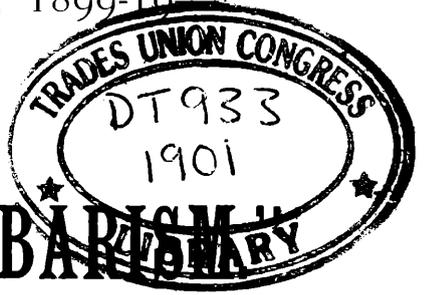


THE WAR IN SOUTH AFRICA, 1899-1901?



# "METHODS OF BARBARISM"

"WAR IS WAR"

—MR. BRODRICK,

AND

"WAR IS HELL"

—GENERAL SHERMAN.

THE CASE FOR INTERVENTION

BY

W. T. STEAD.

*"When is a war not a war? When it is waged in South Africa by methods of barbarism."*

—SIR HENRY CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN, *June 14th, 1901.*

—  
PRICE SIXPENCE.  
—

MOWBRAY HOUSE, NORFOLK STREET, LONDON, W.C.

—  
*July, 1901.*

# CONTENTS.



	PAGE
PREFACE.	
I. A CASE FOR INTERVENTION	5
II. THE HAGUE RULES OF WAR	... .. 16
III. HOW THE PRISON CAMPS WERE FILLED—AND EMPTIED	32
IV. MISS HOBHOUSE'S REPORT ...	37
V. THE POLICY OF DEVASTATION	... .. 47
VI. THE CENSOR'S VEIL OF DARKNESS	67
VII. A RIFT IN THE VEIL: THE SPOELSTRA TRIAL...	... .. 76

THE WAR IN SOUTH AFRICA, 1899-19—?

---

“METHODS OF BARBARISM.”

“WAR IS WAR”

—MR. BRODRICK,

AND

“WAR IS HELL”

—GENERAL SHERMAN.

THE CASE FOR INTERVENTION

BY

W. T. STEAD.

*“When is a war not a war? When it is waged in South Africa by methods of barbarism.”*

—SIR HENRY CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN, *June 14th, 1901.*

---

PRICE SIXPENCE.

---

MOWBRAY HOUSE, NORFOLK STREET, LONDON, W.C.

*July, 1901.*



## PREFACE.

---

Now that at last the leader of the Liberal Party in the House of Commons has ventured to describe the methods employed by our troops in South Africa with the only word that fits the case, it may be convenient to string together for reference a record of the facts, with such dates and references as may be necessary to enable us to understand the Methods of Barbarism we are employing in Africa. The compilation of this work is a thankless but necessary task. When we read of similar deeds to those which are now being perpetrated in our name in the South African Republics, as having occurred centuries since, we marvel that the contemporaries of such events, men humane, enlightened, and Christian, were not able to exercise any effective restraint upon the savagery of their soldiery. But they are excused on the ground that in those days knowledge of the atrocities which accompanied the march of an invading army seldom came to the ears of the nation until the victims had perished and the ashes of their homesteads had long been cold. It is this which differentiates the present war from all those which have preceded it. For to-day the nation at home witnesses every morning and evening, in the camera obscura of its daily press, the whole hellish panorama that is unrolled in South Africa. The work of devastation is carried on before our eyes. We see the smoke of the burning farmstead; we hear the cries of the terrified children, and sometimes in the darkness we hear the sobbing of the outraged woman in the midst of her orphaned children, and we know that before another sunset British troops carrying the King's commission, armed and equipped with supplies voted by our representatives, will be steadily adding more items of horror to the ghastly total which stands to our debit in South Africa. But although this cruel work is being ruthlessly carried on, the very men and women who clamour impatiently for more severity and exult with a savage joy over the big bag of Boers when the list of killed and wounded is a little higher than the average, will resent the publication of this pamphlet, not because of any comments of the compiler, but because it holds up the mirror to the face of War, and presents in brief compass a vivid picture of the kind of deeds for which as a nation and as individuals who have approved of the policy of the nation we shall have to answer at the Day of Judgment.

The extraordinary ingenuity with which the Ministers have deceived Parliament, the stern rigour with which the censorship has been enforced, and the inconceivable misrepresentations of a Pharisaic press have succeeded in blinding millions of people to the fact that the war is really being waged by methods of barbarism, and that at the beginning of the Twentieth Century we have deliberately resorted to methods of warfare which had been ruled out as inadmissible in war by the universal agreement of all civilized nations. But not only for the honour of our nation, but as a necessary protest in the name of Humanity, it is incumbent upon those who care for progress, civilization, or international law, to force the facts in all their grim horror upon those in whose name they are being perpetrated and by whose authority they are being enforced.

W. T. STEAD.

*July 5th, 1901.*

# METHODS OF BARBARISM.

## CHAPTER I.

### A CASE FOR INTERVENTION.

“When is war not a war? When it is carried on by methods of barbarism in South Africa.”—SIR HENRY CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN.

IF the Liberal leader of the House of Commons be right, then a case for intervention has arisen in South Africa. Civilization has not only the right, but the duty of resisting a reversion to the methods of barbarism. The maintenance of the recognized rules of war is a duty incumbent upon all the sovereign states of the world. For the Usages of War are the rules of the only court of ultimate appeal yet established among the nations. Any power which in prosecuting its suit in this arena transgresses these rules renders itself liable to be called to order by any, or all, of the other Powers who have jointly subscribed to the rules in question. If, therefore, the British in South Africa have reverted to the methods of barbarism, the time has arisen for the protest of civilization.

“War is war,” said Mr. Brodrick in the course of a recent debate in the House of Commons, in which, after having exhausted all his resources in order to minimize the horrors reported from South Africa, he fell back upon these words of wisdom—“War is war.” The phrase has been eagerly adopted by the Ministerial press, and the fact that “war is war,” which no one can be found to dispute, is brandished triumphantly before our eyes as an ample justification for every conceivable atrocity which has ever been practised by men upon men since the world began. Those apologists for crime forget that, although war is war, the progress of civilization has been marked by nothing so much as the increased severity of the restrictions placed upon the use of barbarity in warfare. Not so many hundreds of years ago Mr. Brodrick’s phrase would have been quoted complacently to justify such recognized rights of war as the violation of women and the massacre of prisoners. The difference between barbarism and civilization is, indeed, largely to be measured by the extent to which nations, when they appeal to the dread tribunal of war, abide by the rules which the experience, not of philanthropists, but of soldiers, has found to be indispensable if an appeal to the ultimate ratio of kings is not to degenerate into a mutual extermination, not only of fighting men, but of non-combatant women and children.

