight months to complete; but as every day was of importance its component parts were all put in hand at the same time. The different sections, when completed, were packed in cases, placed in transports, and sent to South Africa.

The train was put together at the carriage works at Durban, and its first errand of mercy was to Ladysmith immediately the siege was raised.

To supplement the money voted by the Red Cross Society the borough of Windsor contributed £6100, to which the Princess Christian added £650—the balance of the fund invested in her Royal Highness's name after the Soudan campaign.

Many descriptions were given of this famous train when in course of construction, but that does not deter me from adding yet another to them. In the first place, the whole train is painted white. Each of the seven bogie "corridor" carriages is 36 feet long and 8 feet wide, the passage through being continuous. The first carriage is divided into three compartments—for linen and other stores, for two invalid officers, and for two nurses respectively. The second carriage is also divided into three compartments, namely, for two medical officers, a dining-room, and surgery. Nos. 3, 4, 5, and 6 are each constructed to carry eighteen individuals and four hospital orderlies. It is here that the greatest difficulty was experienced, owing to the line being of narrow gauge, and the space being consequently so very limited. The beds have been necessarily placed in three tiers; and any person accustomed to the lifting and moving of individuals can understand how difficult it is to place a helpless patient sideways on a bed closed on all sides but one, from a gangway 2 ft. 6 in. in width, in which there is only room for one bearer at the head of the stretcher and one at the foot.

This difficulty has been overcome by an arrangement of pulleys in the roof which enables each bed with a patient on it to be raised to the proper level by one man, whilst the hands of the two bearers are thus left free to guide and fix it in position. Each carriage is provided with a stove, a lavatory, and a closet, and necessary storing lockers. No. 7 contains the kitchen and pantry, including berths for two cooks and a compartment between for the guard.

There are perfect hygienic appliances for cooking, several large cisterns containing cold water storage, two large filters, refrigerator, and, in fact, everything necessary for ninety-seven persons, even if they have to live on the train for two or three weeks. Every square inch has been utilised, and

besides the fitted cupboards and drawers for linen, clothing, surgical and medical stores, cutlery, glass, crockery, provisions, &c., two lockers have been placed in the roof of each carriage for linen, &c. The whole train is light and airy, and the enamelled white iron work and fittings, and the bright draperies produce a very cheerful effect. As the train may have to be loaded with its human freight in places remote from buildings and exposed to sun, rain, and dust, an awning has been provided suspended to hooks over the carriage doors and supported by telescopic iron posts. Under this shelter invalids can be transferred from stretchers to the beds they will occupy in the train.

In the central panel on each side of every carriage is a conspicuous red cross on white ground, encircled with the words "Princess Christian Hospital Train," in royal blue and gold. In sockets at the head of the train are two flags, the Union Jack and the Red Cross, in accordance with Article VII. of the Convention of Geneva.

Between March 20, 1900, and March 31, 1901, this train made 94 journeys—going from Cape Town to Pretoria, or from Pretoria to Durban, or from Pretoria to Delagoa Bay—the whole distance travelled being 34,980 miles; the numbers of sick and wounded conveyed between these points being 266 officers, 15 sisters, 6162 non-commissioned officers and men, out of which there have been only three deaths.*

Sir John Furley, at a later period of the campaign, was authorised by the military authorities to form another hospital train, out of any carriages he could obtain. This

* Five carriages exactly similar in construction are being prepared for the Naval and Military Exhibition at the Crystal Palace. The carriages used only for administrative purposes will not be on view. This train is sure to be a most interesting exhibit to the hundreds of thousands of visitors who go to this famous and beautiful building, as it will enable them to see for themselves the arrangements made for travelling in South Africa for "dear Tommy" when he is sick and in pain.

"PRINCESS CHRISTIAN" HOSPITAL TRAIN 407

he did at East London, which is 1000 miles by rail from Cape Town, the whole expense being borne by the British Red Cross Society. This train was composed of one very fine kitchen and dining car, which he commandeered from the Orange Free State just after its conquest by the British troops, and six other bogie carriages of various types, which were rapidly converted into serviceable ambulance waggons, and the train was put under the medical charge of Dr. Stewart. This was a great addition to the means of hospital transport, and its first journey was to Pretoria, and thence to Cape Town, a run of about 1500 miles. I have thus mentioned the three principal means of transport contributed by the British Red Cross Society, and I think had this body done nothing more it would have amply justified its existence.

I am firmly convinced that amongst the many hard-worked individuals connected with this unhappy war no one has given of their time and attention more freely and earnestly than H.R.H. Princess Christian. Her work in connection with the army nursing service reserve has made great demands on both and has also required great tact in the selection of the numerous applicants; and in regard to their fitness she has personally dealt with every one. Altogether over 600 nurses have been enrolled and despatched to South Africa and, a large number of others are on the list ready to proceed thence in case of emergency or to replace those unfit for further duty.

In going through "The Princess Christian" train on one occasion when all the patients were settled for the journey to Durban, I said to a sergeant-major who had been wounded, "You all seem very comfortable here." "And so we are, ma'am," was the reply. "I have been on many campaigns, but I have never known so much done for the troops before. Why, this sleeping suit is fit for a duke. Feel how soft it is,

and what a pretty colour ! It is made of stuff more fit for my wife at home than for a rough soldier like me. Since I was washed and had it put on, I feel like a new man."

Further along along the train I made a similar observation to a private soldier who in a sullen tone replied : " Yes ma'am, it is good enough for me."

As a matter of fact, all on this train are treated exactly alike, and the difference in the answers of these two men arose rather from their mode of expression and natural disposition than from lack of appreciation or dissatisfaction on the part of the latter.

If noble dukes are more given to attiring their persons during their sleeping hours in pyjamas softer in texture and more artistic in colour than other men, then the simile of the sergeant-major was certainly a good one.



HOSPITAL SHIP "PRINCESS OF WALES"

CHAPTER XXXVIII

THE HOSPITAL SHIP THE *PRINCESS OF WALES*

I HAVE heard a naval critic of indisputable authority say quite recently: "I am horrified and amazed to find the utter absence of organisation for war there is in naval matters out here. If we went to war suddenly, we should be worse off than the army in many particulars, and our preventible losses would be too shocking, all through want of common sense and forethought." This being the private opinion of one holding an important command, I am not at liberty to give his name, but if on trial our first line of defence should fail us to the extent implied, great indignation would be felt by the nation against the Admiralty and the Government.

The same excuses could not be advanced for the naval service that are to a certain degree valid where the army has proved wanting; due, however, rather to insufficiency than inefficiency.

The navy is the pride of the nation, and since the needs of the service were put before the people of this land by naval officers and critics during the administration of Lord George Hamilton at the Admiralty, no money has been spared to make it adequate in both men and material for protecting the shores of Great and Greater Britain and her world-wide commerce. To what extent it is still deficient and would fail in the hour of need, I am not prepared to discuss just now. That there are many directions in which

improvements might be made is an undoubted fact, and we have it on the authority of Admiral Sir John Hopkins, when he, in his interesting lecture at the United Service Institution on December 12, 1900, introduced for discussion such a long list of valuable suggestions that any one of them would have proved enough for many an afternoon if the reforms proposed were to be beaten into a practical shape and fit for adoption by the Admiralty authorities.

When her Majesty Queen Alexandra, as Princess of Wales, was turning over in her mind the especial way she would prefer to mark her interest in the war in South Africa, is it at all surprising to find that from the battlefields in Natal and the kopjes in Cape Colony she should direct her thoughts to the navy—the service in which her only surviving son is an officer—or that the outcome should be a hospital ship?

From the time the decision was arrived at to the paying off of the vessel at the termination of her charter, her Majesty has taken the greatest interest in all that appertained to the equipment and fittings; personally inspecting the vessel, and providing it with every requisite for efficiently carrying out the mission undertaken in her name.

The selection of this ship by the Red Cross committee for the purpose has been the subject of many adverse criticisms. But there were many reasons why this selection should have proved satisfactory. The ship was a yachting cruiser and had exceptionally good kitchen accommodation conveniently situated. The space between decks was lofty and well lighted—two important considerations in connection with wards on board ship. All the wards could be made to communicate with the quarters of the nurses and medical officers and all essential accessories, without the necessity of going on deck. The fittings were specially designed to enable wards being completely evacuated

when necessary by placing the patients on deck in the open air, under the awning, without removing them from their cots; and to this, no doubt, must be attributed the excellent medical and surgical results—considerations which do not occur to the mind of those who are so ready to criticise unfavourably. Another point in favour of the selection of this vessel was that the ward accommodation possible, in consequence of the internal construction, was very much greater than that which could be obtained in proportion to tonnage in other hospital ships—a fact which made the vessel more economical in connection with time charters. Thus the *Spartan* and *Trojan*, with a tonnage of 3400 to 3600 tons, had only seventy cots available for sick and wounded, while the *Princess of Wales*, with a tonnage of 3178, had as many as 184. This may also be compared with the accommodation on the larger hospital ships; the *Orcana*, for example, had about the same number of cots as the *Princess of Wales*, with a tonnage of 4803, or over 1600 tons more. When one considers that the Government was probably paying 20s. a ton per month for hire of that vessel, some £2000 monthly was being paid to carry the same number as the *Princess of Wales*.

The two breakdowns that delayed her in English waters on her two first voyages were attributed in the newspapers to various causes wide of the true one. Who could have foreseen that the man in charge of the boilers would be so neglectful of his duty as to allow the evaporation to continue until they were so nearly emptied of water as to cause explosion, or that the same things could have occurred twice, and both at the time of starting? I am hardly within the mark to say explosion, for, thanks to the excellence of the boilers, the accidents did not amount to as much as that.

The first accident occurred in Tilbury Docks before the ship sailed, and the cause was attributed to the muddy water

of the river having deposited mud at the top of one of the boilers, which caused it to get overheated at one point. This was at once detected by the bulging of the boiler, and until the defect was made good the ship was put out of charter.

The second accident occurred just as the ship was about to sail from Southampton, and was the consequence of the evaporation having continued so long that the water was too low in the boiler, with a result similar to the former accident. The boilers were otherwise in excellent condition and comparatively new, and but for this fact the consequences would have been the bursting instead of the bulging of the boilers in question, with the inevitable loss of life.

The Admiralty were blamed for having selected this vessel, though they had nothing whatever to do with it. But it is the fate of public departments to be held responsible for many things that do not come under their jurisdiction at all.

The Red Cross hospital ship, the *Princess of Wales*, has, in spite of these *contretemps*, done excellent work, and given great satisfaction. In respect to the treatment of the cases her record is second to none. Out of the 723 patients treated on board only one died, or out of the 523 conveyed to England 0·19 per cent., which, considering the severity of the cases, is simply marvellous.

In consequence of the ship having been arranged for only "cot-cases," the proportion of severely wounded and dangerously ill patients admitted was equal to if not greater than on other hospital ships—a fact that tells greatly in favour of the medical staff when estimating the percentage of cases treated and the mortality on board. Most of the ships specially fitted as hospital ships had accommodation for a large proportion of convalescents on the troop decks, which, of course, adds to the total; and when these facts are borne in mind the hospital ship *Princess of Wales* compares favourably with any for actual work accomplished.

In looking over the names of the officers composing the ship's company, it is gratifying to observe that out of the four whose duties are to navigate, three have the proud distinction of belonging to the Royal Naval Reserve, and out of a crew of seventeen no fewer than sixteen are also in the same service.

As the question of naval reserves is one of supreme importance to the nation, and to the shipping community in particular, it would be interesting to know whether any other ship chartered by Government could show such a percentage of naval reserve men on board. To those who may feel disposed to act on this suggestion, at least as far as hospital ships are concerned—and it is well to encourage amiable rivalry proved by statisticians of comparative excellence—I will give the names of those vessels that were used as hospital ships to facilitate their search.

GOVERNMENT HOSPITAL SHIPS.

<i>Spartan.</i>	<i>Dunera.</i>	<i>Trojan.</i>	<i>Orcana.</i>
<i>Simla.</i>	<i>Lismore Castle.</i>	<i>Nubia.</i>	<i>Avoca.</i>

Other ships besides these were used for the same purpose for varying periods, and also as prison ships until the military could make other arrangements for prisoners of war and the sick amongst them.

This war being one for the land forces, the navy was not at first expected to do more than transport the troops to South Africa, but as circumstances arose in which the army required help, the navy did all that was possible to respond to the call, not only with ships, but with men and guns. When the sick in Durban could not be accommodated in the hospitals ashore the "handy Jack" rigged up a ship in twenty-four hours to receive the overflow.

The war has done much to educate the mind in diverse ways, but in none more than in the management of military

hospitals. There are many ladies and gentlemen who last year were in blissful ignorance of everything connected with the accommodation and requirements of sick persons, but who could now set to work to get the funds, equip, and superintend a military hospital whether for service at the base, to take part with the advancing force, or to be a floating establishment on the briny ocean. So rapid has been the progress made that they could give many valuable points to the Medical Director-General and his staff at the War Office, who have been at the work since they left their medical schools in the dim distance—before the parents of these young people were in their teens, indeed, I might say before their grandmothers were born! But for those who have not had such special advantages, and whose education has consequently been less rapid, I will mention a few of the multitudinous arrangements that had to be completed before the *Princess of Wales* could proceed to South Africa.

After the ship had been inspected for the committee, and favourably reported upon by the famous Newcastle ship-builders, Messrs. Armstrong, Whitworth & Co., the work of conversion had to begin, and hospital fittings replace those previously existing. The ship's crew was settled by the company, but the medical and nursing staff had to be selected, not an easy task by any means. The appointments being eagerly sought, the applicants were numerous, and were very importunate in their solicitations.

All who have acquaintance with the army are fully aware that Queen's Regulations and General Orders regulate almost everything, and in the opinion of some people far too much. Still, without them the responsible officers would be unable to execute their instructions, for reasons that are obvious. My own personal experience is that when civilians are placed in military positions involving administrative duties, chaos reigns. Requests are preferred that are difficult to refuse

without the support of these regulations, Even the Commander-in-chief feels the need of them when he refers all awkward questions to the chief of the staff for settlement. Everything connected with general arrangements is tabulated for the guidance of those concerned by the various offices to which they appertain, and it is chiefly attributable to ignorance or wilful disregard of these regulations that trouble arises. However efficient civilians may be in their own particular *métier*, they cannot maintain discipline amongst a lot of soldiers in a military establishment without an officer accustomed to "Tommy" and his ways at the head of it. In this crisis Lord Lansdowne has called the best civil aid to help the military officers, but it was a pity their duties were not more clearly defined.

It is not my intention to give lists of all the wonderful things that are indispensable in the equipment of a hospital ship, though I have no doubt a large number of doctors, nurses, and others might find them interesting and full of valuable information. Those really desirous of obtaining them, however, might get a copy of the arrangements made on board the Red Cross hospital ship *Princess of Wales*, from the printers, Phipps and Connor.

In a ship where only severe cases of sickness were to be received, special attention had to be given to the water supply, the ventilation, the sanitary arrangements and disinfectants; for warming and cooling the wards according to the varying latitudes, and for the cleansing of foul linen, which on a long voyage is a matter of great importance. The want of this accommodation on ships where epidemics of fever have unexpectedly appeared has occasioned great anxiety.

Lastly, when arrangements are made by the Admiralty for coaling at Teneriffe, St. Vincent, and other coaling-stations, special precautions have to be taken in regard to the manner of placing the fuel on board; and the effect that want of care

might have on the wounds, &c., of the patients under treatment are easily conceivable.

No description of this ship would be complete that omitted the operating room equipment, viz. :—

- 1 Operating table.
- 1 Electric grid for boiling water.
- 1 Complete set Röntgen rays apparatus.*
- 1 Table and cupboard for instruments and surgical material.
- 1 Operating-room sink.
- 8 Disinfecting solution bottles and irrigators.
- 1 Portable electric light.
- 1 Fixed cluster light.
- 1 Fresh-water tap with Berkefeld sterilising bougie.
- 1 Schimmelbusch steriliser.

A list of games presented by her Majesty Queen Alexandra given below shows the value she attaches to recreation and amusement, which were in addition to the piano, an organ, and an excellent library.

- 1 Case compendium of games.
- 1 Case backgammon and draught boards, chess boards and men.
- 1 Case dominoes, solitaire and cribbage boards.
- 1 Case playing cards.
- Victoria Leeds game.
- Gordon and Kitchener game.
- Cape to Cairo game.
- Halma.
- Rainbow race.

Her Majesty also placed on board a large quantity of tobacco, pipes, and cigarettes, which were distributed to the patients as the doctors considered expedient.

This list of Red Cross medical comforts contributed by Messrs. Brand and Co. is a specimen of a firm's benevolence.

* Presented by his Grace the Duke of Newcastle.

	Dozens.
Essence of beef bottles	48
" mutton "	6
" chicken "	12
" veal "	6
Concentrated beef tea $\frac{1}{4}$ lb. tins	12
Assorted invalid soups	36
Extractum carnis 1oz. bottles	12
" 2oz. "	6
Meat juice	6
Beef tea jelly	9
Beef broth 3lb. tins	1
Beef peptones	3
Turtle soup $\frac{1}{4}$ lb. tins	6

A large stock of wines, spirits, and mineral waters was contributed by several firms and private individuals, but their names are too numerous to mention.

Without disparaging the fitted cases of every sort and kind supplied to the field forces, nothing, in my opinion, could surpass in completeness, both as regards utility and economy of space, the Savory and Moore medicine chests that are in use on transports, in base and field hospitals, and may be found in the equipment of almost every independent unit on active service. They contain everything that could possibly be required, from pins to complete sets of surgical instruments; everything the best of its kind. In this connection I must also direct special attention to those more portable cases of compressed drugs and surgical requisites prepared by Messrs. Burroughs and Wellcome. In varying sizes, from £1 to £100, they were found as part of the equipment of almost every person who had a notion of how to take care of his health.

In connection with hospital ships as auxiliary aids to the Government, the *Maine* will readily be remembered.

As every one knows, she was the American expression of

sympathy to England in her hour of trial. It was natural that a strong and independent off-shoot should come to the support of the old country, which many of our American cousins still call "home"; and for me to say that the offering was replete, the most perfectly equipped hospital ship afloat, would be not only superfluous, but almost an insult. It goes without saying when the Americans do anything it is second to none.

Much good work was voluntarily accomplished for convalescents by the owners of private yachts, of whose names, however, only three or four occur at this moment to my memory, *i.e.*, Sir Samuel Scott, in Durban harbour; Mr. Bullough, Miss Bibby, and Mr. Cooper, in Table Bay, or other points on the coast; and in the discharge of their self-imposed duties no expense was spared.

In *land campaigns hospital ships* have figured before in the general organisation for the sick and wounded.

Thus the China war, the Abyssinian war, the Egyptian wars of 1882 and 1885 and both Ashanti expeditions, as well as the expedition to Benin have had each one or more hospital ships assigned to the base of operations. The best of these, no doubt, were those fitted out for the later campaigns, such as the *Malacca* for the Benin expedition, and the *Coromandel* for the Ashanti expedition of 1895.

But the Convention of Geneva does not include the neutrality of *hospital ships in a naval war*, though the principle was accepted by the Peace Conference at the Hague. The subject has been considered at nearly all conferences of the Red Cross Societies, which are held every five years. The great difficulties of neutralising ships flying the Red Cross flags are apparent. Belligerents object to such ships going into a blockaded port, and naturally they would not be permitted to come out again; then, again, they would not be likely to be allowed to coal. The suspicions would be too

strong that the hospital ship was acting the spy. The difficulties are great, but perhaps they may be overcome to the advantage of sick and wounded sailors at some not far distant date. There have been examples of yachts taking off invalids from ships of war after naval engagements, but this has been done at their owners' risk and peril.

If my naval expert is correct in his opinion as to the shocking losses we should have if we suddenly became engaged in a naval war, as stated in the opening sentences of this chapter, then this becomes a very serious question, especially after our recent experience in South Africa. A naval war would certainly result in greater sacrifices of life and treasure than any that have marked the progress of military campaigns in any part of the world.

Whether the organisation of the navy for war is up to the standard of efficiency that would enable it to respond to the note of war and danger is a matter that ought to be thoroughly investigated. During this war there is no question that the navy in its transport department has more than maintained its wonted reputation. This fact not even the naval critic referred to would deny, nor would he refuse those responsible for its management this meed of praise, though he is quite right in urging the necessity for an adequate navy, thoroughly organised and prepared for war, however suddenly it may be sprung on the nation. But in the hands of Earl Selborne and his present naval advisers the best interests of the naval service are safe.

CHAPTER XXXIX

THE SERVICE BATTERY OF THE FIRST NORTH UMBERLAND VOLUNTEER ARTILLERY, KNOWN AS THE ELSWICK BATTERY

IN selecting those instances of the patriotism of individuals which found expressions in gifts to the nation of complete military units as auxiliary aids to the field force, it is but natural, being a woman, that I should take first those emanating from my own sex, especially seeing what a violent storm of adverse criticism blew upon women and their doings in connection with this war, the result of which temporarily damaged, and threatened to destroy altogether their sphere of influence. With time and increased knowledge of facts, however, a complete change has come over public opinion, and from sweeping assertions in one direction the wind has veered round, so that it now blows nearly as fiercely from the opposite point of the compass. Women are meant to be helpful to men; to encourage and cheer them in their work, but not to be abused for doing it; nor ought they to be lifted out of that position, for is it not in that their true strength lies and by which they rule the world?

Lady Meux's gift of a battery of six Elswick guns to Lord Roberts was gratefully accepted on behalf of the Government, though the privilege of using it was sent to the battery direct. It was a most generous and opportune offering, and proved itself a valuable addition to the fighting force at the disposition of the Commander-in-chief.

The battery was sent out by the 1st Northumberland Volunteer Artillery, and the men are nearly all workmen employed in the Elswick factory—where the guns were made—and consequently they feel they have a sort of proprietary right in them and are personally responsible for their correct behaviour. When I saw the battery in Maitland Camp in May, both men and horses were in excellent condition, and since that date until the present time the reports that are received are of the best.

These guns are described as twelve-pounders, twelve cwt., mounted on a field carriage. It is the first attempt that has been made to introduce them into the field artillery, though they are in constant use in the navy. When H.M.S. *Powerful* was lying in Simons Bay for a short time before she left for England, I saw a similar gun on board that had rendered great service in the defence of Ladysmith by locating at long ranges the Boer positions, and frequently compelling them to evacuate.

These Elswick guns are constructed entirely of steel and designed for great rapidity of fire, and are provided with two natures of projectiles, shrapnel and common shell.

With a full charge these guns have a range of 8000 yards, 3000 farther than the service fifteen-pounder Royal Horse Artillery weapon. When firing shrapnell shell a reduced charge is generally used. The mechanism of this formidable piece of artillery was explained to me by the major in command, and seemed simple enough to work. Great precautions are adopted to lessen the effect of the recoil and to prolong the life of the gun itself. It appears that up to 400 yards half-charges are used, which, of course, strain the guns far less than full ones, though they have to be employed when this range is exceeded. By a simple though ingenious arrangement they may be fired by either the percussion fuse or electricity. For manœuvring these guns a team of eight horses for each

is indispensable, and on bad roads this number is not nearly enough.

The officers of the Elswick battery were: Major Harvey Scott, Captain Morris, adjutant, R.H.A.; Captain Wedgwood, Lieut. Bell, Lieut. Macartney, Lieut. Johnson, Lieut. Wilson, Surgeon-Captain Walford, Vet.-Lieut. Dotchin.

On April 3, 1900, the Elswick battery sailed from Albert Docks in s.s. *Devon* for Cape Town, arriving at Table Bay on Saturday, April 28, where they disembarked and proceeded to Maitland Camp, a few miles outside Capetown. They remained there from May 2 until May 23, leaving on that day for Bloemfontein, about a week's journey by train in war time, when no night travelling is done, and long delays occasioned by the line being damaged by the enemy. On arrival at Bloemfontein, they were in time to take part in the annexation ceremony of the Orange River Colony, the salute being fired by the two guns of the Naval Brigade and the six guns of the Elswick battery. After being in Bloemfontein a few days, the right and left sections, with four guns, were sent to Springfontein, and the centre section, with two guns, to Bethulie, and from there on to Smithfield, where they remained until June 17. On Monday, June 18, Lord Kitchener gave orders for the battery to march to Doornspruit. On July 11 the battery arrived at Pretoria. The centre section arrived first, and was immediately sent out to the rescue of the Lincolns. Afterwards Generals Roberts and Buller came round the camp, and the Elswick battery was pointed out by Lord Roberts, who said, "That is my battery." On July 13 the battery was with Hickmann's flying column—its first action as a united battery—in the direction of Wonderboom, towards Onderspruit. On July 16 the battery was attached to General Sir Ian Hamilton's brigade, and was engaged in forcing the Boers back from kopjes north and north-west. Hamilton's column advanced

to Waterval, and on July 17 proceeded to Hamarskraal, continuing the march on July 18 and 19 along the country north of Delagoa Bay Railway. On July 30 the guns reached De Wegen Drift.

On the 21st, about two miles from camp, the enemy's guns could be seen firing in the battery's direction at least seven thousand yards away. After a reply of a dozen or so shell from the Elswick guns they ceased firing at the convoy they were escorting. On July 22 marching recommenced to Rustfontein. On July 23 two guns, right section, were ordered out from Pretoria to recover the body of a man who had been shot in the valley. The Boers meanwhile were only five miles away in the hills and firing at the party. The guns were brought into action; the third shell dropped over their position at 7800 yards range, and they ceased firing.

July 25. The battery concentrated at Balmoral and was greatly admired.

From Balmoral the battery was recalled to take part in the relief of Rustenburg, and on the road, on August 1 and 2, turned Boers out of Zilikats Nek, driving them across the Crocodile river and pressed on to Rustenburg; the centre section being left on August 5 at Commando Nek on the same river to guard the bridge with Colonel Hickman's brigade until return of others from Rustenburg. August 8 the right and left sections returned from Rustenburg, and on the 10th the three sections (*i.e.*, the whole battery) marched to Baltfontein, then to Thorndal, and on to Karlfontein, Zandfontein, Vlakkfontein and Boedekloof, where Oliphant's Nek was forced, the battery being in action all day. The next day, August 11, the centre section was in action alone, firing forty-five rounds, after which this section proceeded north through Hebron and Zoutpans to Warm Baths, and thence back to Pretoria, arriving on the 28th.

After being provided with 123 remounts on the 31st a

fresh start was made towards Middelburg with Hamilton's division, the battery passing Bronkhurst Spruit for the third time on September 2, arriving at Belfast on September 8, which place was left again on the 11th, reaching Machadodorp the same afternoon, encamping at Helvetia, then on to Waterval-Onder, Nootgedacht, and Godwan, where the left section remained. The right section was ordered to Duivels Kantoor and the centre section to Nelspruit, where it arrived on September 18.

On the 24th the centre section left for Pretoria, arriving on September 26. On the 27th it left again for Rustenburg, where it arrived on October 1, remaining until October 19. On October 17 the right and left sections, after an exciting train journey of six days' duration, arrived again at Pretoria from Koomati Poort, to which town they had marched (a distance of over 300 miles) in twenty-seven days. On October 18 the left section was ordered south to Edenburg. On October 29 the right section arrived at Potchefstroom, from Frederickstad, where it had been to the relief of General Barton, who was surrounded by De Wet. On the 31st the centre section was at Magato Nek. On November 8 the right section was stationed near Elandsfontein Junction, and the left section at Rhenoster Station in the Free State. On November 22 the centre section was at Rustenburg, attached to Q battery Royal Horse Artillery (of Sannah's Post fame), and proceeded on the 23rd north-west to Hartebeestefontein, where it was engaged on November 30.*

On December 1 and 3 it was in action south of Oliphant's Nek. On December 5 it was at Krondal, near Rustenburg. On December 12 the right section encamped between Klerksdorp and Tigerfontein, where it had been for ten days. On December 23 the centre section was in action with Colonel Cunningham's brigade at Leeuwpoort and camped near Oliphant's Nek, continuing its march on

* See positions of guns on page 427.

the 24th for Wolverdund, near Johannesburg, which was reached at 10 P.M., where it spent a quiet Christmas day. On December 27 orders were received to proceed to Potchefstroom, which was reached in four days, the right section being encamped a few miles away, having marched from Vlakfontein to Wolverheind on December 24.

On December 26, the left section was at Edenburg (south of Bloemfontein) doing garrison duty. On January 17 the centre section was at Johannesburg.

It will be seen from the above that for some time past the battery has been divided into three independent sections acting under the orders of separate generals, and continually on the march. Also, there appears to have been very great competition amongst the generals to secure a section of the battery, as long range guns are indispensable to the success of their operations. I have purposely given this detailed account of the movements to and fro of the battery in order to convey an idea to the non-professional mind of the way the troops have had to traverse and retrace their steps; but even this does not carry out my intention, as I am unable to give the distances between the various points mentioned.

The following is an extract from a letter from Captain Wedgwood, giving an account of the action of November 30, 1900, near Hartebeestefontein, by General Broadwood's cavalry brigade. I reproduce it as it is typical of a great many and as showing what volunteers can do.

29/11/1900.—Delarey reported fourteen miles south of Twee river (where we camped) with 1000 men and five small guns and little ammunition. Force marched at dawn, 5 A.M., as under :—

Advance guard, 2 squadrons 10th Hussars.

Main body : 1 squadron ”
 1 pom-pom, Captain Dennis.
 2 sections Q battery, R.H.A.
 1 section Elswick.
 12th Lancers. -

2 squadrons 8th Hussars.
 (about three miles long) baggage,
 ambulance supply party (mules
 and bullocks), two companies Ar-
 gyle and Sutherland Highlanders.

Rear guard. 1 squadron 8th Hussars.
 2 companies Argyle and Sutherland
 Highlanders.
 1 section Q battery, R.H.A.

Crossed to Selous river and turned south by west.

6.15, halted at A till B pronounced clear.

7.30, pom-pom and then leading section Q engaged
 to left and right, to assist cavalry; screen force
 halted; range 2000 yards.

7.44, moved on up steep hill to C (8.45).

9.15, Elswick section ordered to knoll (position I).

Convoy had vanished in a valley of High Ridge.

10 A.M., moved on, halted, and joined main body at D.

10.30, Elswicks trotted on over bad hill to position
 two and opened fire at 4600 on Kafir kraal
 reported held by Boers.

11 A.M., moved on, and leaving section Q on the
 right trotted on to position 3 down hill, seeing
 Boers galloping off up opposite ridge; came into
 action with pom-pom on right; cavalry advance
 stopped fire about 11.45.

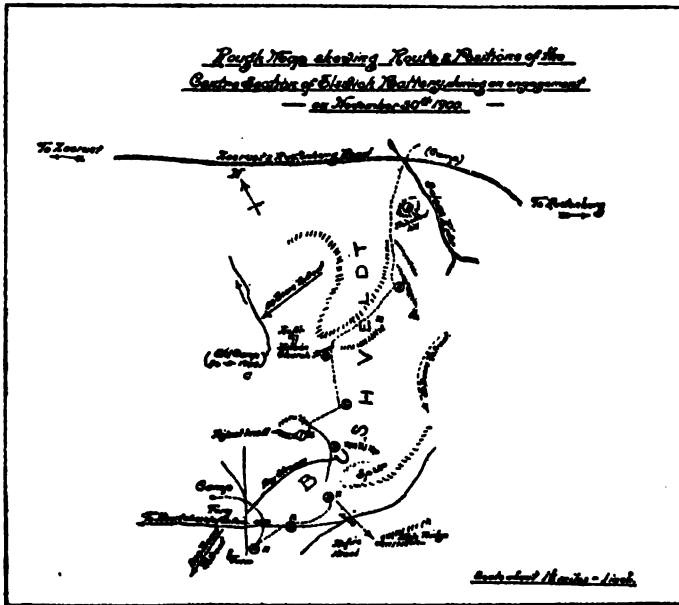
12 (noon), took up position 4 and shelled convoy
 retreating south-west up hill, out of range, say
 8500 yards. Boers had vanished over hills before
 we got up. Q in action on our left and also
 reversing against High Ridge to east, from
 which we were being sniped. Horses having
 been twenty-two hours without water and moving
 at a great pace, we camped on the stream at 3 P.M.

Total casualties on our side, one.

Burnt six farms and many wheat stacks; comman-
 deered 18,000 bundles of oat-hay. Grazing very
 good; travelling about sixteen miles, three at a
 trot.

The accompanying map of route and positions is also Captain Wedgwood's, which he has kindly allowed me to use.

In the future, when considering the armament of the Royal Artillery, in the light of the recent experience gained in South Africa, it is more than probable that the authorities



will furnish each brigade with a few of the heaviest guns of the longest range.

For the supply of guns and mountings to both the army and the navy, the firm of Elswick does credit to the British nation. By its honourable transactions it has reached its present respected and important commercial position, and proves the truth of the old proverb "Honesty is the best policy," a line of conduct that should be followed by all Government contractors, whether they supply guns or boots for the troops, especially during a period of active hostilities.

The two examples I have taken of artillery on active

service are widely different in their natures, though both are automatic guns; the one kind being so light and portable that I could move them, and the other so heavy that a team of eight horses is required to bring them into action, and that under the most favourable conditions.

Other machine guns, between these two and larger, have been used in this South African campaign. In all no less than eighteen natures of British ordnance, each requiring their own particular kind of ammunition, have taken part in the war; all having had to be transported over enormous distances, and ready for action at any moment.

Those who know least about the war and the peculiar difficulties that each section of the army has had to encounter are the most ready to condemn the conduct of it, and criticise the War Office and the officers and men that are daily performing prodigies in overcoming the obstacles that beset them on all hands and of every description.

First it is the staff and regimental officers that are stigmatised as "stupid," then it is the artillery that is found fault with; field artillery guns are denounced as useless and small arms the same. Nothing escapes, even the Australian volunteers have been described as "carpet soldiers." When so much has been said in detraction, and at a time when fault is found with everything that is being done by the War Office, it is quite refreshing to hear the kind words of the Duke of Cambridge, who from long experience can claim to know something of what he is talking about.

In the course of an address delivered to the 3rd Middlesex Volunteer Artillery he expressed his satisfaction at hearing how admirably its members had carried out their military duties during the past year. He said he had often heard the volunteers called fanciful soldiers, but the part they had played in the South African campaign had exploded that idea.

The military spirit which had been developed during the past year was quite extraordinary. Though this was a commercial country, it had, perhaps, stronger military instincts than many of the military countries in other parts of the world. It had afforded a wonderful sight during the past year. The military spirit of the country and of the colonies had been developed in a manner which is almost unaccountable, and to one like myself, who had been at the head of the army for so many years, and who could not now expect to remain much longer amongst them, the spectacle which had been afforded was particularly gratifying. Officers and soldiers had shown what they could do; they had done their duty in a manner which was most creditable to themselves and most honourable to their country.

Lord Roberts, fresh from the battlefields and speaking from personal acquaintance with the volunteers on active service, has nothing but praise for them, and during the whole time he commanded the forces in South Africa he marked his appreciation by having representatives of different volunteer corps on his personal staff.

When leaving Cape Town he said :

The guiding hand of Omnipotence would bring good out of what to our finite understanding was the most unfortunate war of 1881, for that war could not have brought the far-reaching effects that this war had caused. That war could not have consolidated the whole British empire firmly together as this war had done, because it would have been fought by regular troops alone, whereas the present war had been brought to what, he hoped, was a satisfactory conclusion by the militia, yeomanry, and volunteers of Great Britain, and by those admirable and workmanlike contingents of South Africa, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, India, and Ceylon, all fighting as brothers in arms for the dear old flag of the mother-country in the service of their empress-queen.

In this respect he held a unique position as field-marshal of the united Governments, because he was the first who had had the honour to command an Imperial army formed of representatives from all parts of the Queen's dominions, bound by one common

object, namely, to uphold the honour and prestige of the mother-country. He was convinced that this unanimous and spontaneous outburst of patriotism was not an ephemeral thing, and that every member throughout the civilised world would note that England, isolated from them, so far as treaties and alliances were concerned, had only to give the signal and men forthwith flocked from all parts of the world to aid the mother-country. Never had a mother more reason to be proud of her sons than England to-day. So they stood, and, please God, would continue to stand, a united world-wide dominion, bound together by indissoluble ties, and ever ready to carry out the destiny of their race. God had brought them out of what, in the dark days of December, appeared to them to be the Valley of the Shadow of Death. They could now look back on days of tribulation with deep gratitude for the mercy vouchsafed to the Queen's troops.