Starting from the truism that war is war, the apologists for our methods in South Africa constantly argue as if the civilized nations were perfectly free to disregard all the restraints and limitations which, in the slow process of centuries, the wisdom of mankind has placed upon the savage licence of the passions let loose in war. “War is hell,” said General Sherman; but even hell has its limit, and we may regard the definitions of the Hague Conference as a historical record of the successive steps by which the experience of the soldier and the wisdom of the statesman have found it not only possible, but

necessary to restrain the beast and fiend in men. Because General Sherman said that war is hell, many of our journalistic Mentors seem to consider that they have leave and licence from God Almighty to play the devil *ad libitum* among the hearths and homes of the women and children of a nation whose territory we have invaded. This is not so, and when the present delirium passes and the conscience of the nation awakes nothing will fill us, and our children after us, with more horror than the thought of the excesses to which we have abandoned ourselves, in defiance of the protests of contemporary peoples and even the solemn declarations of our own Government.

Even those who use the phrase that "War is war" as justification for the violation, wholesale and retail, of the great interdict placed at the Hague Conference upon those who employ methods of barbarism in war have not yet ventured quite so far as to quote "War is war" in justification of the deliberate massacre of all the non-combatant population. But, already, journalists of the baser sort, of whom we have too many examples in the daily press, are clamouring for greater severity. Not satisfied with the fact that two-thirds of the Republics are a blackened waste, and that the seat of war has been devastated with a severity and a thoroughness which recalls the exploits of Louis XIV. in the Palatinate, nearly two hundred years ago, these men, arrogating to themselves an exclusive monopoly of patriotism, are clamouring for more ruthless dealing with the Afrikanders.

Not even the vast accumulated sum of horror which has been perpetrated in South Africa satisfies them. As confirmed drunkards are said ever to increase the strength of their potations until at last they reach a pitch of delirium when they declare that the strongest brandy is as weak as water, so our Jingo journalists are not ashamed to declare that we are making war with rose-water in South Africa, and to clamour for measures of "salutary vigour." What they want it is difficult to understand, unless we examine the records of the exploits of our own people, when they were engaged in a similar war of conquest, at a time when they were unrestrained by criticism in Parliament or the protests of philanthropists. If the formula "War is war" justifies any and every atrocity and barbarity that can be practised by the invading army against a population defending its homes against violation and its country against subjugation, then there is no reason to condemn—nay, rather there is every reason to emulate—the exploits of Elizabethan generals. There the policy of extermination, or reduction of the population by a steady process of military attrition—to quote the immortal phrase of Winston Churchill—was carried out with a severity that would probably have satisfied even the editors of the *Daily Mail* and the *Daily Express*. The following brief extracts from the familiar pages of Froude,\* embodying the quotations from the official reports of the Robertses and Kitcheners and Pole-Carews of the spacious times of great Elizabeth, may all be justified by the convenient formula that "War is war."

---

\*The following is an extract from Malby's report to Government, as quoted by Froude: "I thought good to take another course, and so with determination to consume them with

From this extremity of savagery at the present moment Ministers shrink. Yet it was a very widespread conviction both amongst civilians and soldiers in South Africa that Kitchener's policy would approximate more and more closely to the Elizabethan precedents. "There is nothing for it now," said an eminent person in South Africa, "but Kitchener and Brutality. Otherwise the war may go on for years." It was believed and stoutly asserted, both in the camps and out of them, that orders had been given that the policy of taking no prisoners, carried out so often in the Soudan, was to be enforced in South Africa. Fortunately, the cry of horror raised in this country on the first revelation of such an awful possibility led to its prompt disclaimer, and to the prosecution and punishment as a libeller of one whose only offence was that of printing a statement made by a British officer, that he had himself received twice repeated commands to take no prisoners when De Wet's capture appeared to be imminent. The refusal of quarter to men who have thrown down their arms has found its stout defenders in some quarters in England, and it is to be feared, unless rumour is a liar, that there have been occasions not a few on which Boers have been slain on surrender by troops who angrily refused to recognize the right of a man to go on fighting till the last moment and then by surrender to claim quarter.

But if the policy of the massacre of men who have thrown down their arms has not been carried out in the good old method of our Irish wars, we have been less scrupulous in waging war upon women and children. Under the plea of military necessity, we have destroyed the homes and sustenance of 60,000 women and children; we have denuded their farms of all the live stock and grain upon which they were able and willing to sustain themselves without asking for help; we have burnt the roofs of their houses over their heads. Having done this, three courses lay open to us. The first and the most merciful was to have followed the precedent of Elizabethan times, to have put the women and children to the sword, or, to adapt our phraseology to modern methods

---

fire and sword, sparing neither old nor young, I entered their mountains, I burnt all their corn and houses, and committed to the sword all that could be found. . . . In like manner I assaulted a castle when the garrison surrendered. I put them to the *miseriordia* of my soldiers—they were all slain—thence I went on sparing none which came in my way, which cruelty did so amaze their followers they could not tell where to bestow themselves. . . . It was all done in rain and frost and storm, journeyings in such weather bringing them the sooner to submission." Here again is an excerpt from another well-known English authority. The *Pacata Hibernia* says Sir George Carew, president of Munster and commander of the English forces there, "having received certaine information that the Mounster fugitives were harboured in those parts, having before burned all the houses and corne . . . diverted his forces into East Clanwilliam and Muskery-Quirke, and harassing the country killed all mankind that were found therein for a terrour to those as should give relief to the runagate traitors. Thence we came to Aherleaghe Woods (the beautiful Glen of Aherlow), where we did the like, not leaving behind us man or beast, corne, or cattle."

Here, again, is an extract from a letter written in 1607 by Lord Deputy Chichester, who commanded the English forces in Ulster: "I have often said and written it is famine must consume the Irish, as our swords and other endeavours worked not that speedy effect which is expected; hunger would be a better, because a speedier weapon to employ against them than the sword." He says: "I burned all along Lough Neagh, within four miles of Dungannon. . . . sparing none, of what quality, age, or sex soever, besides many burned to death. We killed man, woman, and child, horse, beast, or whatever we could find."

(Quoted by W. J. Corbett in the *Westminster Review* for March, 1901.)

of war, we might have massed the unfortunate victims of the policy of devastation and mowed them down with our Maxims. From this, however, we recoiled. The second course was to leave them, homeless and foodless, to cower round the ashes of their ruined homes, at the mercy of all the armed Kaffirs and Cape Bastards who form a kind of diabolic fringe to every British column. From that our commanders recoiled. There only remained, therefore, the third course, which was that actually adopted, namely, that of carrying off captive as prisoners of war the women and children whose homes we had destroyed, and to supply them with the necessaries of life, food, shelter, and medicine. This was the course which we adopted; it was a horrible alternative, the like of which has never been practised for a hundred years in any European country. It was the inevitable corollary of the policy of denudation or sweeping the country carried out by the British commanders.