Though it has sadly to be admitted that Lord Roberts was a little premature in thinking the war was over, and that we had nothing further to do but rejoice and look back with satisfaction on the days of tribulation safely past; there is no doubt that our late beloved Queen fully appreciated the sacrifices made by the troops, and took advantage of every opportunity of showing her appreciation of them.

In spite of failing health and advancing age, she constantly visited the sick and wounded as they arrived in Netley Hospital. She sorrowed with the bereaved, and honoured those who had returned from the seat of war by personally receiving them in audience.

Could any one suggest a way in which a sovereign could show love and gratitude that has not been found by Queen Victoria for her fighting sons, no matter from which corner of the empire they came; regulars or volunteers?

CHAPTER XL

SIR CHARLES ROSS' COLT-GUN BATTERY

IN leaving Maitland Camp I met a friend then serving in Sir Charles Ross' battery and when I told him I had just been instructed in the mysteries of heavy artillery, nothing would satisfy him but that I should have another lesson at Rosebank Camp in artillery firearms more mobile in their character.

I was told that General Sir F. Forestier Walker would hold an inspection of the battery early on the following morning, prior to its departure for Bloemfontein, which was to take place on the Friday, May 4—a coming event that was occasioning great enthusiasm amongst the men who are all old soldiers of the Royal Horse Artillery or have served in cavalry regiments. Accordingly I went with my friend to his camp, where the battery has been stationed for five weeks—since its arrival in Cape Town.

In order to understand the inspection and get an intelligent idea on a subject of such vital importance to success in warfare as automatic guns, I thoroughly went into every detail. It is often taken for granted that such and kindred subjects are quite beyond the ken of womenfolk, and so, indeed, they would be if some kind brother did not occasionally take the trouble to enlighten their minds and expand their understanding, and in this respect I have been more fortunate than words can express.

On the present occasion I was not less so than usual. I

had the benefit of the expert aid of Sergeant-Major Paddon, whom Sir Charles Ross regards with great favour, and I soon found that I could not have been placed in the charge of a more intelligent or painstaking instructor.

No Government has ever been supported by private munificence to such an extent before, and it greatly appreciated Sir Charles Ross' generous gift, which left England with Lord Loch's contingent, but on arrival in Cape Town became a separate unit, self-containing and self-supporting—a new experiment in modern warfare,

Lord Athlumney was the military officer in charge of the battery, and it could not have been in the hands of a better man. He was formerly in the Coldstream Guards, is a major of the Kent Artillery Militia, and during the Dongola expedition of 1896 was serving with Lord Kitchener, when he was mentioned in despatches.

Sir Charles Ross, though he has no record of military service, is a typical Englishman, or, as I should say, Scotsman; and when I saw him in the camp he was working like a blacksmith at his gun-carriages to have them ready for departure. Sir Charles is a rich man and can afford to be generous. He has broad acres in Scotland, square miles in China, mining interests and electric works in British Columbia; and from the wealth that these possessions realise, the nation, and the individual Tommy Atkins whom he has brought with him reap the benefit.

Sir Charles has always been a great sportsman. When he went to Muizenberg, a small bathing-place near Simons Town, where he took his battery for gunnery practice, he shot away the flag from the floating target, which had been riddled at 2000 yards; the men likewise doing especially well in battery firing in support with rifles.

The entire complement of this battery was 5 guns—Colt's automatic '308; 4 officers, 1 sergeant-major, 2 sergeants, 5

corporals, and 48 men ; 12 Cape boys, 60 Argentine horses, 36 mules, and 6 carts for ammunition and transport. When in action there are three men on each gun in the firing line, two men in the rear with reserve ammunition, and the remainder with supplies and stores. These, as all machine-guns—naval included—were painted khaki colour, and are indiscernible on the veld at 1000 yards. The Colt gun can be brought into action as fast as a squadron of cavalry and retire with equal celerity. They fire 450 rounds a minute, and are worked by gas caused by the explosion of the cartridge passing through the valve at $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches from the muzzle ; the swinging lever in the rear causes the extraction of the empty case ; the insertion of a fresh cartridge from the belt, which holds 250, recorks the gun. The firing is done by pressing the trigger.

At a certain epoch of the campaign all additions to the artillery and cavalry were direct national benefits, whether they were heavy guns, like the Elswick battery, or the Colt guns, which are very simple in construction ; so light are the carriages that even I could drag one and the *laisson* across the camp ; and when the gun had been taken from its mounting and placed on my shoulder, I found that under stress of circumstances I could have carried it a short distance. The exact weight of it is 42 lb.

In one or two places during this campaign, however, it has been found that the "Dundonald carriage" has proved too light to be drawn at a gallop over rough country, and Sir Charles Ross came to the same conclusion after various experiments. In order to rectify this defect he had a steel frame added, which he found greatly steadied it, and on the day of inspection he was thoroughly satisfied with the gun-carriages, which moved with ease over the worst country obtainable round Cape Town, maintaining their positions, and proving themselves equal to all emergencies. They were

turned in a nine yards interval at a gallop, and in every way they went through the usual inspection parade with a precision that left nothing to be desired. The men in Sir Charles Ross' battery were easily distinguishable from the multitude of other "gentlemen in khaki" that still abound in South Africa, by the strip of tartan of the clan of which he is the head, and the Prince of Wales' plumes over the word "Ross," together with the insignia of the clan, two juniper branches tied in a knot.

The first day these guns were brought into action was on May 28, at the fight at Boksburg, when they drove the Boers from that coal-mining district, through Germiston into Johannesburg, where the guns were employed to protect the Rand gold mines.

On June 4 they were in action outside Pretoria, prolonging the line along the ridge to the left of the big naval guns. Then came three days' fighting at Diamond Hill, after which four of the guns were employed in an armoured train, whilst the other two were told off for patrol duty round Pretoria.

On June 4 one gun alone fired 3200 rounds, and it is satisfactory to note that during the whole campaign no serious case of jamming occurred.

The *esprit de corps* is so strong in the British army that every officer and man is convinced that his gun, his unit, or corps is the best, and the only really satisfactory one in the service, and sees in it incomparable advantages. The truth of this statement is proved every day in the columns of the daily press. When an attack is made on any arm of the service columns are written in justification of its excellence.

This is a great reason why it is better to have a civilian as Secretary of State for War than a military man, who naturally leans to his own particular branch of the service instead of seeing, with impartiality, the army as a whole.

In concluding this chapter on Colt automatic quick-firing guns, it may be of interest to recall that although these guns were most effectively used by the United States army in the Spanish-American war, their use in the Boer war is the first occasion on which they have been employed by the British authorities. In addition to Sir Charles Ross' battery other units were sent to the front by the various battalions of yeomanry, also under Major W. H. Edwardes, who worked them with General Clements' column, and subsequently with General French's cavalry division, and by Lieutenant Ward in Natal, who was attached to Lord Dundonald's forces with General Buller. In all about sixty of these guns are or have been in action during the present war.

CHAPTER XLI

THE MOUNTED VOLUNTEER AIDS TO THE FIELD FORCE

No woman can dispute with Lady Meux the honour of having contributed a battery of artillery for active service in South Africa, nor can one come forward with the claim, "But I have given a squadron of cavalry." No woman has been found with sufficient courage to interfere with the men on horseback; though I would not venture to predict that in another national crisis—which we all trust will not arise for generations—that one of the gentler sex will not be forthcoming with sufficient temerity even for this, if indeed a whole corps of Amazons might not arise to vie with mounted men on the field of battle itself. General Buller would then have no need to say, "I suppose our officers will learn the value of scouting some day." That good day will have dawned!

In the meanwhile it is to be hoped that after our recent experiences the military establishments will be so increased out of the Imperial Exchequer, and their organisation be so perfected that they can easily be converted from a peace to a war footing. In future the nation (*i.e.*, the members of the House of Commons) must see that its defences are not so insufficient as to admit of the necessity for private individuals coming to the rescue with batteries of artillery, squadrons of cavalry, and military hospitals to make up deficiencies in the hour of danger.

With an ever expanding empire, increasing responsibilities,

and the progress made by rival nations in commerce and military strength, our defences both sea and land require to be kept under constant supervision and unremittingly augmented. No Government could exist that refused to place the army and navy on the footing desired by the representatives of the constituencies.

Many hard things have been heard about the War Office, but what would the Duke of Wellington have said if he had been told that the country would be able at the end of the century to despatch to South Africa from this country, in addition to 175,000 regular soldiers, a further force of 40,000 volunteers of various descriptions from the United Kingdom, thirty regiments of militia, and put in the field 40,000 colonial volunteers drawn from the affected districts, and coming from Canada and Australia to fight shoulder to shoulder with the regular troops in a cause in which the Canadians and Australians were not directly involved?

What would his astonishment be if he could see the volunteer squadrons of cavalry bearing distinctive names that have been raised in a few weeks for active service, to say nothing of the thousands of yeomanry that have flocked around the royal standard! How gladly he would have modified his opinion in regard to the utility of untrained troops if he could have read of the deeds of bravery, the marching powers, and steadiness in the face of the enemy displayed by the City Imperial Volunteers!

In his celebrated letter he says:—

“We hear a great deal about the spirit of the people of England, for which no man entertains a higher respect than I do. But unorganised, undisciplined, without systematic subordination established and well understood, this spirit opposed to the fire of musketry and cannon, and to the sabres and bayonets of disciplined troops, would only expose those animated by such spirit to confusion and distraction.

Let any man make the attempt to turn to some use this spirit

in case of partial local disturbance, the want of previous systematic organisation and subordination will prevent him from even communicating with more than his own menial servants and dependants, and while mobs may be in movement through the country, the most powerful will find that he can scarcely move from his own door.

We are so accustomed to see the police control local disturbances that there is no opportunity of judging to what extent the great duke would be right in the opinion he expressed in 1847. In this respect in these early days of the twentieth century there is plenty of evidence to prove that on such occasions soldiers are not nearly so successful as civil policemen and that there is plenty to show that undisciplined troops can be opposed without fear of confusion to the fiercest artillery and rifle firing from an enemy as thoroughly trained and disciplined as the Boers have proved themselves to be. For have they not taught us, and all the great military Powers, valuable lessons in the finer arts of war? We are told by an eminent authority that for their own purposes the Boers in South Africa are the best trained and disciplined troops in the world. They have given ample proof of their extraordinary mobility, their ingenuity in moving heavy ordnance to and from distant parts of the country and to the summit of positions thought to be quite inaccessible. When a distinguished general was informed, in the beginning of the war, that they had such and such guns of position, he replied "But what good are they? They require stationary platforms." He soon found out what good they were, and that the Boers made readily enough stationary platforms just when and where they required them, with the concrete they carried about with the guns. They have taught us how to dig trenches, how to take scientific advantage of cover, and how to bring down the transport of an army to the smallest limits. Even Lord

Kitchener, who is considered heartless in the way he cuts down baggage, has gained a point or two more in South Africa in connection with field transport.

A letter was forwarded by a *Times* correspondent which was found in a deserted house at Ottershoop, and was written by a Boer to his brother and dated September 1, 1899. The following extract from it which appeared in the *Times* of December 6, 1900, shows that the burghers fully anticipated war and were to a man quite prepared to fight.

We are going to have a bloody war and can expect the same every day, nay, every hour, as sure as I am writing this. We must be brave and faithful to our country. The English Government will not declare war because they say we are a subordinate State. The troops will cross our borders at a certain hour to occupy our country, and, of course, as soon as they cross they will be fired on. Our country will be bathed in blood and tears, our bravest men will fall in battle, but we will gain the victories; our cause is just and righteous, and besides, according to statistics, an advancing army of 50,000 is equal to 17,000 on the defensive. Well, O.V.S. and Transvaal can have 34,000 men in the field in eight days, then we will be twice as strong as the 50,000. Their artillery will not do so much harm; we fight guerilla fashion. Our artillery will play havoc with the 25,000 or 30,000 voet-gangers. We are all mounted. We have the advantage of selecting our own battlefields. They say England can send more than 50,000; they must prove this first. But our Republican armies will also be reinforced from the discontented populations from Natal and the Colony. I think we have a good chance of wounding England for life. I think the first shot will be fired close to your office in Marico district, sixteen miles north of Mafeking. You people must be on your guard. I expect the telegraph wires will be cut throughout the State at a given hour. Our Government expects it.

As will be seen, they calculated the force England could send against them fairly accurately, not counting the militia and volunteers.

That this was the opinion entertained generally by the burghers in the Transvaal and the Free State I have every reason to believe, as the conversations I had with the prisoners of war on the *Manila* fully confirmed the sentiments in the foregoing letter. Many belonging to Zeerust, Rustenburg, and Potchefstroom showed that they anticipated nothing else for months and were confident of success.

To have left out of their calculations the volunteers was a great error in judgment, though a very natural one. For, as Mr. Brodrick said in the House of Commons, no one except an official would have been willing to believe that the War Office could or should be in a position to find such a force to land in South Africa. This is a surprise to ourselves; we have astonished all foreign nations, and the result is that the late Presidents of the South African Republics have discovered their error when it is too late to rectify it. The value of undisciplined troops has now been proved beyond dispute, both for the attacking and defending force.

Lord Dundonald—the great leader of irregular cavalry and mounted infantry, of whose success in Natal all have heard—was asked to give his opinion of the men that formed the regiments of his brigade. He said: “They were of all classes and professions; men with whom you could go anywhere and do anything.” But in this connection it must be remembered that Lord Dundonald is not a self-opinionated man, and was not above asking for advice, or listening to the suggestions of any one, whatever his position in the force, and, not only did he listen, but acted on the suggestions if, after due consideration, he thought they were better than his own ideas had been.

That he correctly sums up the attributes of the men composing his brigade there is no doubt, and his opinion may also include the volunteers in Brabant's Horse, Thorneycroft's and Bethune's Mounted Infantry, the contingents of

mounted Bushmen from Australia, and the Ranchers from Canada; the list may be extended to the corps known by the names of officers in the British regular army, *i.e.*, Roberts' Horse, Kitchener's Horse, Compton's Horse, Paget's Horse, and the newly formed Prince of Wales' Horse; also those bearing the names of distinguished civilians, such as Strathcona's Horse and Loch's Horse. All are men that will do anything or go anywhere—men who volunteered for active service and have stood the test which proves them to be good and useful soldiers of the King.

I make special mention of Strathcona's Horse in the next chapter, but should like to give another instance of the kind of work done by these volunteers, and for my purpose have selected the corps bearing the name of Lord Loch.

I am fully aware that I might have chosen one that has seen more severe fighting and has gone through more experiences of a thrilling nature; but, though the books on the war have been as plentiful as blackberries in autumn, the more permanent ones are still to be written, and the best material must be left for the great historians who will do justice to subjects that I, with others, only venture to touch upon.

Loch's Horse is a colonial corps, which was raised by the late Lord Loch and Mr. George Farrar in England, at the headquarters of the 1st Surrey Rifles in Camberwell. They numbered about 220 in all, and from the commencement of the campaign have been commanded by Captain Brown, late Royal Irish Rifles, who had previously seen service both in Egypt and Rhodesia. Major Hodgson, late Lincoln regiment, was the second in command, but he has since been appointed resident magistrate of Boksburg. When the corps left England in February 1901 it was united to Sir Charles Ross' battery, but was formed into a separate contingent when it reached Cape Town. After a short delay at Rose-

bank Camp it was sent up country, and they saw their first fighting at Karee siding, they were then brigaded with Lumsden's Horse and the 8th Mounted Infantry, under Colonel Ross. Commanded by him, they were in the action at Houtnek, where Lumsden's Horse were very severely cut up. Two days later, in Lord Roberts' great march, they assisted in the capture of Brandfort, and were first into the Boer laager. After various small affairs they took part in the battle of Zand river, where they gained great praise from General Hutton for their coolness under an extremely hot shell-fire.

Loch's Horse were among the first to enter Kronstad, and a fortnight later were actually *the first* of Roberts' army to cross the Vaal, and were in time to save the bridge and the coal mines at Vereeniging from complete destruction.

Three days later, after some severe fighting round Elandsfontein Junction, they captured the important town of Boksburg. This may be regarded as their great feat during the war, for by the time the corps reached the town, so exhausted had the horses become that only four officers, one sergeant and twelve men were left. These, however, rode straight into and through the town, driving out over two hundred Boers and capturing three guns, and taking over sixty prisoners. After holding Boksburg for three weeks Loch's Horse and the Royal Canadians occupied Springs, thirteen miles to the east. This place was infested with Boers, and the hairbreadth escapes of the patrols would be too numerous to mention.

Later the corps moved down to the Free State to help in the chase of De Wet, and to guard the railway line at Taai-bosch Spruit; it is their proud boast that their section is the only part of the line which, up to the date of writing, has not been damaged by the enemy, though they had been in charge of it for at least four months. All arrangements

were made for me to drive to Taaibosch from Johannesburg, but the state of the country was so unsettled that I had to give up the idea.

On a most regrettable occasion, when Lieut. W. A. S. Williams, Adjutant of the 8th Mounted Infantry, was killed, and Colonel Ross was dangerously wounded, Sergeant Picton, of Lord Loch's Horse, gallantly charged up to the wall of a kraal behind which an unknown number of Boers were hidden, and shot three with his revolver, whereupon the others threw down their rifles and surrendered. For this gallant action Sergeant Picton has been recommended for the medal for distinguished service in the field. On several occasions both officers and men have been mentioned in despatches and several of the troopers have received commissions in the regular army. One that occurs to my mind is Sergeant-Major Adam, who volunteered from the militia to this corps, and had a commission given him in the First King's Dragoon Guards and returned to England in November in consequence, but left again with his regiment in January for a further period of active foreign service.

Such are the men that have been gathered together under the banner of irregular corps to serve in South Africa. They are the pioneers of England's greatness. Some people call them "the black sheep of the family"—the *mauvais sujets* that go away, anywhere, because they cannot pass their examinations, or have got into some trouble at college. Bad boys at school often make *good* citizens; when they are thrown on their own resources they generally fall on their feet. The rough life they find in distant colonies to which they are banished by indignant parents, or to which they have been attracted by a spirit of adventure, soon hardens their constitutions and renders them physically fit for anything. Their education likewise gives them a leading position in all local affairs.

They are the first to lead the way to places where missionaries afterwards come and settle, trade and development following as a natural consequence.

They are the men of whom England has reason to be proud; the colonisers of distant parts, and of the earth. When there is a cry for help they come in their thousands to defend what they have helped to make—Greater Britain.

CHAPTER XLII

STRATHCONA'S HORSE

It would be impossible for me in the compass of the present volume to make detailed references to all patriotic impulses which have found an outlet in every conceivable direction. In selecting two batteries and two corps of mounted men I have merely done so as illustrations.

The opportune contribution to the Imperial forces made by Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal comprised three squadrons of men, as fine and as well mounted as any that have landed in Table Bay or Durban since the war began. The greater part of the 500 men have come a distance of 12,000 miles to stand shoulder to shoulder with the other sons of the empire that have gathered together on the sandy plains and uplands of South Africa to punish a people that have wantonly invaded our territory and insulted our Queen and country.

It is very marvellous to observe how rapidly men and animals bear violent changes in climatic conditions! When I saw "Strathcona's Horse," the men had been three months previously sleeping out in the open at night in the neighbourhood of Klondyke, with the thermometer 40° below zero; when they arrived in South Africa the temperature in their tents at Green Point was 100° Fahr.!

So eager were these hardy men from the Wild West to serve their Queen and uphold our national honour, that Colonel Steele had no sooner received his orders to recruit for the

force than they were executed—the whole complement for his command being raised in five days, and that in a distance from point to point of 5000 miles. But three short weeks were employed in completing all the arrangements, from the date of the first order to recruit, to that when all were embarked at Halifax on board the *Monterey*, which vessel accomplished the voyage in twenty-two days—a distance of 7000 miles. It took but a couple of hours to embark the men and horses at Halifax and half a day at Cape Town to disembark them and to take up their ground at Green Point camp.

This is as “smart” a piece of work as our American cousins could have put through, and even they could hardly have surpassed it. The average English mind does not usually associate great celerity with efficiency and attention to details, but as far as the outfit and equipment of Lord Strathcona’s contingent was concerned this general rule does not apply. With ample means, and willing hands, Colonel Steele soon organised his command into squadrons, appointed his officers, and divided the work; the most important conditions of enrolment being that all had to be good horsemen, good shots, of robust constitution, and unmarried; minimum height 5 feet 6 inches, and 36 inches chest measurement; not to be under twenty-two nor over forty years of age.

Men that are accustomed to spend their lives on extensive cattle ranches in Canada generally comply with these requirements, because the nature of their calling imperatively demands that they should be good horsemen and good shots. The outdoor life they lead stimulates and invigorates their physique, and as for being married, most of them wait until they have had enough of life in the Wild West before they “seek the comfort of a wife.”

The advantages of having as large a number of horsemen

as possible of the particular type of Lord Strathcona's Horse are obvious, when the great mobility of the Boers is borne in mind. The contingents that come from Canada and Australia are well able to give a good account of themselves and command respect from the enemy in their own mode of warfare; and when their own faithful steeds are exhausted from hard work and short rations they have learned the knack, as well as the Boers, of lassoing wild horses. By the kind permission of Colonel Steele I saw how the trick was done. He ordered two of his men to mount good horses, and selected two others of the fastest, and set them free to career around the camp; away they went over rough stones between the tents, and into the lines, but were soon caught by their pursuers, who swung a coiled rope with a loop at the end, which the animal tightened around its neck, that so secured it that further escape was impossible. This little exhibition afforded amusement and instruction to those in camp, and an opportunity for the three batteries of artillery, the 6th Royal Warwicks, the details of Guards, of Army Service Corps men, and for the 2000 Boer prisoners to judge of the horsemanship of our friends from Canada. A short time ago another contingent of Canadians were able to capture in this manner some of the horses that had broken away and were enjoying their liberty, and defying their riders, Royal Horse Artillerymen, on the veld.

When a practical and useful gift is offered at a critical moment, and happens to be just the thing most wanted, it is sure to be appreciated by the recipient; and this is the position of the Government in regard to Lord Strathcona's generous contribution to the Imperial forces.

To prove their worthiness, every officer and man in the squadron gave of their best to second the High Commissioner's effort in this matter, as well as to support their position as representatives of "loyal Canada."

Green Point Camp is much preferred to Maitland Camp by the troops of all arms. It certainly has many advantages that are apparent to the ordinary visitor. It is nearer to Cape Town, easier to provision, close to the tramway, and has two beautiful views of which the eye never tires: Table Bay, with the ships in dock, and a large fleet of magnificent vessels that are anchored in the roadstead or passing in and out of it; picturesque sailing vessels, or stately constructions in iron and steel. The second view, Table Mountain, is not less pleasing to those who take a delight in mountainous scenery in a fine climate, and varied in its colourings by glorious sunsets. Sir Francis Drake described it as a "lovely mountain, the most stately thing in the circumference of the earth." It is not that it is so high, being only 3582 feet, but rising almost perpendicularly out of the blue waters of the Atlantic, there is a grandeur about it that is very impressive. Clear brilliant sunshine, not too hot, characterises most days, which are ushered in by a sunrise that is only second to the sunset; and as for the nights, they are regarded as perfect by astronomers, and are greatly appreciated by those that hunt in couples and seek the Southern Cross in the Milky Way!

Strathcona's Horse in camp gave no false notion of what they would be worth in the field. On one of these lovely evenings, indeed on the very one that Colonel Steele gave me the lassoing exhibition, a staff officer took him apart, and after-events told me he came with instructions to proceed with the men under his command on a secret mission to intercept the enemy, which, by the orders, were supposed to be somewhere on native territory.

All the preparations for departure were made in a cloud of profound secrecy. In the shortest time the officers and men were on board two transports, and to the surprise of those on the s.s. *Chicago* they found they were to be

escorted by the *Doris* flagship on the station and two gunboats.

Our Canadian friends never felt themselves so important in their lives, and many firm resolves were formed to give a good account of themselves, and discharge with success whatever duties their secret mission might impose on them.

Half the regiment was sent to Durban, and half to Kosi Bay in Tongaland, but when the latter reached their destination they found the slim and wily Boer had learnt their secret, and had made their arrangements to receive them ashore!

To effect a landing in Kosi Bay in ordinary times is no easy matter, and has to be accomplished by the means of ropes thrown across; but to do so in the face of an enemy was impossible, so the mission failed.

If it were possible for our men, those in command, to occasionally tell *lies*, and have said unhesitatingly that Strathcona's Horse "were going to Beira or some other place," their departure would have attracted no particular notice, but so much secrecy gave a zest to the finding out whither they were bound.

Under these circumstances the flagship and gunboats proceeded to Delagoa Bay, and the half of Strathcona's Horse which they had been escorting returned to Durban, and there entrained for Bond's Drift (on the Tugela), and marched to a place a few miles north of Eshowe, where orders awaited them to march back again to Durban.

So, with their 700 pack mules and 1100 bhistis, in charge of Captain Chestney, 17th Bengal Lancers, they began the 130 miles march, which they accomplished in three days, a feat that has not been equalled, with pack transport, during this war, which is saying a good deal, when beaten "records" in marching have been of constant occurrence.

On July 1 Strathcona's Horse first came under fire at

Greylingstadt, and from that time to the first week in August marching and fighting with General Clery's Division were the events that diversified the days. On the 7th of that month the chief part Strathcona's Horse had to play in this great drama was given to them when they were attached to the 3rd Mounted Brigade going north from Paardekop, with General Sir Redvers Buller, on perhaps the most difficult march of the campaign, though not the longest, which is an honour that belongs to the Winberg column.

To have been included amongst the 18,000 fighting men on a march over country where in places there are no roads, over such vast plains that the transport waggons could travel for miles twenty abreast, and at other points through drifts that were sometimes at an angle of forty-five degrees, and up mountain sides, on a track so narrow that there was hardly room for one, with a deep ravine on one hand of 2000 feet and more and a solid rock on the other, rising perpendicularly to a height that was impossible to estimate, if actual knowledge of the fact had not told them it was 3000 feet to the top; the transport for the seven weeks for men and animals was, under the latter circumstances, then drawn out to a length of twenty miles.

In this marching column there were naval 4·7 guns, and at times the gradients were so steep—one in five—that with eighty oxen they could not be moved without being dismounted, the gun and cradle then going on in separate waggons. These guns were called "cow guns," and were invaluable for finding out the country.

Strathcona's Horse took part in the capture of Ermito, Carolina, Machadodorp, Lydenburg, Pilgrims Rest, and went to Spitz Kop, the most formidable rise on the Manchberg range.

A resolution has been passed by the Canadian Government, that when the Imperial Government no longer require the

services of Strathcona's Horse,* on their return to Canada they are not to be disbanded, but maintained as a permanent force for service in the country, this being a graceful tribute to Lord Strathcona and a living symbol of gratitude for all the benefits he has conferred on the Dominion and on the mother-country in her hour of need.

I have heard many men remark, who lay claim to a superior knowledge of men and things, that no volunteers from the Colonies, or indeed from England, will again be forthcoming as volunteers; and I sincerely trust our policy in foreign affairs will never be so vacillating and our preparation so weak as to lure our opponents into a belief that liberties can be taken with impunity; but if ever we are obliged to resort to war to maintain our rights and honour, then it will be seen that our brothers in the Colonies will volunteer, and in increased numbers, to the support of the old country.

The stories of the war that will be told to the generations yet unborn will fire the ambition and fructify the natural spirit of adventure of all true-born Britons. Nothing will be said of the hardships endured or about being "fed up." The discomforts will be forgotten within a month of their coming home, and in another month they would be as ready as ever to be "off to the wars again." Indeed, before the ink has had time to dry on this page, the appeal made by Lord Kitchener to Australia for more mounted men has been responded to with enthusiasm, and a contingent is already on the sea making for South Africa.

* Since writing the above the Canadians have all returned from South Africa and have safely arrived in the Dominion, "Strathcona's Horse" being so far privileged as to remain in London for a week *en route*, Londoners giving them no lukewarm reception.

CHAPTER XLIII

REFORM OF THE WAR OFFICE

IN the foregoing pages I have endeavoured to show what extraordinary difficulties the non-combatant departments of the army have had to encounter in the discharge of their duties during this great Anglo-Boer war.

I presume it will appear clear to the minds of the majority of the readers, even from my inadequate accounts, that herculean efforts were made by the staff officers, and those employed under them, of the various departments to meet the requirements such a large military force has occasioned, and that the chief impression will be that the army has been more remarkable for its insufficiency than its inefficiency to perform the task set before it.

At first all the War Office arrangements and calculations were made on the basis of an army corps of about 35,000 men; and to hastily raise, train, equip, transport, and keep mobile the huge army of 250,000 men that have been landed from all parts of the empire on the shores of South Africa, strained the organisation of every office to almost breaking point. But to counteract this inadequate preparation, unflinching loyalty and heroic devotion to duty on the part of one and all has made it possible, without any serious breakdown in any of the several branches connected with supplies and transport.

Colonel Sir Howard Vincent says :—

There are some people who blame the Government for insuffi-

cient preparation for a war they wanted to avoid, they hoped to avoid. These are the very persons who said at the end of last September they could see no reason for military preparations. Now they say we should have punctuated despatches with army corps. It is indeed marvellous that we have sent 220,000 troops, and all their arms, ammunition, and stores in British ships—200 in number, with a burden of a million tons, over 6000 miles by sea, between twenty and thirty days on the ocean, and three hundred leagues by land, with only two or three mishaps. Such a work reflects the greatest credit upon the War Department, upon the Admiralty, upon the Mercantile Marine, upon the heads of the railways. Where is the Power which could accomplish, which could attempt such an undertaking?

That we, a non-military Power, have been able to raise such an army for active foreign service, came as a great surprise even to ourselves, and that we were able to do so without impairing the upkeep of our military establishments in India and elsewhere, and at the same time be able to get together another 30,000 men to furnish a military display such as that which took place on Saturday, February 2, 1901, when the body of our late beloved Queen Victoria, "the Good and Great" was carried through London to her last resting-place, or when King Edward VII. went in full state to open his first Parliament twelve days later.

Since my return from South Africa, what to my mind has been the most remarkable result of the war is the readiness of everybody to find fault, and that on the merest rumour, with those charged with its conduct. Statements that have scarcely a shade of truth are made in the House of Commons on the unseemly behaviour of the troops. Charges are preferred against the departments that the slightest investigation would prove to be unfounded, and there is a general rush to the public press to suggest improvements in the army and to reform the War Office—some, of course, bearing the stamp of good sound common sense, whilst others are not only truly ludicrous, but make

the editors of the papers that publish them appear very ignorant.

To give an instance or two, a newspaper that has a large circulation amongst the masses speaks of the plague as having broken out amongst the troops in South Africa and that typhoid fever, disguised under the name of enteric, is claiming its hundreds weekly. As typhoid and enteric are synonymous terms, and as the Royal Army Medical Corps are obliged to use the official nomenclature of diseases, it is obvious there is no question of disguise; but those who undertake the duty of educating the people should surely master those technical terms that vary in civil and military practice.

A journal that has great power and influence amongst the upper classes also gives circulation to statements that are inaccurate. I read in one issue that there were no hospitals for horses in South Africa, when there were four (see page 8). Also that in consequence of the report of the Commissioners on the Hospitals Inquiry Commission, an ambulance train of five carriages was constructed to convey military invalids to England.

As a matter of fact, this train was ordered in the early part of the war and began its errand of mercy in April, which was some weeks before the Commission was thought of (see page 402).

In spite of all that can be brought against the army in South Africa, and all that has been said in disparagement of the War Office authorities, there is no doubt but for the steady increase that has been made to the fighting efficiency of the army, and the numerous improvements that have been initiated during the administration of the Marquess of Lansdowne, the late Secretary of State for War, there would have had to be a very different tale written than is now happily the case.

Another Majuba would have had to be related in our national history. He has left behind him an unprecedented record of progress in all that concerns the welfare of the army and has seen it tested as no military force has ever been before.

Almost every departmental office has undergone some change which has enabled it to carry on more efficiently its functions to the army as a whole.

Army officers are not one whit less conservative than naval officers, and view with suspicion any innovation affecting their particular branch of the service; and as this is the general feeling both in the combatant and non-combatant ranks, the reformer must be a brave man to run in opposition to such a stream of prejudices. If he succeeds in disturbing them, he must, moreover, be prepared to lose all his friends.

It is with the service itself that the chief difficulties lie in the way of reform; and the higher up the lists the officers are, the worse it is to convince them that changes are from time to time necessary.

Was there ever so much dissatisfaction caused as when Mr. Childers brought in his territorial measure? The army veterinary surgeons were no better pleased with him when he announced that in future they would be formed into a separate department, and be employed anywhere as required, instead of being attached to cavalry regiments or batteries as heretofore. It was the same thing with the army surgeons, and more recently, two or three years ago, the Army Service Corps was reconstructed on the present basis; and to the great credit of those responsible, it has during the war more than justified the most sanguine expectations.

I have often put the question whether the work entrusted to these several departments could have been satisfactorily performed under the old system. The reply has always been

most emphatic, and to this effect. Though we certainly greatly preferred being permanently attached to regiments, there is no doubt that the demands made during this war could not have been met at all under the old system.

In a volunteer army, sweeping reforms cannot be brought in, for the last state would be worse than the first; and in a country where the army establishments are voted year by year, the best intentioned and most zealous War Minister can only handle the men and stores the nation places at his disposal.

The prominence rightly given to the navy since 1884 and the consensus of opinion in the press, and elsewhere, that it was of paramount importance to make it invincible against any combination led to the idea that a small army was sufficient to meet the needs that the empire would be likely to demand of it, and consequently it has been difficult to make its wants known and obtain for them the consideration in Parliament that might otherwise have been readily accorded to it.

Yet, in spite of much opposition from the Legislature, many additions have been made to the numbers of the regular army since 1895, and improvements in all ways can be recorded.

The following are the chief measures which have taken place since that date to improve the condition of the private soldier :

(a) Grant of messing allowance of 3*d.* a day (1898), partly counterbalanced by abolition of deferred pay.

Net cost £800,000 a year.

(b) Small improvements in clothing, better flannel for shirts (1897); extra boots and trousers, and grant of canvas shoes (1899).

Cost, about £60,000 a year.

(c) Improvement in barracks. Many of the old barracks are very inconvenient, and some are insanitary. By the Military

Works Acts, 1897 and 1899, a sum of £3,759,000 is appropriated for building new barracks.

(d) Elasticity in the conditions of service. Enlistment for a three years' term of service with the colours was introduced for infantry of the line in 1898.

Military Training.—The most important measures were as follows:—

(a) The Manœuvres Act, 1897, first made it possible to arrange for manœuvres on a large scale at a reasonable cost, by giving powers of compulsory use of land, and by providing for a Manœuvres Commission with power to arbitrate.

(b) The Military Works Acts, 1897 and 1899, provided £1,189,000 for the acquisition of rifle and artillery ranges and manœuvring grounds. This includes the purchase of Salisbury Plain, the only piece of War Department land in England, except Aldershot, where large bodies of troops of the three arms can be trained together. Some thirty-three rifle ranges—twenty-six at home and seven abroad—are being constructed out of the funds raised under these Acts.

For artillery practice the War Office has just purchased 18,000 acres on the Kelworth Mountains, in Ireland, where a military camp is to be formed and barracks erected.

Rifle ranges for the volunteers will have to form an important item in future Army Estimates; money spent on rifles and ammunition is wasted unless training ground is also available.

Arms and Equipment.—(a) The horse artillery was re-armed with a lighter gun, and the field artillery guns were altered to throw a heavier shell (fourteen pounder instead of twelve and a half-pounder) in 1895 and 1896.

(b) All the gun-carriages of the horse and field artillery were fitted with the spade-brake, thus securing a quicker rate of fire, in 1899; and an extra supply of waggons and ammunition was provided. New field guns of an improved pattern are now being made.

(c) It has now been decided to spend a large sum in accumulating a reserve of arms and equipment.