It is significant of the degradation into which this war has plunged large sections of our people, that journalists, university graduates, and orthodox Christians expressed their amazement at the incredible humanity which led us to undertake the feeding and housing of the women and children of our enemy. Women and children take their chances in all wars. In sieges and on battlefields they must necessarily share the privations and sufferings of their men-folk, when the actual tide of battle or the exigencies of siege render it impossible to extricate them from the fighting line or to remove them from the beleaguered city. But it must be remembered that the Boers when besieging Ladysmith allowed the women and children to dwell in a neutral camp—a policy of humanity much in excess of that practised by the Germans in their invasion of France. But the unavoidable sufferings of women shut up in a beleaguered town are one thing, the sending out of destroying columns to devastate a whole countryside, to destroy the property, and burn the homes of women and children who could not in any sense be regarded as combatants, is altogether another thing. If to serve our own imagined interests we adopt a policy of devastation and make prisoners of war of women and children, we are at least under an obligation to accord to them all the privileges of the prisoners of war which have been recently defined in the Hague Convention. In feeding those unfortunate prisoners of war, whom we have herded in prison camps and confined behind barbed-wire, sentry-guarded barriers, we are but discharging the elementary duty of every army in the field. Not even the most savage among the so-called civilized nations refuse to feed prisoners of war. It has been reserved for British journalists to consider the perfunctory and inefficient discharge of this first of all duties as an illustration of the abounding humanity with which Britain is conducting this war.

Unfortunately the duty was most inadequately performed. If Generals will make babies prisoners of war, they ought at least to provide them with food suitable for their needs. This, however, would have implied some foresight and some degree of provision for the inevitable. It was not forthcoming. Thousands of children were crowded together in tents, without adequate bedding, and without any food save the rations supplied to soldiers in hard training. Bully beef and flour, with a little coffee and sugar, can hardly be regarded as milk

for babes. The immediate result, therefore, of our policy of denudation was the policy of concentration adopted by General Weyler in Cuba, and imitated by Lord Kitchener in the Transvaal and Orange Free State. From that the immediate and inevitable consequence followed that the children died like flies.

The death of many was directly accelerated by the adoption, by the British military authorities, of a policy worthy of the Inquisition. When the helpless women and children were first incarcerated in these prison camps, discrimination was carefully made between those who had husbands, brothers, and fathers still on commando, and those whose male relatives had either been killed, taken prisoner, or surrendered. Those in the latter category were supplied with what is called a "full ration," that is to say, they were given the beef, flour, coffee, and sugar which was considered necessary to maintain adult men in health. These full rations were declared by Dr. R. P. Mackenzie, the district medical officer of the Boer camp in Johannesburg, in a letter which he addressed to the Military Governor, to be insufficient to keep the refugees in health. Major Cavaye, the officer charged with the distribution of the Imperial Relief Fund at Johannesburg, admitted, when receiving a deputation on the subject, that the ration scale which he had received from Lord Kitchener in Pretoria was not sufficient to keep body and soul together, and that he had, on his own responsibility, given the refugees some flour to mix with their maize meal.

But let us assume that the full ration represented the irreducible minimum upon which the Government would feed its prisoners of war. It was then deliberately determined, apparently upon the authority of Lord Kitchener and with the sanction of Mr. Brodrick, to subject the women and children whose husbands and fathers were still obeying the orders of their Government, in defending their country against the invader, to a policy of systematic starvation. To a woman whose husband was on commando, to the helpless child of a man who had not yet laid down his arms, the decree went forth that they should be deprived of one half of the rations necessary for their proper sustenance. Starvation was thus deliberately employed as an engine of torture in order, by the suffering inflicted upon their women and children, to induce their men-folk to desert the ranks, and for pity's sake to sacrifice the cause of their country. We could neither kill, wound, nor capture the burghers who were still in the field. But we could catch their women and their helpless little children. Having caught them, we could pen them in our substitute for the Spanish Inquisition, the Prison Camps. Instead of stretching them upon the rack, using the thumb-screw, or applying the red-hot iron to the soles of their feet, we achieved the same result by inflicting the refined and horrible torture of slow starvation. Under this *peine forte et dure* the children sickened, pined away to living skeletons, and then happily were released by death from their sufferings. Every one of these children who so died as the result of the cutting down of rations by half, in order to bring pressure to bear upon their relatives in the field, was as deliberately murdered as were any of the Irish babies whom General Carey spitted in the campaign against the renegade traitors of Munster. The prison camp itself may not have originally been intended as a place

of torture or as a means of putting pressure upon the burghers; but the half-ration system stands revealed, naked and unashamed, as a deliberate act of state policy employed for the purpose of compelling the surrender of foes whom we were unable to overcome in the field.

The *Spectator*, a journal whose utterances register the very lowest depths of the abyss of moral degradation into which we have sunk as a nation, absolutely declared that Lord Kitchener, according to the laws of war, would have been justified in refusing any help to the families of men on commando. The *Spectator* conveniently ignored the fact that the families of the men on commando whom Lord Kitchener was feeding on half rations were prisoners of war, carried off by our troops from the homes where they were perfectly content to feed and provide for themselves, and that we were therefore, by the rules of war recognized by every nation, under an imperative compulsion to feed them adequately. Yet the *Spectator*, with its smug Pharisaism and nauseous cant, did not hesitate to assure its readers, who had been accustomed, in the days of Mr. Hutton, to regard it as an exponent of Christian ethics, that Lord Kitchener would have been perfectly justified in refusing even half rations to his prisoners of war who happened to be women and children. Instead of starving them straight off, he preferred slow and continuous torture to the quicker process, which would have been an advantage to the sufferers, but a disadvantage for their gaolers. To have followed the *Spectator's* benevolent ruling, and to have deprived them of any food at all, would have hurried them all to the grave in a week. The poor little children who were being starved in furtherance of British policy would have reached the land where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest; but, on the other hand, Lord Kitchener would have been deprived by their death of the engine of torture which he was employing steadily, week by week, day by day, to compel the burghers to surrender. By feeding them on half rations he secured a maximum of torture, and at the same time he avoided the sudden destruction of the apparatus of pressure upon which he built such hopes.

The first news that the British public received of this infernal policy was in a Reuter's telegram which appeared in the *Times* of Jan. 18th. It was received with incredulous horror by all excepting those who knew that "Kitchener and Brutality" was the watchword of the hour in influential circles in South Africa. But when Parliament met and Mr. Brodrick was questioned, he admitted the truth of the report, and the Jingo majority greeted this official avowal of a policy of torture with loud cheers. Well might the military correspondent of the *Westminster Gazette* say:—

"I can conceive of no more humiliating confession being wrung from a British Minister, nor can I conceive of a greater degradation of the political conscience, than that indicated by the fact that so humiliating a confession was greeted by the cheers and approval of his political supporters."

Notwithstanding the enthusiasm with which the majority of the House of Commons exulted in this utilization of the sufferings of women and children as a means of compelling the submission of our

enemy, the scandal provoked a remonstrance from the foreign Consuls at Pretoria. The Boers believe that it was in deference to this remonstrance, and not to the protests of the British public, that this inhuman policy of half rations was abandoned. That which the conscience of humanity failed to effect was brought about by the protests of foreign Powers. It is believed in this country that the system was abandoned on Feb. 27th in consequence of the question asked in the House of Commons the previous day. But the Boers maintain that the change was due to the representations of the foreign Consuls. This fact was only recently brought to light in letters received from Pretoria. If true, it is of the first importance, inasmuch as it seems to show the only way in which the British authorities in South Africa can be compelled to observe the rules and usages of war.

If the Boers and their leaders are right in attributing this abandonment of the half-ration system to foreign representations, it would appear that, despite all our protestations that we are a law to ourselves and care nothing for the opinions of other Powers, a quiet unpublished protest by Consuls at Pretoria succeeding in effecting that which all our protests in this country failed to bring about. It is therefore natural that the Boers are disposed to appeal to foreign countries, and especially to those Powers who are in a special manner the custodians of International Law, for the necessary restraint which, in the name of civilization and humanity, must be imposed upon the methods of barbarism used by our army in South Africa.

The specific point to which the attention of foreign Powers may be properly directed is the continuous, systematic, and deliberate violation of the rules of war which were solemnly drawn up only two years ago at the Hague Conference. That these rules have been violated wholesale and in detail is undisputed. The only excuse of the Government is that all rules of war may be set on one side by a clause introduced by the German Military Delegate into the Preamble, to the effect that the rules are intended to limit the disasters "so far as military necessities permit." If we were to take advantage of this, and make each military commander an absolute judge of what military necessities permitted, we might as well dispense with all rules of war of any kind, for, as Milton reminds us, the author of all evil was the original discoverer of the exceeding convenience of this pretext.

"So spake the fiend, and with necessity  
The tyrant's plea excus'd his devilish deeds."

But, fortunately, the British representative at the Conference, Sir John Ardagh, the head of the Intelligence Department of the British Army, expressly pointed out that the overriding of the regular rules was only reserved for extreme cases, and was not at all intended to annul the obligation to observe these rules as the ordinary and recognized laws of war. The exact words of Sir John Ardagh are as follows:—

The British Military Delegate is of opinion that, subject to the reservation "saving the necessities of war," they (the Hague Rules) all may be accepted. This reservation, he desires to point out, must be implicitly applied to any and to every Code or Compact by which it may be attempted to regulate the infinite variety of circumstances and conditions which arise in war, and it is in a great measure provided for in the Preamble. To insist upon it too prominently would, in his opinion, tend to unduly weaken the efficacy of even the most perfect rules, and to relegate the relations of belligerents to each other, and to

the populations of the theatre of war, to undefined and contentious principles, and their arbitrary interpretation by interested parties.

The Rules provide for the ordinary and constantly-recurring incidents of war, and regulate them in conformity with usage, expediency, justice, and humanity. Unforeseen cases must still be left for decision when they occur. (*Blue Book C*, 95, 34, p. 161).

Mr. Brodrick has just taken refuge behind the German proviso. It is well the point should be considered gravely by all the Governments who took part in the Hague Conference, for if Mr. Brodrick's plea be correct, not only is Sir John Ardagh's observation made of none effect, but the whole of the Rules of War have been practically wiped out. This is an international question, and one upon which it is the right and interest of every State to have an opinion, and make that opinion felt.

What, therefore, is our immediate duty? Is it not to bring into operation at once the engine which, as the story of the half rations seems to show, is the only engine by which effective pressure can be brought to bear upon our Ministers? They are deaf to humanity; they scoff at the entreaties of the Opposition; but they dare not attempt to offer even to the smallest of other Powers the glaring sophisms which are considered good enough for the House of Commons. To invoke the intervention an international petition has been extensively signed in many European countries and at home, which points directly to the use of this one instrument of influence which civilization yet seems to possess. The first clauses of this Protest and Appeal are as follows:—

TO THE SIGNATORY POWERS OF THE HAGUE CONVENTIONS OF ARBITRATION AND OF THE RULES AND USAGES OF WAR.

We, the undersigned, recognizing the value of the conclusions registered by the Powers at the Hague Conference, place on record our solemn protest against the violation of their provisions in the operations of the war now raging in South Africa.

I.

We accept the Laws and Usages of War drawn up at the Hague as formulating the usages which distinguish civilized from barbarous warfare, and although technically the South African Republics may be excluded from the Convention, the moral obligation to observe them is not affected thereby.

We note with deep regret that the proclamations and official instructions issued by the British commanders in South Africa reveal a system of devastation and confiscation in direct violation of Articles 44 to 53 of the Convention.

And therefore, while recording our solemn protest against this reversion to the practices of barbarism, we appeal to the Powers to offer such prompt and friendly representations as may be necessary to restrain the operations of war in South Africa within the limits laid down in the name of humanity and civilization.

This memorial has been signed by men of European reputation in every country in Europe, including M. Richet, Professor Virchow, Dr. Schweinfürth, M. de Bloch, M. Frédéric Passy, Senator Trarieux, M. Emile Zola, M. de Pressensé, Dr. Kuypers (of Holland), Senator Lafontaine (of Belgium), Signor Lombroso, Signor Moneta, M. Björnsterne Björnson, Señor San Pedro (Vice-president of the Senate, Madrid), Mr. William Watson, Mr. Walter Crane, Professor Alfred Russel Wallace, Dr. Clifford, Professor Sully, and many other men of light and leading in every European country. It will be shortly ready for presentation. It will be addressed in the first instance to the Permanent Bureau of Arbitration which has been established at the Hague, and in the second it will be addressed *seriatim* to each of the Governments which signed the Hague Convention.