Volunteers.—A special payment of half the annual capitation grants (i.e., about £250,000) was made to the volunteers in 1896; they were armed with the magazine rifle in 1896-98; a scheme

for providing them with regimental transport was partially carried out in 1899 and is now being completed; £750,000 is taken in the Estimates 1900-1901 for re-arming their artillery with modern weapons; and some £140,000 has been assigned for the purpose of assisting them in the acquisition of rifle ranges.

5. *Fortifications*.—A scheme for the partial re-armament of fortresses at home and abroad was approved in 1897; between 1896 and 1899 nearly £800,000 was spent in replacing modern weapons for obsolete ones. In 1899 a scheme for bringing up to date the whole armament was worked out and approved, at the estimated cost of £2,770,500, and the guns are being made as fast as possible.

The additions to the regular establishments were:

7,430	in	1897.	4,378 ¹	„	1899.
16,955	„	1898.	27,543	„	1900.

Total 56,306.

In these figures are included seventy-one batteries of horse and field artillery, and twenty-one battalions of British and four coloured infantry.

Concurrently with these improvements in the army, the War Office had to carry on large military operations in India, Egypt, and in South Africa, and in consequence of the experience gained in each of these campaigns, ameliorations in the organisation of the army have continually taken place; and though there is still much left to be done, it is nevertheless in a very different condition to what it was when Lord Lansdowne first became Secretary of State for War. If every man had his due, he would at this moment be regarded as the most successful War Minister that ever held office in Pall Mall; and when a true and impartial record of his administration comes to be written he will rank amongst the greatest statesmen of our day.

There are, of course, a thousand ways from the point of view of an outsider in which the method of conducting the

business of the War Office could be amended, and there are countless others that could be named by those who come into frequent contact with the routine work of various departments, who could testify to the great annoyance caused by the delays which occur before any matter can be finally settled. But as long as an army exists to defend and protect the vital interests of this empire, which vary with every succeeding year, additions, re-organisation, and innovations must constantly and inevitably take place.

Mr. Brodrick, the present Secretary of State for War, in deference to public opinion, has appointed a committee, composed for the main part of well-known business men, to report on the internal business of the office, and to consider the system of contract and audit, the further decentralisation of the work, and the more expeditious discharge of the duties of the several departments.

The members of the committee are:—

Mr. Clinton Dawkins, of Messrs. J. S. Morgan and Co., late Finance Minister in India (chairman);

Mr. Beckett, M.P., of Messrs. Beckett and Co., Leeds;

Mr. W. Mather, M.P., of Messrs. Mather and Platt, Salford;
Sir Charles Welby, C.B., M.P.;

Colonel Sir George Clarke, K.C.M.G., Superintendent Royal Carriage Department, Woolwich;

Mr. George Gibb, General Manager North-Eastern Railway;

Colonel H. S. G. Miles, M.V.O., Commandant of the Staff College, recently Chief Staff Officer to the Natal Field Force;

Mr. H. J. Gibson of the War Office, secretary.

The following are the terms of reference:—

(a) The report of the Committee on Decentralisation of War Office business, 1898.

(b) The report of the House of Commons Committee on War Office contracts, 1900.

(c) The draft report of the Departmental Committee on War Office establishments, 1898-99; and, subject to the general distribution of responsibility laid down by the Order in Council of March 7, 1899, requests the committee to consider—

(1) Whether the present method of conducting the administrative and financial business of the War Office, and its distribution as between the civil and military departments, is satisfactory.

(2) Whether the detailed financial audit as conducted in the War Office is required by the public interest; and whether the existing financial checks on the War Office hinder the efficient transaction of its business.

(3) Whether the office of the director of contracts should deal with all the business now transacted there, or whether the making of contracts could be in whole or part transferred to the military districts, or to the military departments of the War Office.

(4) Whether (with or without a transfer of staff) any of the administrative and financial business now transacted in the War Office could be delegated to the military districts.

(5) Whether any change in the numbers, status, and pay of the clerical staff is desirable.

(6) Whether military officers and military clerks should be substituted in any degree for the present trained civilian staff; and to report any other amendments of procedure in connection with the aforementioned subjects which would bring the work of the War Office more into harmony with that of large business undertakings.

This committee held their first meeting on January 8, but after the best opinion has been taken and the most eminent business men have had their say, they are not as likely to know where the shoe pinches, however minute their investigations, as those officials who have metaphorically to wear that shoe and bear with the pain its smallness occasions.

The reform of the War Office must come from within, and not from without — carried through by an official, a

permanent official, who knows where to look for the weak spots, in the same way as was done at the Admiralty in 1870.

The officers of the army have been so often told that the system at the War Office is such a thoroughly rotten one that, conservative though they be, they are quite prepared for any change; and the general public has also been educated up to the same idea, with the result that now everybody is clamouring for reform.

Even what is admitted in one breath as excellent, and has borne the severe test of the war in an admirable manner, must nevertheless in the next be reformed.

I have frequently heard all officials at the War Office described as "deadheads," and that there should be a clean sweep of the lot.

The extraordinary wave of patriotism that swept over the country has done more to popularise the army than any inducement in the way of increased pay or improvements in the condition of the private soldier could have effected, and so in the same manner this spirit of reform that is now consuming newspaper writers will have the effect of saving Mr. Brodrick from the unpopularity that fell to the lot of Mr. Childers when he brought in his measures for the reorganisation and consolidation of the departmental offices of the Admiralty; measures which have resulted in such unqualified success that the Admiralty is now in the enviable position of being the best conducted public department in his Majesty's vast dominions—not even is it second to the Post Office, the administration of which is the pride of the nation and the admiration of all foreigners who have any dealings with it.

It is an indisputable fact, proved by the light of events, that in time of war the organisation of the army has answered well, certainly exceeded the most sanguine expectations. As

to the strength of the army, it is what the nation wills it shall be. If the people say it is to cost fifty millions a year, what Minister or Cabinet could go against their strongly expressed desires?

The War Office can only suggest what the military forces of the country should be. It cannot create a big army. At this moment it is generally supposed that the House of Commons never refuses money for either the army or the navy, but this is scarcely according to strict truth. Serious additions to the estimates lead to much adverse criticism from certain members, who do not in the least consider whether the proposed expenditure is for indispensable requirements or not.

Now that the whole nation is determined on having an adequate army and navy sufficient for the needs of the empire for both offensive and defensive purposes, thoroughly organised and well trained, it would be a great disaster if the opportunity were allowed to pass away without advantage being taken of it. The suggestions proposed by Mr. St. John Brodrick to Parliament are generally admitted to be on the right lines, viz., the extending and perfecting of the present system which is the defect the war has demonstrated.

Lord Roberts, in his capacity as Commander-in-Chief, has done the right thing to prevent the recurrence of public apathy, of which already signs are not wanting, when he gave the order that uniform should be worn by those whilst on duty in Government offices,* and, by degrees, it is to be hoped that mufti will become less and less the wear for military men. Certainly it should never be seen when they are employed in their official capacity.

* Alas! this much-needed reform cannot be enforced because of the extra cost it entails in various ways, one being railway fares for officers' servants. The order, for the present, is therefore cancelled.

There is yet another way, but not so easy of accomplishment, in which much could be done to reform the War Office, and would tend more to the despatch of business than could result from any suggestion that a railway or company director could propose.

Sympathy, greater sympathy, between the various departments is sorely needed, so that when the requirements of one branch are brought before another for adjustment they may be understood and granted, instead of, as at present, through want of personal contact, being regarded as excessive, if not absolutely unnecessary.

It is in consequence of this feeling being so general that delays occur, and means are devised to avoid doing altogether the thing desired.

Ignorance, indifference, and jealousy are not, however, wholly responsible for this disregard of the needs of other offices and corps. Much of it is traceable to the impossibility of meeting their demands, however anxious to do so a head of a department might be, which is due to the absence of all control of finance. Everything connected with money is centred at head-quarters, and the officials there are exceedingly hard to approach. Any request presented to them is received with a cold douche, a reception nobody cares to risk more frequently than is *unavoidable*. Why, for instance, should not colonels of regiments have the power to indent upon the local bases for the things they require as is permitted to captains of ships?

If the war has taught anything, it has shown that the majority of officers are gentlemen, who can be trusted to serve the State in money transactions both honourably and economically. Officers in responsible positions have more than once had to use the credit of the Government to obtain necessaries when they were not attainable according to regulations. But it is not at all within the

scope of this book to advise on the reform of the War Office.

Those who wish to know a little of what should be done in that line could not employ their time more profitably than by attentively perusing the twelve sensible articles that appeared in the *Pall Mall Gazette*, by a military correspondent, which dealt with the questions connected with it. The series commenced on November 7, 1900, and concluded on January 27, 1901.

As to the merits of the conflict which has resulted in such an outpouring of blood and treasure, I will quote the opinion of one who has carefully studied all the official documents, and in a lecture delivered in Ontario, Canada, on February 6, 1900, Mr. William Robins points out *The truth about the Transvaal*.*

This pamphlet is really a summary of the negotiations that preceded the famous ultimatum, with copious extracts from the report of the Bloemfontein Conference. Its contents should be studied by every British subject, and carefully read by all those who assist in forming public opinion in Europe and in the United States.

The lecturer in this address gives equal prominence to despatches sent by Mr. Chamberlain, Sir Alfred Milner, and Mr. Kruger, and from them the reader can form his own opinion as to their tone and temper.

His opening words to the Canadians were:—

The merits of this conflict are very generally misunderstood by both foreigners and our own people. Considering the importance of the issue to the world at large, misconception in either quarter is regrettable; but in view of its special and enormous significance to ourselves it is in the highest degree desirable that we should know the truth. In a task which perhaps no living man can now measure it would be deplorable

* Hiram Walker & Sons, 13, Trinity Square, Tower Hill, London.

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

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

confute those enemies of England who revile her under all circumstances. To me it seems clear that we have rarely gone to war with equal justification, and certainly never with more.

I feel it is impossible for me to write a sentence that would add to the value of this opinion, formed as it is on a careful research of official documents, and with it I bring this volume to an end.

APPENDIX

A DESPATCH

FROM EARL ROBERTS, K.G., G.C.B., TO THE RIGHT
HONOURABLE THE SECRETARY OF STATE
FOR WAR, WAR OFFICE, LONDON, S.W.

London, *April 2*, 1901.

SIR,—

In continuation of my despatch No. 9, dated Johannesburg, November 15, 1900, I have the honour to bring to your notice the excellent work done during the campaign up to November 29, 1900, by the various departments of the army which have contributed so much to the success of the operations in the field.

In my former despatches I have testified to the admirable bearing and devotion of all ranks, and their cheerful endurance of the many privations and hardships of the war, and it is now my pleasant duty to bring forward the names of some of those who have in their several capacities, whether civil or military, most prominently distinguished themselves, or whose services have come under my personal observation.

In a later despatch I propose to deal with officers and other ranks of the regular forces whose names have been brought forward by general officers under whom they have served, and with all ranks of Militia, Imperial Yeomanry, Volunteers, Indian and Civil Lists, and I trust that the inevitable delay in publishing their names will not affect the date of the promotions or rewards that his Majesty's Government may be pleased to confer upon any of them.

LINES OF COMMUNICATION.

The organisation and working of the lines of communication,

exclusive of Natal, have been entrusted to Lieutenant-General Sir F. Forestier-Walker, K.C.B., C.M.G. The difficulties may best be appreciated by a reference to the following facts: (a) The lines of railway to be guarded aggregated 2017 miles in length. (b) Up to October 24, 1900, there had been despatched to the front over the military systems a total of 7920 officers, 193,656 men, 148,948 animals, 411 guns, 3012 vehicles, and 360,028 tons of stores and supplies. (c) Two expeditions had been made against rebel forces in the districts lying to the north-west of Cape Colony. (d) Local defence for the whole of the important places in Cape Colony had been organised, and town guards and district mounted corps formed. The above only represents a fraction of the duties that have come under the control of the G.O.C. lines of communication, and that all has been so successfully accomplished is due to Lieutenant-General Sir F. Forestier-Walker and his able assistants, especially Colonel J. K. Trotter, C.M.G., and Major H. du Cane, R.A.

DISEMBARKATIONS.

The arduous work of disembarking the troops, supplies, stores, remounts, and mules, and embarking the many thousands of sick, wounded, and discharged men, reflects the greatest credit upon Captain Sir E. Chichester, C.M.G., R.N., and the staff at each of the four ports, Cape Town, Port Elizabeth, East London, and Durban.

The magnitude of the task can be realised from the following figures, compiled for the period from the commencement of the war up to October 31, 1900:

	EMBARKED.	
	MEH.	ANIMALS.
Cape Town . .	81,519	849
Port Elizabeth . .	3,276	42
East London . .	2,902	850
Durban . .	81,425	8,148
Total . .	69,122	3,884

	DISSEMBARKED.	
	MEN.	ANIMALS.
Cape Town . .	187,976	52,941
Port Elizabeth . .	25,895	46,004
East London . .	28,134	36,800
Durban . .	69,969	43,832
Total . .	261,974	179,577

GOVERNMENT RAILWAYS.

My thanks are especially due to Mr. C. B. Elliot, Mr. T. R. Price, and the staff of the Cape Government Railway, as also to Mr. D. Hunter and the staff of the Natal Government Railway. It is not too much to say that the successful carrying out of the enormous railway transport operations is mainly due to the very willing aid afforded by these gentlemen and their hard-worked establishments.

THE DIRECTOR OF RAILWAYS DEPARTMENT.

The difficult and arduous work performed by this department reflects the greatest credit upon all concerned. The Orange River Colony and Transvaal Railways, embracing a length of 1130 miles, under the title of the "Imperial Military Railways," were taken over by this department as the country was occupied by her Majesty's forces, and on September 30, 1900, a staff of 17,874 officers and men was employed by it. From the outbreak of hostilities up to August 31, 1900, these railways had carried 177,000 passengers, 86,000 animals, and 520,000 tons of goods. All temporary repairs in the Cape Colony, Transvaal, and Orange River Colony were carried out, with a few exceptions, by the Military Railway Staff. Up to October 31, 1900, these temporary repairs included the restoration of 75 bridges, 94 culverts, and 37 miles of line. A detail of the general advance from Bloemfontein to Johannesburg, a distance of 265 miles, will give some idea of the expedition with which repairs were effected. The period during which the advance was being made was from

May 3 to June 11, 1900, in which space of time the following temporary repairs were executed :

27 bridges,
41 culverts,
10 miles of line,

including seven deviations, varying in length from 200 yards to two miles.

From June 6 to November 15, 1900, the Imperial Military Railways were more or less seriously damaged by the enemy on 115 occasions, but all such damages were promptly repaired, and did not materially affect the working of the railways, except that the running of trains after dark had to be suspended. During the same period fully 60 per cent. of damaged bridges and culverts were permanently or semi-permanently repaired.

TRANSPORT.

It having been found that the allotment of transport to units in accordance with the "War Establishments, 1898," was not suitable for a large force, I, on my arrival in South Africa in January 1900, decided that the transport service must be reorganised.

The result of this reorganisation, under Major-General Sir William Nicholson, has been most successful, and has fully justified my expectations. I append a detailed report on the subject.

ARMY SERVICE CORPS.

To do justice to the excellent work done by the Army Service Corps during the war, and to give lengthy details of the magnitude of the task assigned to this department, are beyond the limits of a paragraph in a despatch. It is, however, estimated that since the war began and up to October 30, 1900, the approximate number of rations issued to the army operating from the Cape Colony, north of the Orange River, has been :

	Number of Rations.	Approximate tonnage.
Soldiers and natives	45,000,000	90,000
Animals . . .	20,000,000	100,000

The strength has been approximately :

	Number.	Required daily.
Soldiers and natives	179,000	858 tons.
Animals . . .	98,000	465 „;

It must be remembered that in the early days of the occupation of Bloemfontein, the average number of trains which could be sent from the south over the single line of railway was 7·5 daily ; and that this line of railway conveyed not only supplies, but also stores, equipment, ammunition, remounts, troops, &c. Again, the supply of the army after leaving Bloemfontein was a matter of very grave anxiety, and it was only by the devotion and zeal of the Army Service Corps officers that the supplies were brought from the railhead to the troops in sufficient time to supply their daily wants. As an instance of the difficulties alluded to, a halt at Smaldeel was made imperative to allow the railway to bring the supplies sufficiently near to enable the transport to convey them to the troops. Another instance was the march from Taaibosch to Johannesburg, when, as the railway had not been sufficiently repaired to admit of the required amount of supplies being brought to the front, we had to depend on such supplies as could be locally obtained. Though after the occupation of Pretoria the supply question never became acute, and later on the opening of the Natal and Delagoa Bay Railways increased our available sources, yet the difficulties to be overcome have been many ; not the least of them being the fact that to meet all our requirements, and until the rolling-stock at Barberton and Komati Poort was captured, we were dependent upon 95 old engines to work the whole of the Orange River Colony and Transvaal rail-

way systems, whilst in peace time the late Republics found that 250 engines were necessary for their daily use. In the above I have only referred to the work done in supplying the troops based on the Cape Colony. The Natal army has reason also to be entirely satisfied with the manner in which it has been supplied, and the occasions have been rare when any portion of this army have had anything but full rations. These services reflect the greatest credit on Colonel W. Richardson, C.B., and Colonel E. W. D. Ward, C.B., Directors of Supplies, and the Army Service Corps serving under them.

ARMY TELEGRAPHS.

The duties performed by the army telegraphs under Lieutenant-Colonel R. Hippisley, R.E., throughout the war have my entire approbation. No portion of the army has had more work or greater responsibility than this branch. With a *personnel* of 25 officers and 1221 operators, linesmen, &c. (of whom 4 officers and 158 N.C.O.s and men have died or been invalidated), nearly 2½ millions of messages have been dealt with during the past thirteen months, some of them containing as many as 4000 words. The telegraph systems taken over, repaired, and maintained exceed 8800 miles in length, with over 9000 miles of wire. In addition, 959 miles of air line have been erected and 1145 miles of cable laid. Great credit is also due for the quick way repairs to the lines, so frequently interrupted by the Boers, have been carried out. This is a most dangerous service, as there is always a chance that the enemy may be lying in wait near the break, but there has been throughout the most unhesitating promptitude in its performance. The young officers in charge of cable carts have also often had perilous work to perform when winding back their wire, alone or with a very small escort.

SUBMARINE TELEGRAPHS.