It may be said that nothing will be done. I am not so sure of that. It is true that hitherto Russia and France have abstained from making any protest against what both Count Lamsdorf and M. Delacassé would probably admit, without hesitation, constituted a flagrant violation of the Rules of War, on the ground that if the Powers of the Dual Alliance were to move, it might lead, not to antagonism, but to somewhat of an increase in the strain of their relations with the Powers which constituted the Triple Alliance. The Kaiser, for his own purposes, his fleet not yet being built and equipped, has deemed it wise to place himself in direct opposition to the sympathies and convictions of the great majority of his subjects. But the Kaiser is a very uncertain quantity, whose policy may vary from day to day, while the convictions and sympathies of the Germans on this subject are as fixed as fate. No one can say how soon the Kaiser may find it not merely desirable, but necessary, for him to put himself in accord with the feelings of his people. He has recently recalled Count von Walderssee, and modified, if not abandoned, his original policy in China. He may do the same in South Africa. He is much more likely to do the same in South Africa if by so doing he can put himself in accord not only with the sentiments of his own subjects, but also with the policy of his French and Russian neighbours. His path would be made still more smooth for him if the initiative of representation were to be taken by the smaller Powers. If Russia or Germany were to take the lead in calling the English Government to account, their representation might, however unintentionally, appear to have the character of a menace, and it would provoke resentment which might aggravate rather than diminish the sufferings which it was intended to alleviate. It would be very different if the initiative were taken by the small Powers whose delegates honourably distinguished themselves at the Hague Conference, as they had previously done at the Conference of Brussels, by the way in which they defended the right of the peoples of invaded countries to defend themselves against the forces of the invaders.

Only two years ago Great Britain was herself arrayed on the side of the invaded nationalities, and it will ever be remembered to the credit of Sir John Ardagh that he proposed to add a special clause to the end of the first chapter declaring that "nothing contained in that section should be considered as tending to impair or to suppress the right which belonged to the population of an invaded country to fulfil its duty of opposing to the invaders by all lawful means the most energetic and patriotic resistance." He did not withdraw his proposition until—again to quote his words:—

The general effect of the discussion was to demonstrate that Her Majesty's Government earnestly supported the cause of the weaker Powers, and the right and duty to oppose a patriotic resistance to an invader—to place those views on record—and to evoke a declaration that the majority of the members of the Sub-Commission were of opinion that its purport was of such a nature that the Article formulated by the British Delegate added nothing thereto.

But England, unfortunately, has abandoned the  *rôle*  of the defender of the rights of invaded nationalities. She has succumbed to the temptation of territorial conquest. We must, therefore, look to the

smaller States to take the initiative in reminding her, as they have already done at Pretoria in the matter of the half rations, that even the greatest of Powers must abide by the rules which all the Powers, including England, accepted so recently as 1899.

“But which of the small Powers,” it will be asked by the scornful, “will undertake to bell the cat?” The Belgian Minister, who has just expelled Andries De Wet from the territory of Belgium for daring to speak a word against the attempt to crush the Afrikaner nationality by methods of barbarism, has not exactly the qualities of heart or soul which would qualify him to stand out as the spokesman of humanity in this matter. But no one looks to Belgium to take the initiative. That *rôle* properly comes to the Netherlands. Fortunately, a new Government is coming into power at the Hague. The new Ministers, fresh from a General Election, will find themselves confronted in the first days of their ministerial existence with the question whether or not they will invoke the signatory Powers to urge upon England that she should restrain her operations in South Africa within the limits of civilized warfare. No doubt there is a certain degree of risk, although it is nothing so great as many of the Dutch imagine. Not even Mr. Chamberlain is likely to seize Java as a retort courteous to the suggestion that we should abide by the engagements into which we entered at the Hague, nor is it likely that the British fleet will bombard Amsterdam, if the new Ministers of Queen Wilhelmina venture to give expression to the universal conviction of the civilized world as to the methods of barbarism which England is employing in the Transvaal. Holland, Belgium, Switzerland, Denmark, Sweden and Norway were Powers that stood up nobly for national independence and the rights of invaded populations at the Hague Conference. Why should they not collectively address an appeal to the Emperor of Russia, as the author of the Hague Conference, to lay their representations before the other Powers with a view of inducing the British Government to respect the rules of war?

Holland cannot abandon the noble though dangerous *rôle* of the initiative to any other Power. Her people are the descendants of the men who suffered from methods of barbarism in the time of Alva. They inhabit a country every province of which was at one time seared with the Spanish torch, as we have seared the valleys of the Transvaal. The women and children who are suffering in South Africa are of their own kith and kin. The great traditions of the past, the memory of the occasions on which the Dutch people intervened to save liberty in Europe, and even liberty in England, should act as a strong incentive to the generous minds who will shortly be engaged in considering this suggestion. Nor must it be forgotten that while up to the present moment the Government of Mr. Secretary Hay, at Washington, has maintained, under great pressure, a policy of cordiality with England which has cost the American people great searchings of heart and which has exposed them to no small degree of odium, there is a point beyond which even American patience cannot be strained. If the Dutch Government were to appeal to the United States on behalf of outraged humanity in South Africa, they would be able to rest their plea not merely upon the rules of war which were drawn up at the Hague Convention, but upon the explicit declaration of the United

States Government on the subject of the policy of concentration. It is not four years since President McKinley and his Cabinet, with the unanimous approval of the whole American nation, declared war against Spain, and in the official document, which stands on record as the justification for their action in attacking the Spanish monarchy, we find the policy of the Concentration Camp denounced in terms which President McKinley might apply to-day to the Prison Camps of South Africa.

Now the policy of concentration thus gibbeted before the world, as sufficient to justify intervention, even to the extent of war in the name of civilization and of humanity, is the exact policy which has been pursued, and is at this moment being pursued by the British authorities in South Africa. Mr. Hay may turn a deaf ear to the prayers of his own countrymen; he may turn a blind eye to the misdeeds of England in many matters; but it would probably overstrain even his capacity for ignoring facts and abandoning the traditional policy of his country if he were to be confronted by an appeal from the Government of Holland, asking him to support a remonstrance addressed to England on the subject of the prison camps in South Africa. In any case, even if the initiative of Holland failed either to secure the support of the small Powers, or to obtain the aid of the United States Government, the Ministers of Holland would at least have the consolation of knowing that they had not failed in the duty which they owed to their kinsfolk and to humanity, and that the blood of the murdered innocents who are being done to death daily in the Orange Free State and the South African Republic would not lie at their door.

## CHAPTER II.

## THE HAGUE RULES OF WAR.

"All nations must hail with satisfaction the admirable work of the Conference in humanizing the Laws of War both on land and sea."—LORD PAUNCEFOTE.

It is a curious illustration of the lack of precise information which prevails in this country as to what was actually done at the Hague that no complete English translation of the Rules and Usages of War has been published in this country. They are to be found in the English language only in the Blue Book published by Eyre & Spottiswoode for 2s. 10½d., and in Mr. Holls' book on "The Peace Conference at the Hague," which was published in America by Messrs. Macmillan. We have now been at war for nearly two years in South Africa, and it is doubtful whether 10 per cent. of our general officers have ever read the text of the Convention, which in the opinion of their own Government and in that of all the other civilized Governments in the world ought to have regulated their conduct under the ordinary conditions of warfare. It may be well, therefore, in view of the proposed intervention of the Powers for the purpose of restraining the operations of war in South Africa within the limits of civilized warfare, and to suppress the methods of barbarism which have been so forcibly referred to by Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, to print here with brief elucidating remarks the clauses of the Hague Convention which are pertinent to the question now under discussion.

The Convention begins with a Preamble, which explains that the Powers, while seeking means to preserve peace and prevent armed conflicts among the nations, thought it necessary to have regard to cases where an appeal to arms may be caused by events which their solicitude could not avert. That is the precise condition of things which has arisen in South Africa. With the desire of serving even in these extreme cases the interests of humanity and the ever-increasing requirements of civilization, they consider it important, with this object in view, to revise the laws and general customs of war, either with a view to defining them more precisely, or of laying down certain limitations for the purpose of modifying their severity as far as possible. It will be noted that this clause in the Preamble distinctly recognizes that the limitations upon the severity of war increase in proportion to the progress of civilization. Hence, precedents drawn from wars which were fought thirty, forty, or fifty years ago are not available to-day. The world has moved since the burning of Bazeilles, and still more since the operations of Sherman in Georgia and of Sheridan in the Shenandoah Valley.

But to return to the Preamble, the Powers declare that with the object above stated they have adopted a great number of provisions to define and govern the usages of war on land. In their view these provisions, the wording of which has been inspired by a desire to diminish evils of war so far as military necessities permit,

are destined to serve as general rules of conduct for belligerents in their relations with each other and with populations. They admit that it is impossible to foresee all the circumstances which occur in war, or to provide against them in advance. But in all cases not provided for they declare that it must not be supposed that there is no law but the arbitrary judgment of military commanders.

**"In cases not provided for in these regulations the populations and belligerents remain under the protection and empire of the principles of international law, as they result from the usages established between civilized nations from the laws of humanity and the requirements of the public conscience."**

This declaration was the result of the intervention of the British delegate, Sir John Ardagh, who objected to the proposal brought forward by M. Beernaert to omit the discussion of some of the most important articles of the original draft. Sir John Ardagh took exception to this on the ground that such an omission would deprive the belligerents and the populations of valuable rights and privileges important to the weaker nations. M. Martens, the original author of the articles as drafted for representation before the Brussels Conference, made a conciliatory speech, in which he maintained that the object of the articles was not to sanction the disasters of war, but aimed at helping the peaceful and unarmed populations. Sir John Ardagh accepted M. Martens' explanation as good so far as it went, but he regarded it as hardly sufficient protection for the weaker states. Therefore he gave notice of his intention to propose an additional article after No. 11, to the effect that "nothing in this chapter shall be considered as tending to diminish or suppress the right which belongs to the population of an invaded country to patriotically oppose the most energetic resistance by every legitimate means." The upshot, and perhaps the result, of this notice on behalf of Sir John Ardagh was to cause M. Martens to draft the proviso already quoted, denying the right of military commanders to act according to their own arbitrary judgment, and placing the control of unforeseen cases under the law of nations, the law of humanity, and the requirements of the public conscience. This was accepted by Sir John on behalf of his Government, not as quite satisfactory, but as going sufficiently far to indicate that the invaded populations had rights, and that England regarded herself as their natural champion. No one at that time dreamed, least of all Sir John Ardagh, that in less than six months the course of events would have revealed Great Britain in a very different light, and have transformed her from the champion of the rights of invaded populations to the ruthless asserter of the right of the invader to decide according to his own arbitrary judgment what liberties could be taken with the lives and property of the unarmed non-combatant populations. In thus posing as a champion of the rights of invaded populations to offer the most energetic opposition to the invading armies Sir John Ardagh was true to English traditions.

The aim and object of the Hague Rules was that "while recognizing the inevitable consequences of war, they admit them

as a fact and not as a right, and they endeavour to diminish their effect and alleviate the sufferings entailed upon populations by imposing restrictions upon the conquerors in the exercise of the hitherto uncontrolled power which victory may have placed in their hands."

It is evident, therefore, that the Hague Convention was accepted by our Government as a distinct advance in the direction of the humanization of war. By their acceptance of these rules they rendered precedents which had arisen before their adoption inapplicable.

Upon the point as to whether the new rules do impose limitations upon the prerogatives of the conqueror, Sir John Ardagh says that the majority of the delegates, even those of the great military powers, appeared to admit that, although restrictive rules limit and diminish the prerogatives of the conqueror, concessions in this respect have advantages which, on the whole, preponderate over those which arise from the exercise of unlimited arbitrary powers. We may take it, then, that when the British Government ratified the Convention they deliberately assented to an international limitation upon what had previously been the unlimited arbitrary powers of military commanders, who are, therefore, no longer to be left to the exercise of their own unfettered discretion. This point has never been adequately appreciated by public writers upon this question, who continually hark back to what Sheridan did, or what the Germans threatened to do, as if such acts of severity had not been formally considered, condemned, and forbidden in future.

To take an illustration which naturally occurs to my mind at this moment. Sixteen years ago the Criminal Law Amendment Act was passed raising the age of consent from thirteen to sixteen. The fact that before the amendment of the law offenders who had ruined girls between the ages of thirteen and sixteen could not be punished, could not be pleaded to-day as a reason for acquitting a criminal who was clearly guilty under the new law.

I have already quoted Sir John Ardagh's explanation of the proper meaning to be attached to the limitations so far as military necessities permit, and now pass on to the consideration of the Convention under its several heads. The first section relates to belligerents, and in the very first chapter entirely disposes of the nonsense so frequently talked in this country by uninstructed writers who assert that the Boers have no right to be considered belligerents because they are not regular soldiers. The very first article sets forth that the laws, rights, and duties of war apply not only to armies, but also to militia and volunteer corps who fulfil the following four conditions:—

**First. To be commanded by a person responsible for his subordinates.**

**Secondly. To have a fixed distinctive emblem recognizable at a distance.**

(This provision has been ignored on both sides, for the supreme object of all armies in future will be to deprive their men of any fixed distinctive emblems which would be recognizable at a distance. The adoption of khaki marks the recognition of the necessity for invisibility.)

**Thirdly. To carry arms openly.**

**Fourthly. To conduct their operations in accordance with the laws and customs of war.**

In case any persons venture to assert that the Boers have put themselves out of court by not observing the rules and customs of war, it may be well to quote here the following passage from the speech addressed by Lord Kitchener to the Burghers' Peace Committee shortly after his assumption of the supreme command. Speaking of the Boers, he said :—

The leaders need have no fear as to their treatment. All who have fought fairly and in accordance with the recognized principles of war—and *there were very few exceptions*—would on surrendering receive the consideration due to their rank.