The working of the submarine telegraphs was most satisfactory, and the liberality of the companies in giving special rates for soldiers was much appreciated by the army.

MILITARY POSTAL SERVICE.

The magnitude of the task set the military postal service may be appreciated when it is realised that the army mails from England have exceeded in bulk the whole of the mails arriving for the inhabitants of Cape Colony and Natal, and contained each week little short of 750,000 letters, newspapers, and parcels for the troops. No little credit is therefore due to the department under Major Treble in the first few months, and for the greater part of the time under Lieutenant-Colonel J. Greer, Director of Military Postal Services, for the way in which it has endeavoured to cope with the vast quantity of correspondence, bearing in mind the incessant manner in which the troops have been moved about the country, the transport difficulties which had to be encountered, the want of postal experience in the bulk of the personnel of the corps, and the inadequacy of the establishments laid down for the several organisations.

ROYAL ARMY MEDICAL CORPS.

Under Surgeon-General Wilson this department has laboured indefatigably both in the field and in the hospitals. Some cases have been brought to my notice in which officers have proved unequal to the exceptional strain thrown upon them by the sudden expansion of hospitals, and in the earlier stages of the war the necessity of more ample preparations to meet disease were not quite fully apprehended. These cases have been fully reported on by the Royal Commission, and will no doubt receive the attention of his Majesty's Government. I am not, however, less conscious of the unremitting services of the great majority of the officers of the Royal Army Medical Corps. There are many instances, indeed, recorded of great gallantry having been displayed by the officers in carrying on their work of mercy under heavy fire, and in the face of exceptional difficulties their duty has been ably performed. My thanks are also due to the distinguished consulting surgeons who have come out to this country, and by their advice and experience materially aided the Royal Army Medical Corps. The services rendered by Sir William MacCormac, Mr. G. H. Makins, Mr. F. Treves, the late Sir W. Stokes, Mr. Watson Cheyne, Mr. G. Cheatle, Mr. Kendal Franks, Mr. John

Chiene, and Sir Thomas Fitzgerald were of incalculable value. The abnormal demand upon the R.A.M.C. necessitated the employment of a large number of civil surgeons, and to these gentlemen the army owes a debt of gratitude. The heavy strain on the Army Medical Department was further much relieved by the patriotic efforts of the several committees and individuals who raised, equipped, and sent out complete hospitals. None but those on the spot can realise how much the Irish Hospital, under Sir Sir W. Thompson, the Yeomanry Hospital and Bearer Company, under :—

Mr. A. D. Frupp, M.V.O., M.B., M.S. ;

Mr. A. R. J. Douglas, M.R.C.S. ;

Mr. A. A. Scott-Skirving, M.R.C.S. ;

Mr. T. H. Openshaw, F.R.C.S. ;

The Langman Hospital, under Mr. R. T. A. O'Callaghan, F.R.C.S.I. ;

The Welsh Hospital, under Professor T. Jones, M.B., F.R.C.S. (dead) ; Professor A. W. Hughes (dead) ;

The Princess Christian Hospital, under Mr. J. P. Bush, M.R.C.S.

The Edinburgh Hospital, under Mr. D. Wallace, M.B. ;

The Scottish National Hospital, under Mr. H. E. Clarke, M.R.C.S.E. ;

The Van Alen Hospital, under M. S. Osborn, F.R.C.S., and the Portland Hospital, under Mr. A. Bowlby, F.R.C.S., contributed to the comfort and well-being of the sick and wounded.

I might here mention the invaluable assistance rendered to the sick and wounded by those private persons, members of the British Red Cross Society, who, headed by Her Royal Highness Princess Christian, raised, organised, and equipped hospital trains. As a result of their patriotic exertions, two complete trains were constructed, one being built at Birmingham, and the other made up at East London. Eight other hospital trains were organised by the medical authorities in South Africa, and also rendered excellent service. It may give some idea of the work which was accomplished by these trains if I append a statement showing the distance they covered and the number of patients they carried :—

CAPE LINE RAILWAY.

	Journeys.	Miles.	Patients.
Second Train .	126	67,000	6,068
Third „	64	62,000	6,288
Fourth „	24	Unknown.	2,888
Fifth „	26	28,200	3,118
Sixth „	31	Unknown.	2,694
Seventh „	92	„	6,296

NATAL LINE RAILWAY.

	Journeys.	Patients.
First Train . . .	145	12,148
Second „ . . .	166	12,789
Third „ . . .	9	772

HOSPITAL SHIPS.

The army in South Africa owes a great deal to the hospital ships, and to the staff of medical officers and nurses who attended the sick and wounded, transferred to them from the base hospitals.

The *Spartan*, *Trojan*, and *Princess of Wales* were used to convey invalids to Cape Town from other colonial ports. The *Lismore Castle*, *Dunera*, *Orcana*, *Avoca*, *Nubia*, and *Simla*, were originally hired transports, and were fitted out at Durban and employed in establishing a fortnightly system of hospital ships for the conveyance of invalids to England.

The *Princess of Wales* and the *Maine* were fitted out and maintained by the splendid generosity of private individuals, the former by the Central British Red Cross Committee for H.R.H. the Princess of Wales, and the latter by a committee of American ladies.

My grateful thanks, as well as those of the army in South Africa, are due to the individuals concerned, as well as to those owners of private yachts who placed them at the disposal of the sick and wounded officers and men.

The following table will be of interest :—

Name of Ship.	Where prepared.	By whom.	Voyages home with Invalids to end of Dec. 1900.	Number of Invalids carried.
<i>Spartan</i> . . .	Southampton	Union S.S. Co.	1	108
<i>Trojan</i> . . .	"	"	1	66
<i>Princess of Wales</i>	Newcastle-on-Tyne	Armstrong, Whitworth's	3	523
<i>Maine</i> . . .	Thames	{ Atlantic Trnspt. Co.	2	285
<i>Lismore Castle</i> .	Durban	} Admiralty Trnspt. Dpt.	2	289
<i>Avoca</i> . . .	"		4	1,131
<i>Dunera</i> . . .	"		2	539
<i>Orcana</i> . . .	"		3	548
<i>Nubia</i> . . .	"		2	543
<i>Simla</i> . . .	"	3	816	

My thanks are due to Khem Bahadur Dhanjibhoj, a Parsee gentleman, long resident in the Punjab, who presented tongas for ambulance purposes. These tongas were horsed and fully equipped with drivers and all necessary gear. They proved most useful.

NURSING SISTERS.

I find it difficult within the limits of a short paragraph to give expression to the deep feeling of gratitude with which the Nursing Sisterhood has inspired all ranks serving in South Africa. The devotion, skill, courage and endurance displayed equally by the Army Nursing Service and by kindred organisations from the colonies, have excited my admiration, and jully justified the opinion I have held for years as to the necessity and economy to the service of an ample nursing service for our army. Some of the nurses who have been the most helpful have been lent to the Army Nursing Reserve by the great hospitals in the United Kingdom.

I propose, in a later despatch, to bring to your notice the names of some of the most deserving.

ARMY CHAPLAINS DEPARTMENT.

I gratefully acknowledge the services rendered by this department, under Rev. E. H. Goodwin. The devotion to duty of the several chaplains, civil as well as army, throughout the campaign, especially during the siege of Ladysmith and in the hospitals, has been frequently brought to my notice.

ARMY ORDNANCE DEPARTMENT.

This department has had an immense amount of work during the campaign, and under the capable direction of Colonel R. Noel Clarke has carried it out in a very satisfactory manner. The military operations covered a vast area, and only two single lines of railway were available, and these were so congested with troops, horses, and material of all sorts, that to get stores to the front in good time was always a matter of uncertainty.

That they were able to cope with these difficulties and keep the army supplied with all the various stores that are dealt with by the department, reflects great credit not only on Colonel Clarke, but on the officers, warrant officers, non-commissioned officers, and men under him.

The following brief statement, showing the duties which the Ordnance Department have had to carry out, will give some idea of the work devolving on this department :—

- (1) Receiving stores from England at four different bases.
- (2) Forwarding the stores along the lines of communication to thirteen ordnance depôts.
- (3) Issuing the stores to the troops as required.
- (4) Foreseeing the needs and providing for the replenishment of stores by demands from home, and by local purchases in South Africa, which up to July 1900 amounted in value to over £1,000,000.
- (5) Establishing local workshops for the repair of arms, vehicles, harness, camp equipment, &c.

The personnel of the department consisted of seventy officers, 968 warrant officers, non-commissioned officers and men, and 785

civilian subordinates, in addition to a large number of native labourers.

The following are a few of the stores that passed through the Ordnance Department.

Ordnance: 6 spare batteries of field artillery, 2 spare batteries of horse artillery.

Ammunition: 1,031,000 rounds of artillery ammunition of seven different calibres, from 6 in. to 12 pr., 122,000,000 rounds of rifle and machine-gun ammunition.

Stores: 50,000 tents and marquees, 865,000 blankets, 385,000 waterproof sheets, 40,000 sets saddlery, 4,500 sets transport harness, 275,000 sets picketing gear, 140,000 horse rugs, 2,000,000 pairs horse and mule shoes.

Clothing: 716,514 khaki frocks, 825,902 pairs khaki trousers, 897,076 pairs boots, 827,500 shirts, 1,647,200 pairs socks.

THE ARMY PAY DEPARTMENT.

The work thrown on this department has been out of all precedent with that which it has ever been called on to perform in previous campaigns. And it has been carried out under circumstances of great difficulty by Colonel W. B. Wade and his assistants to my entire satisfaction. At the commencement of the campaign there were only three field paymasters. There are now nine; and whereas the monthly accounts in September 1899 only showed a total of £42,404 16s. 1d., they had reached in September 1900 a total of £2,750,350 12s. 2d.

Such an expansion of business required an equal increase in personnel, which was not always forthcoming, the result being a considerable increase of work on those who were present.

ARMY VETERINARY DEPARTMENT.

This department, under Veterinary-Colonel I. Matthews, has performed good work. The peace establishment being too small for the requirements of a large war, necessitated the employment of 123 civil veterinary surgeons, who, however, soon adapted themselves to the conditions of active service, and did much good work. Great assistance was afforded by the excellently-organised field veterinary hospitals so kindly lent by the Government of India. These hospitals leave nothing to be desired as regards supplies and

equipment, and the personnel of Native N.C. officers, shoeing smiths, and trained attendants rendered most valuable service. There has been a notable immunity from contagious and ordinary diseases, except glanders, of which there have been five hundred cases, all of which the department was fortunately able to quickly suppress. There has also been an exceptional freedom from horse sickness; under 200 deaths out of more than 210,000 horses and mules.

REMOUNT DEPARTMENT.

The calls made upon the Remount Department, under Major W. Birkbeck, 1st Dragoon Guards, and H.S.H. Captain Prince Francis of Teck, K.C.B., D.S.O., have been quite abnormal. Not only has the wastage of horseflesh by cavalry and artillery been beyond all expectation, but from the beginning of the war up to October 31 1900, the department has been called upon to handle a vast number (60,611) of mules for transport purposes, and 57,380 cobs for mounted infantry. The number of cavalry and artillery horses that have passed through the Remount Department during the same period amounts to: cavalry, 21,252; artillery, 9885. The organisation, on such a scale, may be said to have been extemporised during the war, and the way in which all ranks have done their utmost to cope with difficulties and profit by the experience gained in the earlier parts of the campaign is certainly deserving of credit. The personnel sent by the Government of India proved of much value.

SIGNALLING.

The work done by the signallers, under the experienced guidance of Major T. E. O'Leary, R.I.F., during the campaign has been very arduous, and has frequently been carried out at great personal risks. The young officers and the N.C.O.s and men employed have risen to their responsibilities, and have in almost every instance acquitted themselves to my entire satisfaction. The establishments for the different units have been found to be too small, and the absence of signallers with the militia and Royal Artillery has necessitated men being attached from other branches from which they could ill be spared. The electric search-light used for signalling purposes in connection with the relief operations of Ladysmith and Kimberley was of great service, and was provided by the naval authorities.

This despatch would be incomplete were I to omit to mention the benefit I have derived from the unfailing support and wise counsels of Sir Alfred Milner. I can only say here that I have felt it a high privilege to work in close communication with one whose courage never faltered, however grave the responsibilities might be which surrounded him, and who, notwithstanding the absorbing cares of his office, seemed always able to find time for a helpful message or for the tactful solution of a difficult question.

My grateful thanks are also due to the Governor of Natal. During the earlier part of the campaign I was practically cut off from communication with Sir W. Hely-Hutchinson, but I have since learned how throughout that period of anxiety and peril he and his Ministers did all that men could do to help the troops at the front, and to keep up the spirits of the inhabitants of the colony. Sir W. Hely-Hutchinson endeavoured in every way to meet the various requirements of the army, and I am glad of this opportunity of saying how much I appreciated the assistance he afforded.

Sir Godfrey Lagden has my cordial thanks for the valuable assistance he has rendered, and for the firm attitude he displayed under very trying circumstances; for the complete control he has maintained over the natives of Basutoland, for the accurate and valuable intelligence collected by his agents, and for the provision of a very large number of Basuto ponies for the use of the mounted infantry.

Rear-Admiral Sir R. H. Harris, K.C.B., K.C.M.G., has, since the outbreak of the war, been in supreme command of H.M. naval forces in South African waters. I am glad of this opportunity of expressing to him my thanks and those of the army for the cordial co-operation and never-failing support which he has extended to me ever since my arrival at Cape Town in January 1900.

General Lord Kitchener of Khartoum, G.C.B., K.C.M.G., R.E., has, as my Chief of the Staff, rendered me unfailing and very loyal support, and I am greatly indebted to him for the valuable assistance he at all times afforded me.

He has held a difficult position, and he has discharged its duties with conspicuous ability. I left the command of the army in South Africa to my late Chief of the Staff with the

utmost confidence that he would do all that man could do to bring the present phase of the war to a speedy conclusion.

Major-General W. F. Kelly has served first as my D.A.G. and then as A.G., duties for which he is eminently fitted, and in carrying out which he has proved himself a most efficient staff officer.

Colonel E. Wood, C.B., R.E., as my C.R.E., has given me every satisfaction.

Colonel (temporary Major-General) Sir William Nicholson, K.C.B., has already been mentioned by me for good services as Director of Transport, but I should like to record here the assistance he has always been ready to give me in any other matters which from time to time I have had occasion to refer to him. His marked ability and ripe experience in all administrative work have been of very great value to the army in South Africa.

Colonel Ian Hamilton, C.B., D.S.O., has already been repeatedly mentioned for his services in Natal and in the siege of Ladysmith. In March 1900 he joined me in the Orange River Colony, and since then has at different times been in command of a mounted infantry division, a division of infantry, and large mixed forces of all arms. I have long had occasion to recognise the exceptional military qualifications of this officer, and the high expectations which I had formed of his capacity for command have been amply justified.

Lieutenant-Colonel H. V. Cowan, R.A., military secretary, has continued to give the closest attention to his work, which has been of the most confidential and often very arduous nature. In the performance of these duties he has given me complete satisfaction. I am much indebted to him for his able assistance.

Lord Stanley (late Lieutenant Grenadier Guards), Hon. Colonel 2nd V.B. Loyal North Lancashire, has for the last five months been my private secretary, in which position, owing to his thorough knowledge of men and affairs, he has rendered me valuable assistance.

Captain A. C. M. Waterfield, I.S.C., my assistant military secretary, is a young officer of considerable promise, and did good work on many occasions in the field.

Colonel H. R. Viscount Downe, C.I.E., went out as my A.D.C., and was afterwards selected to accompany the military attachés

of foreign Powers, in which position his tact and judgment proved of much value.

Captain the Earl of Kerry, Lieutenant Lord Settrington, Lieutenant Lord Herbert Scott, all of the Irish Guards, and Lieutenant H. Wake, King's Royal Rifles, my aides-de-camp, Commander the Honourable S. J. Fortescue, my naval A.D.C., and Lieutenant W. H. Cowan, R.N., A.D.C. to Lord Kitchener, and afterwards my naval A.D.C., carried out their responsible duties to my entire satisfaction.

Lieutenant-Colonel Byron, Royal Australian Artillery, Major Denison, Royal Canadian Regiment, Captain Watermeyer, Cape Town Highlanders, and Lieutenant Seddon, Roughriders, New Zealand contingent, my colonial aides-de-camp, and the Duke of Westminster, extra A.D.C., all performed their various duties loyally and well.

Major T. Laing, who raised and commanded my bodyguard, and whose recent death I deeply deplore, showed himself an officer of great merit, and I am much indebted to him and to Captain W. M. Sherston, commanding the 48th Company Imperial Yeomanry (Army Head-quarters' Escort), and to Captains C. H. Gough and A. G. Maxwell, I.S.C., camp commandants, for their excellent arrangements.

Major W. R. Edwards, I.M.S., took over the medical charge of Head-quarters Staff in March 1900, and performed his duties most satisfactorily.

Lieutenant and Quartermaster J. Bowers, A.S.C., my confidential clerk throughout the campaign, proved himself an able and most reliable officer.

Lieutenant-Colonel Sir H. Rawlinson, Bart., Coldstream Guards, A.A.G., is a very promising officer. By his untiring energy, and his readiness and quickness in all emergencies, also by his good eye for country and topographical knowledge, he has proved himself to be possessed of considerable soldierly qualities.

Major C. Hume, R.A., took over the duties of D.M.I. when Major Colin Mackenzie was appointed Military Governor of Johannesburg. He has worked hard, and has carried out all his duties in a thoroughly conscientious manner.

Major R. M. Poore, 7th Hussars, has, as Provost Marshal,

carried out his somewhat thankless duties with commendable energy and success.

Captain H. H. Wilson, the Rifle Brigade, D.A.A.G., is an officer of considerable ability. He has worked on the Headquarters Staff since August with energy and success, and done much good work.

Brevet-Major H. H. Prince Christian Victor, G.C.B., G.C.V.O.—The much-to-be-regretted death of his Highness occurred before I had forwarded the recommendation for reward, which he so well deserved. His sterling qualities as a soldier, his unfailing courtesy and attention to his duties, had endeared him to all with whom he came in contact, and his early death is a real loss to the army.

Captain and Brevet Lieutenant-Colonel G. F. Gorringe, D.S.O., R.E., Major H. I. W. Hamilton, D.S.O., Royal West Surrey Regiment, and Major J. K. Watson, D.S.O., King's Royal Rifle Corps, who served on Lord Kitchener's staff, have done much hard and good work throughout the campaign.