Lest there should be any possible loophole open as to the rights of the Boers as belligerents, Article II. was drafted. It runs as follows :

**The population of a territory which has not been occupied, who on the enemy's approach spontaneously take up arms to resist the invading troops without having time to organize themselves in accordance with Article I, shall be regarded as belligerents if they respect the laws and customs of war.**

The third and last article of the first section extends the rules of war to non-combatants :—

**The armed forces of the belligerent parties may consist of combatants and non-combatants. In case of capture by the enemy both have a right to be treated as prisoners of war.**

#### PRISONERS OF WAR.

The second section proceeds to define the rights and privileges of prisoners of war. This section is of considerable importance because, for the first time in modern war, the prisoners consist not only of men armed and unarmed, but also of women and children. The pretext that the inmates of the prison camps were refugees, who sought to take advantage of our generous hospitality by accepting free quarters and free rations behind barbed wire fences, has long been abandoned, even by its original authors. It is now admitted, even by Mr. Brodrick, that the women, children, and even babes in arms are prisoners, and as they are prisoners under no civil law, they must be prisoners of war. They are therefore entitled to the benefit of the Articles from IV. to XX.

**Article IV.—Prisoners of war must be humanely treated. All their personal property except arms, horses, and military papers remain their property.**

It would be very difficult to reconcile this article with the wholesale destruction of all the personal belongings of our unfortunate captives, which was the invariable preliminary to their incarceration in the prison camps.

Article V. limits the right of imprisonment.

**Prisoners of war may be interned in a town, fortress, camp, or any other locality, and bound not to go beyond certain fixed limits. But they can only be confined as an indispensable measure of safety.**

Here again the Hague rules come into sharp collision with the method in which we have treated the women and children whom we have made prisoners, for their confinement was not an indispensable measure of safety. This is proved by the fact that Lord Kitchener has now, under pressure from home, declared that they are all free to go if they have means of subsistence. It cannot, therefore, be said that their

confinement was indispensable, for it has now been dispensed with. Article VI. deals with utilization of the labour of prisoners of war, and need not be quoted here.

#### NO HALF RATIONS.

Article VII. is more important, inasmuch as it stamps the illegality of Lord Kitchener's half-ration system, and brings it under the direct ban of international law.

**Article VII.—The Government into whose hands prisoners of war have fallen are bound to maintain them. Failing a special agreement between the belligerents, prisoners of war shall be treated as regards food, quarters, and clothing on the same footing as the troops of the Government which has captured them.**

Our troops received full rations. They were not divided into two categories. Every half ration issued by Lord Kitchener's orders between Jan. 18th and Feb. 27th was a direct violation of Article VII.

The next five articles relate to questions of parole and to attempts at escape, and it is worth while noting for the information of Mr. Brodrick that prisoners of war who endeavour to escape are not liable to be shot if captured, but only to be subjected to disciplinary measures. This is expressly provided for in Article VIII. Yet on June 15th last Mr. Brodrick told the House of Commons that "all prisoners attempting to escape are liable to be shot."

#### NO STEALING THE PROPERTY OF PRISONERS.

**Article XIV.—A Bureau for information relative to prisoners of war is instituted, on the commencement of hostilities, in each of the belligerent States, and, when necessary, in the neutral countries on whose territory belligerents have been received. This Bureau is intended to answer all inquiries about prisoners of war, and is furnished by the various services concerned with all the necessary information to enable it to keep an individual return for each prisoner of war. It is kept informed of internments and changes, as well as of admissions into hospital and deaths.**

It is also the duty of the Information Bureau to receive and collect all objects of personal use, valuables, letters, &c., found on the battlefields or left by prisoners who have died in hospital or ambulance, and to transmit them to those interested.

Articles XIV., XV., and XVI., so far as can be ascertained, have been absolutely ignored not only in relation to the captives in the prison camps, but in relation to the other prisoners of war whom we have scattered over the world from Ceylon to Bermuda. It would be interesting if a question were asked in Parliament as to the constitution of the Information Bureau which we agreed ought to have been constituted at the commencement of hostilities. Who are its members? What has it done? It would be even more interesting to know what steps have been taken to receive and collect all objects of personal use, valuables, letters, &c., which have been found on battlefields or left by prisoners who have died in hospital and ambulances and to transmit them to those interested. This rule would presumably apply not only to battlefields, but to any place where prisoners of war were taken. If this benevolent resolution

made at the Hague had been acted upon by our Government the sweeping columns which were employed in devastating the country would each have been accompanied by an officer of the Information Bureau, whose duty it would have been to collect all articles of personal use belonging to the women and children whom we carried away into captivity. Instead of any such officers being appointed, the soldiers, doctors, and officers alike appear to have been allowed an absolutely free hand to steal what they pleased, and to destroy all the personal property that they could not carry away.

NO INTERDICT ON OUTSIDE RELIEF.

**Article XV.**—Relief societies for prisoners of war, which are regularly constituted in accordance with the law of the country with the object of serving as the intermediary for charity, shall receive from the belligerents for themselves and their duly accredited agents every facility, within the bounds of military requirements and Administrative Regulations, for the effective accomplishment of their humane task. Delegates of these societies may be admitted to the places of internment for the distribution of relief, as also to the halting places of repatriated prisoners, if furnished with a personal permit by the military authorities, and on giving an engagement in writing to comply with all their Regulations for order and police.

Article XV., if not a dead letter, has been very imperfectly fulfilled. Instead of welcoming the aid of Relief Societies for the purpose of accomplishing their humane task of distributing relief to the prisoners, continually obstacles have been placed in the way of the Societies formed in Holland and elsewhere for the purpose of mitigating the severities of our prison camps. Nurses have been denied admission to the prison camps, passes have been withdrawn, rendering it impossible for charitable persons to supply condensed milk and medicine to the suffering children, while permission has been absolutely forbidden to ladies like Mrs. Bosman to visit the torture camp at Potchefstroom, the alleged reason for such a refusal being that the state of things there was too bad to permit her to visit it.

NO REFUSAL OF OUTSIDE GIFTS.

**Article XVI.**—The Information Bureau shall have the privilege of free postage. Letters, money orders, and valuables, as well as postal parcels destined for the prisoners of war or dispatched by them, shall be free of all postal duties, both in the countries of origin and destination, as well as in those they pass through.

Gifts and relief in kind for prisoners of war shall be admitted free of all duties of entry and others, as well as of payments for carriage by the Government railways.

The whole drift of this article is plain. It is that the Government shall facilitate by every means the despatch and distribution of gifts and relief, which is not exactly the spirit in which the Government has acted in relation to the packages sent from Holland for distribution to the prison camps at the seat of war. The next three articles need not be quoted, as they do not relate to any question under discussion.

## THE REPATRIATION OF PRISONERS.

**Article XX.**—After the conclusion of peace the repatriation of prisoners of war shall take place as speedily as possible.