General the Right Hon. Sir Redvers Buller, G.C.B., K.C.M.G., V.C., held the chief command in South Africa until my arrival in the early part of January 1900; from that time onwards he was in command of the Natal Field Force, and carried out the difficult operations terminating in the relief of Ladysmith. Subsequent to that event his troops formed part of the main army, which had for its object the occupation of the Transvaal up to Komati Poort.

Lieutenant-General Sir G. S. White, G.C.B., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E., G.O.V.O., V.C., was mainly responsible for saving the colony of Natal from being completely over-run by the enemy. His gallant defence of Ladysmith, and the prowess of his troops at Talana, Elandslaagte, and Waggon Hill, will live in the annals of history. I greatly regret that ill-health prevented Sir George White from taking a conspicuous part in the latter stages of the campaign.

Lieutenant-General Lord Methuen, K.C.V.O., C.B., C.M.G., has been in command of a division since the first despatch of troops from England in October 1899. The manner in which he has kept his command at all times ready and complete for service, the rapidity of his movements, combined with his untiring energy and conspicuous courage, have largely contributed to the present comparative quiet on the western border of the Transvaal.

Major-General O. Tucker, C.B., has always worked under my immediate command. He is a good fighting soldier, and has afforded me able assistance on many difficult occasions.

Major-General Sir A. Hunter, K.C.B., D.S.O., is an officer possessed of great soldierly qualities and considerable experience in war. He came out to South Africa as Chief of the Staff to Sir Redvers Buller, but, owing to the force of circumstances, he served during the siege of Ladysmith as Chief Staff Officer to Sir George White. He, with his division, came under my direct command in April 1900, since when he has performed valuable service in connection with the arrangements for the relief of Mafeking and the capture of General Prinsloo.

Major-General Sir Leslie Rundle, K.C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O., has commanded a division in South Africa since last April. He and his troops have had a very trying time, and have acquitted themselves of their task in a most creditable manner.

Major-General T. Kelly-Kenny, C.B., as General Officer L. of C., Orange River Colony, and previously as G.O.C. that Colony, has invariably shown sound common sense and military instinct of a high order through many trying and anxious hours. I am much indebted to Major-General Kelly-Kenny for the good service he has performed.

Major-General G. T. Pretzman, C.B., has been Military Governor of Bloemfontein since last March, a difficult post, in which he has carried out his duties to my entire satisfaction.

Major-General G. Barton, C.B., has been in command of the 6th brigade, first in Natal and afterwards in the Orange River Colony and Transvaal. He is a careful and thoughtful leader.

Major-General J. D. P. French, as G.O.C. the cavalry, has on every occasion rendered me invaluable service. He never makes difficulties, and is a man of exceptional nerve. His truly soldierlike qualities are only equalled by his sound judgment, his unerring instinct, and his perfect loyalty. His services have been of incalculable value to the Empire as well as to myself.

Major-General R. Pole-Carew, C.B., commanded a brigade under Lieutenant-General Lord Methuen to that officer's entire satisfaction. In April 1900 he was given the command of a division, with which he did good service at the battle of Diamond Hill and subsequent advance to Komati Poort.

Major-General R. S. S. Baden-Powell, as the gallant defender of Mafeking, is already well known. Since the relief of that town he has held a command in the field, and I selected him for the responsible position of Inspector-General of Police, in which his undoubted organising powers will have ample scope for good and useful work.

Colonel W. H. Mackinnon commanded the whole of the C.I.V. troops. In this position, hitherto unprecedented in the annals of our military history, he displayed tact, judgment, and resource, and I am much obliged to him for the manner in which he carried out his duties.

Colonel C. E. Knox was for many months in command of the 13th Brigade, in which he did such excellent service that I have on several occasions lately given him the command of mixed columns. In every case he has fully justified his previous reputation as a gallant soldier, a sound strategist, and a good tactician.

Colonel E. T. H. Hutton, C.B., A.D.C., has commanded the 1st Brigade Mounted Infantry, in which capacity his unbounded energy and soldierly qualities, and his thorough knowledge of M.I. duties, have on several occasions been of great service.

Colonel H. H. Settle, C.B., D.S.O., was for some time Inspector-General of Lines of Communication, Cape Colony, where he did good work. Latterly he has, on several occasions, commanded columns in the disturbed districts of the Western Transvaal and Orange River Colony, and has always carried out his duties to my complete satisfaction.

Colonel G. H. Marshall has been C.R.A. to the Army in South Africa. In this position he has had an immense amount of responsible work to perform, and has done it with praiseworthy diligence and skill, having an able and untiring assistant in the person of Lieutenant-Colonel Sclater, his A.A.G.

Colonel Arthur Paget, 1st Scots Guards, was sent from Bloemfontein in April 1900 to command the 20th Brigade at Kimberley, and served with it in the west and east of the Orange River Colony. Afterwards he was given command of a mixed force, with which, in the northern theatre of war, he has shown energy, decision, and intelligence in his successful efforts to pacify a very turbulent district.

Colonel R. Clements, D.S.O., A.D.C., commanded the 12th

Brigade, with which he took up the work of General French at Colesberg when that officer was moved forward to the relief of Kimberley. Since then he has rendered good service both in the Orange River Colony and in the Western Transvaal.

Colonel E. W. D. Ward, C.B., was of immense value to Sir George White during the siege of Ladysmith. After the relief of that town he joined Army Head-quarters, and from that time was Director of Supplies to the Field Army. His readiness and resource, his imperturbable good temper, his power of organisation and thorough knowledge of his duties, deserve the thanks of all ranks in the army.

Colonel Ward is an officer who stands quite by himself as a departmental officer of genius and character.

Colonel C. W. Douglas, A.D.C., came out originally as A.A.G. to Sir Redvers Buller, and shortly afterwards succeeded Colonel Pole-Carew in command of the 9th Brigade, which he has held ever since. In this position he has rendered Lord Methuen every support and assistance, and has earned my thanks for his continuous and useful work on the western border of the Transvaal.

Colonel W. G. Knox, C.B., served with credit throughout the siege of Ladysmith. He has since then commanded a brigade in the Orange River Colony, and has carried out his duties in a soldier-like and efficient manner.

Colonel J. G. Maxwell, D.S.O., commanded the 14th Brigade in the general advance from Bloemfontein to Pretoria. After the capture of that city he was appointed to the post of military governor, a position in which his businesslike methods and sound common sense proved most valuable, and helped him to overcome many difficulties with credit and success.

Colonel Hector Macdonald, C.B., D.S.O., A.D.C., has commanded the Highland Brigade since the lamentable death of Major-General Wauchope. He has shown resolution and energy in carrying out the somewhat thankless task which has fallen to the lot of his command, of pacifying the Orange River Colony and protecting its communications.

Colonel R. G. Broadwood has commanded the 2nd Cavalry Brigade throughout the operations. He has had a great deal of hard and responsible work, under which his health gave way—but with his soldierly instinct he returned to South Africa as soon as

he recovered, and will, I feel confident, prove himself the gallant cavalry leader I believe him to be.

Colonel H. L. Smith-Dorrien, D.S.O., has done extremely well with the 19th Brigade. He has shown exceptional aptitude for command in the field, being sound in judgment, quick to see and act, and full of resource. He is, moreover, a good organiser, and possesses in a marked degree the confidence of those in his command.

Colonel T. E. Stephenson, Essex Regiment, is possessed of excellent soldierly qualities. He has commanded the 18th Brigade throughout, and with it has borne an honourable part in the campaign.

Colonel Lord Chesham, Imperial Yeomanry, as one of the prime movers for the employment of yeomanry in the field, and more particularly as one of the general officers commanding the yeomanry with distinction and dash, I owe him a debt of gratitude difficult to express, but none the less deeply felt.

Colonel Brabant, C.M.G., has been in chief command of the Colonial troops from the Cape Colony, which, amongst other distinguished actions, furnished the contingent which, under Lieutenant-Colonel Dalgetty, so gallantly defended Wepener. Colonel Brabant is a fine leader of men; he represents the true Imperial feeling in the Cape, and, aided by his fellow colonists, has furnished an object lesson in loyalty and devotion to the Crown.

Colonel Dartnell, as G.O.C. Natal Colonists, has maintained the best traditions of H.M. regular forces, to which he formerly belonged. His name stands very high in the estimation of the colonists of Natal, and he possesses the greatest influence over the natives. His advice was of much assistance in the earliest actions of the war, afterwards during the siege of Ladysmith, and finally in the general advance through the Biggarsberg to Laing's Nek, when Natal was cleared of the enemies of the Queen.

Colonel G. G. Cunningham, D.S.O., has been in command of a brigade in the Rustenberg district for some months. He has acquitted himself well and to my satisfaction. I consider him a promising commander.

Colonel B. T. Mahon has, on several occasions, displayed soldier-

like qualities when in command of mounted troops, especially when in command of the flying column for the relief of Mafeking. He has a quick and good eye for country.

Colonel H. Cholmondeley did excellent service as commander of the C.I.V. Mounted Infantry. He proved himself on many occasions thoroughly well qualified for this responsible post, and has earned the warmest commendations, both for himself and his men, from all the G.O.C.s with whom he has served.

Colonel St. G. Henry, Northumberland Fusiliers, has repeatedly shown to advantage as a leader of men, and as commanding officer of the 4th Corps of Mounted Infantry he has done excellent work.

Lieutenant-Colonel M. F. Rimington, 6th Dragoon Guards, rendered very exceptional service with a specially-raised corps of scouts. He had an intimate knowledge of the whole of the Orange River Colony, and no hardship was too severe, or peril too serious, to deter him from pushing his reconnaissances far to the front or flanks of the force to which he was attached.

Lieutenant-Colonel H. Plumer, York and Lancashire Regiment, was sent out on special service to Rhodesia in June 1899, since which time he has been constantly in the field. He raised and organised a corps of irregulars, and moved on Mafeking, and acted in conjunction with Colonel Mahon in the relief of that town. He has since been actively engaged in the Transvaal, and has consistently done good work, not only as a soldier, but as an administrator of a high order.

Lieutenant-Colonel J. Spens, 2nd Shropshire Light Infantry, has on several occasions commanded a brigade in the field. He is reported on as never raising difficulties, and always carrying out his orders with good sense and great determination.

Lieutenant-Colonel E. A. Alderson, West Kent Regiment, commanded the 1st Corps of Mounted Infantry from the beginning of the war. He evinced such special aptitude for this most important work that I entrusted him with a brigade of Mounted Infantry, which I have every confidence he will command with success.

Lieutenant-Colonel T. D. Pilcher, Bedfordshire Regiment, has, whilst in command of the 3rd Mounted Infantry, shown remarkable merit as a leader. Although a young officer, he is full of

resource, capable of devising an excellent scheme, and resolute enough to put it into execution.

Lieutenant-Colonel H. L. Dawson, I.S.C., is an officer possessing considerable experience of cavalry work in the field. He in the first instance commanded Roberts's Horse, and afterwards commanded the 5th Corps of Mounted Infantry with credit during a period in which it was continually engaged with the enemy.

Captain H. de Lisle, D.S.O., Durham Light Infantry, has commanded the 2nd Corps of Mounted Infantry throughout the operations. He is one of the best of the many deserving junior officers which this war has brought into prominence. He possesses in a very marked degree the qualities of resolution, quickness, and daring, which are so necessary to the successful leading of mounted men.

Major W. Ross, Durham Light Infantry, has always played a distinguished part in command of the 8th Corps of Mounted Infantry. I much regret the loss of his services, which I trust may only be temporary, from a severe wound which he received whilst very gallantly commanding his men in an important and successful action.

Brevet-Lieutenant-Colonel Le Gallais, whose death I deeply regret, served during the war in command of a mounted corps, and also as chief staff officer to the Mounted Infantry Division. In both these capacities he rendered brilliant service, and gave every promise of rising to the highest rank as a cavalry leader.

Major N. Legge, D.S.O., 20th Hussars, commanded the 6th Corps of Mounted Infantry throughout the operations. He, at all times and in all places, did most excellent service. He was a capable, painstaking and gallant leader. I deeply regret the early death of this most promising officer.

Major A. W. Thorneycroft, Royal Scots Fusiliers, in command of a regiment of Mounted Infantry, has already been brought to notice by Sir Redvers Buller. Since coming under my immediate command he has gained my confidence as a most gallant and capable leader.

Brevet-Major E. G. T. Bainbridge, the Buffs, has commanded the 7th Corps of Mounted Infantry throughout the operations. He is a very promising young officer, who knows how to handle mounted men with judgment and dash.

Major Colin Mackenzie, Seaforth Highlanders, is a very promising officer. He was appointed Military Governor of Johannesburg as soon as that city was occupied. Since that time many difficult problems have been brought before him for solution. In dealing with these he has displayed great judgment and force of character, and has thereby rendered valuable service.

Major G. J. Younghusband, I.S.C., commanded the 3rd battalion of Imperial Yeomanry under Lord Methuen throughout the operations, during which his battalion suffered 109 casualties out of a strength of 500 men. Major Younghusband is an officer of wide experience and great ability, and Lord Methuen speaks in the highest terms of his capacity as a commander.

Captain J. Bearcroft commanded the Royal Naval Brigade until the men finally rejoined their ships in October. I have already referred in my despatch of March 31 to the valuable services rendered by him and his men, and I am glad to be able now once more to bear witness to the pluck, endurance, and cheerfulness which have been exhibited by all our sailors under most unusual and trying circumstances.

REPORT ON THE FIELD TRANSPORT IN SOUTH AFRICA.

In describing the transport arrangements during the South African campaign it will be convenient first to explain, in general terms, the War Office system of transport under which the troops were equipped when they first landed in the country; and, secondly, to show what modifications in that system were rendered necessary by the strength of the force employed and the development of the military situation.

According to the regulations, as laid down in "War Establishments, 1898," each unit of a field force is given a certain amount of transport, calculated on the strength of the unit in men and horses, to carry the authorised weight of baggage, and from one to two days' supplies of food and forage. This transport is in regimental charge, and is supposed to remain attached to the unit so long as the latter is employed in the field. There are also supply columns for each brigade, for divisional troops, and for corps troops, carrying one day's supplies of food and forage; and a supply park for each army corps, calculated to carry three days'

supplies of food and forage for the troops composing the army corps. The regimental transport is in charge of regimental transport officers selected from the several units, and the supply columns and parks are in charge of Army Service Corps officers. At the beginning of the war in South Africa it was decided that the regimental transport should consist of vehicles drawn by mules, and that ox waggons hired locally should be provided for the supply columns and parks. Under ordinary conditions mule waggons can march some twenty miles a day at the rate of three miles an hour, and ox waggons not more than sixteen miles a day at the rate of two miles an hour. Thus the transport problem was complicated by the different paces and length of marches of the draught animals employed. Owing, however, to the delay that would have occurred in purchasing and shipping the enormous number of mules which would have been required had oxen not been utilised, the use of two sorts of transport was unavoidable; and the War Office system might have worked satisfactorily had the force been of the strength originally contemplated, and had each unit in that force been continuously engaged in active operations. But with a much larger force, a considerable portion of which had necessarily to be employed as garrisons for towns, in holding important strategical positions, or in guarding bridges and railways, the equipment of each unit with the same amount of regimental transport gave some of the troops more mule waggons than they wanted, thus lessening the mobility of the troops actually operating against the enemy. Again, it is obvious that a column might be wanted to carry out a rapid movement at such a distance from its base of supply that its equipment with nothing but mule transport would be obligatory. In such a case the War Office system would fail, unless a sufficient reserve of spare mule transport were immediately available, or unless other units were deprived, for the time being, of their regimental transport, which, as previously mentioned, they were supposed to retain throughout the campaign. Difficulties would also arise in regard to the organisation and supervision of the augmented mule transport of the column, regimental transport officers not being transferable from their respective corps for general transport duty.

On my arrival at Cape Town in January 1900, one of the first

things which engaged my attention was the state of the transport service, as I brought to notice in my Despatch, No. 1, dated February 6, 1900. Mobility is one of the most important factors in military operations, and mobility depends not only upon a sufficient amount of transport being forthcoming, but upon its being so organised that it can be employed in the most effective manner. I very early recognised that unless turning movements could be undertaken at a considerable distance from the railway, or my base transferred by a flank march from one railway to another, the Boers would obtain the enormous advantage of knowing beforehand my exact line of advance, and by destroying bridges and constructing entrenched positions would be able indefinitely to delay the offensive action from which alone a successful issue was to be expected. Consequent on the reverses in December 1899, large reinforcements were being despatched from England, and as these landed they were at once pushed up to the front with whatever transport could be collected at the base. Early in the year the supply of transport could barely keep pace with the requirements of the fresh troops, and the result was that hardly any of the units, except those sent out at the beginning of the war, had been uniformly equipped with transport on the War Office scale. Ox transport had occasionally been substituted for mule, and in some cases the proportion of waggons was excessive, and in others deficient. These, however, were comparatively trivial matters. Of much more serious importance was the fact that no attempt had been made to introduce a comprehensive scheme of transport organisation which would enable a force to operate in such portions of the enemy's territory as were not traversed by railways. The first thing to be done was to ascertain definitely what transport each unit possessed, and what additional mule and ox transport could be got ready by the beginning of February. Secondly, after providing for the obligatory requirements of the troops remaining on the defensive, it was necessary to collect all available transport at convenient points, and to divide it into manageable units under responsible officers, so that it might be in readiness to accompany the troops detailed for offensive action. On receipt of the returns showing the transport in possession of each corps, the points of concentration were selected, and commanding officers were directed to hand over their regi-

mental transport to departmental charge, except such vehicles as ammunition and water carts, ambulances, and the waggons carrying the technical equipment and stores of the Royal Artillery and Royal Engineers. The mule transport so withdrawn was formed into mule transport companies under departmental transport officers. The latter, on the scale of two per company, were obtained partly from the Army Service Corps and partly from the list of special service officers, especially those who had acquired some knowledge of transport duties in India or Egypt. Each company consisted of forty-nine mule waggons, with one Scotch cart and one water cart, this proportion being sufficient to carry the baggage and two days' supplies of food and forage for an infantry brigade of four battalions, or a cavalry brigade of three regiments. The companies were provided with a suitable subordinate establishment of Europeans and natives, and being self-contained and independent could be distributed in accordance with the requirements of the military situation, and the duties devolving on the several columns into which the field army was from time to time divided. Detailed tables of equipment, baggage, and supplies were drawn up and circulated for the guidance of general and commanding officers. The ox transport was similarly organised into companies of 100 waggons each, officered mainly by the Army Service Corps.

The administration of the transport service thus created was at first entrusted to the director of supplies at head-quarters, but it was soon apparent that the officer in question had quite enough to do in attending to his own duties, and shortly after the march from the Modder River to Bloemfontein had begun, I found it advisable to appoint a separate director of transport. For this post I selected my military secretary, Major-General Sir W. G. Nicholson, who had assisted Lord Kitchener at Cape Town in elaborating the scheme of reorganisation, and whose previous war experience rendered him familiar with the departmental transport system. Major-General Nicholson had under him at army head-quarters two assistant adjutant-generals for transport, namely, Colonel Bunbury, Army Service Corps, and Major Furse, Royal Artillery, and he carried on his duties in direct communication with the director of transport, chief ordnance officer, and director of remounts at the base, besides being in constant

personal communication with the director of supplies at the front. Being chief transport officer on the head-quarters staff, he dealt direct in regard to all transport questions with general officers commanding brigades, divisions, and columns. As the army advanced into the Orange River Colony and Transvaal, deputy directors of transport and other staff officers were appointed to supervise transport arrangements at Bloemfontein, Kroonstad, Kimberley, and other important military centres: these officers reporting to, and receiving orders from, the director at head-quarters. In addition to the transport officers of the mule companies attached to troops in the field, senior transport officers were posted to the staff of general officers commanding, being made responsible to the latter, as well as to the director of transport, for the care of the animals and general efficiency of the transport under their charge. It was their business to bring all irregularities and deficiencies to notice, and to insist on only the prescribed amount of baggage being loaded on the waggons.

It may be asked how the reorganisation of the transport service, admitting its desirability in other respects, facilitated the plan of operations for the relief of Kimberley and occupation of Bloemfontein. It did so in this way. There was only a limited amount of transport available at the beginning of February 1900, and by withdrawing the greater part of the regimental mule waggons from the units left to guard the northern frontier of Cape Colony and the line of communication up to the Modder, sufficient mule transport could be collected to equip three infantry divisions and three cavalry brigades, together with the artillery, engineer, mounted infantry, and medical units attached to the force. Had the troops which remained on the defensive been allowed to keep their regimental transport on the War Office scale, at least another month must have elapsed before an advance could have been made, and during this period Kimberley must also inevitably have fallen into the enemy's hands. In short, the departmental system which I introduced in January 1900 possesses an elasticity and adaptability to the changing conditions of field service on a large scale which the regimental system lacks. It may indeed be contended that transport animals and establishment in regimental charge are likely to be better cared for than the transport temporarily attached to units under the departmental system,

commanding officers being specially interested in the comfort of their men and the mobility of their corps. This, no doubt, is true to a certain extent; but, on the other hand, selected transport officers, with previous experience of the management of mules and control of European and native subordinates, are better acquainted with their duties than ordinary regimental officers; and as their advancement depends on their efficiency, they may be expected to exert themselves to the utmost to maintain the transport under their charge in a serviceable condition. The regimental transport officer, however zealous, is an amateur, and the departmental transport officer a professional. Moreover, in South Africa every endeavour has been made to keep the mule transport companies with the brigades and divisions to which they were originally allotted, and by this means general and commanding officers have been led to realise that, while the responsibility for the proper care and feeding of the animals rests primarily with the transport officers, it is their duty to co-operate with the latter to the fullest possible extent.

After withdrawing all the available mule transport from corps which were not included in the force that was being concentrated for the relief of Kimberley and subsequent march to Bloemfontein, barely sufficient was forthcoming to carry the baggage and two days' supplies of food and forage on the prescribed scale. I was therefore reluctantly obliged to reduce the normal proportion of ambulances and mule waggons allowed for medical units. In the case of bearer companies only two ambulances instead of ten, and one mule waggon instead of two, were taken; and in the case of field hospitals only two mule waggons instead of four. If the march had been longer, and if the force had been isolated from the day it left its advanced base on the Modder, this reduction might have caused considerable hardship, but communication was kept up with the Modder camp throughout the halt at Paardeberg, a subsidiary base being also established at Kimberley. The sick and wounded could therefore be conveyed in convoys of empty ox waggons to the hospitals at the Modder and Kimberley until the force marched from Poplar Grove to Bloemfontein. And here it may be mentioned that the ox waggon compares not unfavourably with the regulation ambulance as a conveyance for the sick and wounded. It moves more slowly, and the vehicle being heavier and longer,

and its wheels bigger, it jolts less when going over bad roads or the open veldt.

When Cronje's commando was brought to a stand at Paardeberg, I thought it advisable to strengthen the force by bringing up the Brigade of Guards from the Modder, and some difficulty was found in equipping it with transport, most of the mule waggons previously attached to it having been absorbed in the newly formed transport companies. Lieutenant-General Lord Methuen, however, from whose division the Brigade of Guards was withdrawn, contrived to collect about half the authorised proportion, the deficiency being made good by ox-waggons abandoned by the Boers during their retreat from Magersfontein.

As regards ox transport, the force moving from the Modder River to Bloemfontein required 475 waggons to carry ten days' supplies of food and forage, and 125 waggons for reserve ammunition. This number was provided, but unfortunately 180 loaded supply waggons were captured by the enemy early in the march at De Kiel's Drift. Strenuous efforts were made during the halt at Paardeberg to remedy this serious loss, fresh waggons being obtained from Kimberley, and captured waggons being utilised. For some days the biscuit and grocery ration had to be reduced, the ration of fresh meat being increased; but on the whole the troops were sufficiently well fed, and on entering Bloemfontein the director of supplies had in hand groceries for eight days, and biscuit and bread-stuff for five days. The provision of a full ration of grain for the cavalry, artillery, and mounted infantry horses, and for the transport mules, presented greater difficulties. Until the waggons captured at De Kiel's Drift had been replaced, the force was living almost from hand to mouth, besides which the mounted corps were spread over such a wide area that it was no easy matter for their mule waggons to go in daily to the supply dépôt and take out the requisite quantity of grain. To relieve the strain which was experienced on this occasion, and to ensure the mobility of the cavalry, horse artillery, and mounted infantry, it was resolved on arrival at Bloemfontein to increase the proportion of mule transport with these units, so as to carry four instead of two days' supplies of food and forage.

During the march from the Modder River to Bloemfontein, and especially during the early part of it, water was scarce and the

grazing poor. Still, the casualties among the transport animals were not excessive. On starting the total number of mules was 11,362; 10,566 mules reached Bloemfontein, the loss being 796, or 7 per cent. The total number of oxen on leaving the Modder was 9788; 2880 oxen with 180 waggons were captured at De Kiel's Drift, leaving a balance of 6908; 184 fresh waggons with 2680 oxen were obtained *en route*, raising the balance of oxen to 9588; and on reaching Bloemfontein the number available was 8968; the casualties being 620, or about 6½ per cent.

The operations above referred to lasted from February 11 to March 13. During this period six additional mule companies had been organised in Cape Colony, a considerable number of ox-waggons had been collected south of the Orange River, second-hand mule-waggons of local manufacture had been purchased by the chief ordnance officer, and an ample supply of mules and harness had arrived at Cape Town. The troops which marched from the Modder to Bloemfontein numbered about 84,000 men. The advance northward took place on May 3, by which date 48,000 additional troops, including Militia and Imperial Yeomanry, had been moved up across the frontier of Cape Colony. The transport requirements, coupled with the necessity for making good the deficiencies in the transport of the units which had marched from the Modder, inclusive of the bearer companies and field hospitals, imposed a severe strain on the transport department. This strain was intensified by the congestion of railway traffic north of the Orange River, which prevented any facilities from being afforded for railing up mules, waggons, or harness, and other transport stores, beyond Norval's Pont or Bethulie until a few days previous to the advance. The force detailed for the march northward consisted of three and a half infantry divisions, four cavalry brigades, and a division of mounted infantry, with forty-two horse artillery guns, sixty field guns, ten naval and siege guns, and the usual proportion of engineers and medical units. Owing, however, to the disturbed state of the country, the troops left behind in the Orange River Colony had also to be fully equipped with transport. To carry the authorised amount of baggage, two days' supplies of food and forage for the infantry, and four days' supplies for the mounted corps, as well as to equip the ambulances, and the technical vehicles belonging to the artillery and engineers, over 22,000

mules, with a corresponding number of waggons, were required. Besides this, 2500 ox waggons, with 40,000 oxen, had to be provided for the ammunition and supply columns, to carry the reserve ammunition and an average of seven days' reserve supplies. During the halt at Bloemfontein steps had also to be taken to re-mobilise Lord Methuen's division, which had been denuded of most of its mule transport when I moved from the Modder River early in February; to equip with mule and ox transport Sir A. Hunter's division, which had been transferred from Natal to Kimberley; to provide fifty mule waggons for the flying column which was being organised for the relief of Mafeking; and to replace the sixty-seven mule waggons which were captured by the Boers at Sanna's Post. To satisfy the above demands nearly 6000 mules and 4000 oxen were needed, as well as waggons, harness, and establishment. The task of supplying such a large amount of additional transport within six weeks was not an easy one, but it was successfully accomplished, and when I left Bloemfontein all requirements had been met, except as regards the mule waggons for two out of the four days' supplies to accompany the cavalry division. These, however, were ready a few days afterwards, and joined the cavalry division at Kroonstad.

During the march from Bloemfontein to Pretoria there was little to record affecting the transport, except that the mules suffered less than might have been expected from the long marches and cold nights, the casualties among them not exceeding 7 per cent. The ox is an animal of a more delicate constitution than the mule, and if he does not get sufficient time for grazing and rest, or is exposed to severe cold after a trying march, he almost invariably succumbs. The casualties, therefore, were heavier among the oxen, amounting to about 4500 a month, that is, slightly over 11 per cent.

While the advance to Pretoria was taking place, fresh mule companies were being organised at Bloemfontein, and additional ox waggons were being collected along the lines of communication. These were pushed up to the front by road, and served to replace casualties and to equip the columns which were formed later on at Kroonstad for the pursuit of De Wet. After the establishment of army head-quarters at Pretoria no very large demands were made on the transport department, but it was necessary to provide

for the equipment of Sir F. Carrington's force at Mafeking, to keep the existing transport in an efficient state, and continually to rearrange its distribution in accordance with the duties assigned to the several columns into which the force was now divided. In September 1900, an advance was made along the Delagoa Bay Railway, and Komati Poort was occupied. Early the next month, as no further operations on a large scale seemed likely to take place, and as the departmental organisation had by this time got into thorough working order, I decided to reduce the transport staff at head-quarters. Sir W. G. Nicholson accordingly returned to India, being replaced as director, first by Colonel Bunbury, Army Service Corps, and afterwards by Lieutenant-Colonel Wickham, Indian Staff Corps. Major Furse, also, the assistant-adju-tant-general for mule transport, reverted to duty at the War Office.

From the foregoing brief narrative it will be seen that the departmental system which was introduced on my arrival in South Africa fulfilled my expectations. It proved capable of rapid expansion under circumstances of exceptional difficulty; the re-distribution of transport units was effected without causing inconvenience or hardship to the troops, and the small percentage of casualties among the mules showed that the animals were at least as well cared for by departmental officers as by regimental officers under the War Office system. And here it may be stated that while I was in chief command in South Africa, no mishaps occurred, nor had any military operation to be postponed or abandoned, owing to the transport being inadequate or inefficient. This satisfactory result must mainly be ascribed to the excellent work done by Major-General Sir William Nicholson and his staff, and the capable officers in charge of mule and ox transport companies—work which was the more creditable inasmuch as transport duty in the field does not usually carry with it the same chances of distinction as employment in the fighting line or on the general staff.

In this account of the transport arrangements in South Africa, reference has only been made to the force based on Cape Colony. The Natal force, under the immediate command of Sir Redvers Buller, was equipped with ox transport, except such vehicles as water-carts, small-arm ammunition-carts, ambulances, and the

like, which were drawn by mules. Moreover, in the Natal force, the War Office system was adhered to, the transport for regimental baggage and supplies being retained in regimental charge. A somewhat higher scale of baggage was allowed, tents being carried for the troops, as well as a moderate amount of supplementary stores for sale in regimental coffee-shops. When, however, a portion of Sir Redvers Buller's force, consisting of one infantry division and two cavalry brigades, took part in the advance to Komati Poort, additional mule transport was brought up from Natal to carry the baggage on a reduced scale, and two days' supplies for these troops. The system adopted in the Natal force was no doubt suited to its requirements, but the conditions were so different from those existing in the much larger force which was based on Cape Colony, that what was feasible and appropriate in the one case would have been impracticable in the other.

It may be of interest to offer a few remarks on the description of transport employed in the war. The ox waggons and oxen were obtained locally through contractors, a team of sixteen oxen and two native drivers being allotted to each waggon. The load for a waggon was 6000 lb. The oxen were, as a rule, fine animals, and very tractable. The curious thing about them was that they would pull together, however large the team might be. With heavy guns as many as twenty spans of oxen were employed, and when they were on the move the trek chain was always taut. This characteristic is probably due to heredity, for in India, where oxen are commonly used for draught purposes, and where more than two spans are never attached to a native bullock-cart, but little advantage is gained by employing more than four spans at the outside to draw a gun or other heavy load. The Kaffirs are unrivalled in their management of oxen, and extraordinarily proficient in the use of the long whip, by means of which they guide and urge on their teams. During the greater part of the year the oxen only need a sufficient daily interval for grazing and rest to keep in good condition, provided that they are not driven too fast and that the marches are of moderate length. In the depth of winter the animals require hay and Indian corn to supplement the withered grass of the veldt, and are all the better for being covered at night with horse-blankets, or with blankets lined with felt, called in India "jhoods." At my request the Government of

India supplied a considerable number of jhools, and these were found to be of great service in keeping the oxen warm during the bitterly cold nights of July and August on the high veldt. Being built in the country of hard and seasoned wood of indigenous growth, the ox waggons lasted well and seldom needed repair.

The mule transport consisted of what are called in South Africa buck-waggons, carrying a load of 3500 lb., and drawn by ten mules each, with two native drivers. The War Office supplied as many mules as were asked for, and though many of the animals were untrained, they readily adapted themselves to draught. Besides receiving a sufficient grain ration, mules require careful and regular watering and grazing, and difficulty was experienced in getting the native drivers to attend to their duties in this respect. It was so much easier to tether the mules together in groups of five than to knee-halter them singly, that continual vigilance had to be exercised to prevent the former practice from being adopted. When tethered together the strongest animal drags the rest about, so that they can neither drink nor graze, and consequently they rapidly fall off in condition. Being accustomed to drive oxen, the Kaffirs are apt to use the long whip too freely in driving mule teams, and so much was this the case that it was found necessary to prohibit the use of the long whip with mule transport, the drivers being provided instead with short hunting whips.

The mules employed in the campaign have been imported from North and South America, Spain and Italy. A few also were supplied from India, and as many as could be obtained were purchased locally. Taken all round, no complaint could be made of the quality of the animals. The best were the Cape mules, these being thoroughly acclimatised, hardy, short-legged, and compactly built. Next to them came the mules from the Punjab. Big mules are a mistake for ordinary field transport, as they require as much care and as large a grain ration as horses.

As regards the buck-waggons, those purchased locally were found to be much more serviceable than those manufactured in England, technically described "Bristol pattern waggons." As in the case of the ox waggons, the former were built of hard, well-seasoned wood grown in South Africa. Mule waggons not being in constant use at home, there was no stock in hand,

and they had to be put together hurriedly, the wood used in their construction warping and shrinking in the dry climate of the veldt. The wheels, especially of the English waggons, gave a great deal of trouble, requiring frequent re-tiring and other repairs. Six buck-waggons were imported for trial from the United States, and these proved to be superior to any other pattern of either Cape or English manufacture. The wheels were of hickory, the bodies of black walnut, and the metal work of steel. They were built by Messrs. Stude, Baker, and Co., who have a great wagon manufactory at South Bend, Indiana. The superiority of these vehicles was doubtless due to the fact that mule waggons are largely used in America for the carriage of goods as well as for military transport. The manufacturers have therefore learnt by practical experience what is the best type of wagon, and what the most suitable materials to employ in building it. It may be added that the waggons in question cost considerably less than the Bristol pattern waggons.

The mule harness supplied from England, though perhaps a little too elaborate, was of excellent quality, and much more durable than what was obtainable on the spot.

An account of the transport in South Africa would be incomplete without a reference to the steam traction-engines and trucks which were sent out in charge of Lieutenant-Colonel Templer, 7th battalion King's Royal Rifle Corps. These were first landed in Natal and afterwards transhipped to Cape Town, where some were employed for carrying stores from the docks, the remainder being utilised at Kimberley, Bloemfontein, Johannesburg and Pretoria. At these centres, where coal and water were readily obtainable, the engines proved a valuable adjunct to animal draught; but owing to the absence of fuel they could not be used on the line of march, or to haul supplies to bodies of troops encamped more than twenty miles from a coal depôt. From a military point of view the defect of steam traction lies not only in the impossibility of working it unless coal and water are available at each halting-place, but in the weight of the fuel and water which each engine has to drag along, thus expending much of its tractive force. This defect would be greatly lessened if an efficient oil motor could be substituted for the steam motor, as in that case no water would be wanted, while the coal would be

replaced by a more portable and concentrated description of fuel.

In conclusion it may be observed that, although in some respects the organisation and maintenance of an efficient transport service in South Africa was not an easy matter, the abundance of good grazing in almost every district of the Orange River Colony and Transvaal during the greater part of the year was an advantage which hardly any other country would have afforded. The ox transport was practically self-supporting, and no forage except a moderate grain ration, sometimes procurable locally, had to be provided for the mules. In the thinly populated and uncivilised regions in which the British army generally fights it is not infrequently as difficult to feed the transport animals as the troops themselves. In South Africa this difficulty was reduced to a minimum.

ROBERTS, F.-M.

March 24, 1901.

PRESS OPINIONS
ON
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