This article, it is true, relates to some time in the dim and distant future, but it lays down a principle of which it will be necessary to remind the Government when they choose to declare that the war is over. They have already said that it is over several times, but, if they had been speaking the truth, their first duty was to have begun the repatriating of the 20,000 Boer prisoners whom they have transported across the seas. It is well to note that the article does not say "when the treaty of peace is signed," but only "after the conclusion of peace." It will never be possible to find any one in the Transvaal who will sign a treaty of peace, but, if the Boers are not victorious, the time will come when our Government will have to declare that peace has been established in the countries which they have annexed, and then, according to international law, they must immediately begin the repatriation of the 20,000 burghers, who have certainly not learned to love us any the more by their sojourn in Ahmednagher Camp and St. Helena.

## RESTRICTIONS ON BELLIGERENTS.

The second section upon hostilities bears directly upon those methods of barbarism which have been employed by the British army in South Africa. If the framers of those rules had been gifted with the spirit of prevision, and could have seen in advance what our generals would do, they could hardly have framed the rules more peremptorily in order to condemn in advance the methods by which this atrocious war has been carried on.

Article XXII. runs as follows :—

**The right of belligerents to adopt means of injuring the enemy is not unlimited.**

This is the first article of the Magna Charta of what we may regard as civilized war. It runs directly counter to the assertion constantly made by advocates of measures of barbarism, that any means are legitimate. "War is war," said Mr. Brodrick, but war does not confer upon the belligerent a right to adopt any and every means that in his malevolent ingenuity he may devise for injuring the enemy.

## CRIMES EXPRESSLY PROHIBITED.

The articles then proceed to define what means are expressly forbidden. They are set forth in Article XXIII.

**Besides the prohibitions provided by special conventions, it is especially prohibited—**

- (a) **To employ poison or poisoned arms.**
- (b) **To kill or wound treacherously individuals belonging to the hostile nation or army.**
- (c) **To kill or wound an enemy who, having laid down arms or having no longer means of defence, has surrendered at discretion.**

From a correspondence which took place last month in the *Daily News*, this special prohibition is scoffed at by many of the supporters of the present war. They regard it as ridiculous to imagine that a Boer who had been firing up to the last moment can claim quarter by then throwing down his arms and surrendering at discretion. Again and

again in this war cases have been recorded not by enemies or by correspondents, but by the soldiers themselves, in which they have murdered Boers who had laid down their arms and surrendered at discretion. Of these instances I will only quote one or two.

Private C. Chadwick, of the 3rd Grenadier Guards, writing from Modder Camp, says :—

“The Boers cry for mercy when they know they have no chance of shooting you down, but we take no notice of the crying, and stick the bayonet through them.”

Private G. Washington, of the 2nd battalion of the Coldstreams, says of the four battles fought by Lord Methuen—

“In the last two fights we used the bayonet freely, as we advanced, and the Boers appealed for mercy in vain.”

I will not revert to the massacre that took place by the Lancers, when the Boers threw down their arms and pleaded for mercy at the battle of Elandslaagte, for that is too well substantiated and too familiar.

Private W. S. Tarrant, writing from Estcourt to his parents in Swindon, said :—

“When the Boers are caught, they beg for mercy, but they have not been getting much from us of late, only from the officers.”

In the same sense Driver F. Clark, of the 65th Howitzer Battery, writing on Jan. 12th, 1900, to his brother at Bristol, says of the Boers at Magersfontein :—

“I know our troops won't have any mercy on them. It is only the officers that stop the men from killing them right out. I have seen a few put out of their misery.”

The *Montreal Herald* of Dec. 7th published a letter describing what is an aggravated case of refusal of quarter :—

Letter from Bert Holland, Canadian Mounted Rifles, to his parents in Ottawa, describes the shooting of the “worst sniper” in the district. Driven into a boggy spot, and his horse got stuck, “he pitched his rifle away, and threw up his hands, supplicating for mercy. The boys rode up within one hundred feet of the old wretch and commenced firing. At first they shot him through the arms and legs, then through the stomach, and when they thought they had sufficiently punished him they put a volley through his heart, fairly riddling it. Then they proceeded to his house, where they found his son hiding under the bed, with a bandolier on and a rifle in his hand. They took him into camp, and the chances are he will be shot.”

The right to demand quarter at the last moment was denied by General Ian Hamilton, in a speech at Bath, reported in the *Times* of March 11th. Describing the final scene at Elandslaagte, General Hamilton said that the Boers had made a desperate and determined defence. “But when our men came right up to them they stood up. *Of course they had by all rules forfeited their lives then.*” But he went on to say that they didn't use the bayonet, which he seemed to regard as an exceptional and altogether uncovenanted mercy on their part.

A correspondent writing in the *Daily News* on this subject claimed that the point of view of General Hamilton, and indeed of all soldiers as far as the writer knew, was expressed in a passage written by a correspondent, who signed himself J. B. A., in which he described General French's ride into Kimberley. He said :—

“When the Boers had emptied a few saddles, they put up a white flag; *but the work of cavalry cannot be stopped at the goal itself. All the Boers there—some say 32, some say 37—were spitted.*” The writer goes on to defend this.

There is only too much evidence confirmatory of this, but enough has been said to show how general among the rank and file, at any rate, was the impression that they had a perfect right to kill men who had surrendered.

**(d) The declaration that no quarter will be given.**

*Truth* prints an extract from a letter written by Charles Foran, a trooper of the Canadian Mounted Rifles. It bears date Feb. 15th, and first appeared in the *Evening Herald*, St. John's, Newfoundland:—

We took twenty prisoners last Thursday. Three of us took two from a house with their guns, bandoliers, &c. Their mother and sisters begged us to leave them; the old lady put her arms round my neck and kissed me and begged me not to take her sons. They cried and yelled as if we were going to kill them, *which we had a right to do*. If we caught them on the veldt with their rifles *we should have shot them, as we have orders not to take any prisoners*.

**(e) To employ arms, projectiles, or material of a nature to cause superfluous injury.**

This raises the whole question of the use of expanding bullets, which England declared at the Hague were legitimate, and that the injury which they caused was not superfluous. England also sent several million rounds of expanding bullets to Africa, and in the North of the Transvaal and at Mafeking for the first three months of the war no other bullets were used. The Boers afterwards captured many of these bullets, and used them against our troops, but at the beginning of the war President Kruger peremptorily refused to allow any bullets to be used by the Boers save the solid Mauser, which every one admits is the most merciful missile ever used in warfare.

THE WHITE FLAG AND RED CROSS.

**(f) To make improper use of a flag of truce, the national flag, or military ensigns, and the enemy's uniform, as well as the distinctive badges of the Geneva Convention.**

Upon this point the recriminations between the two armies are endless. The only difference between the charges of the Boers and those of the English is that the Boers, recognizing the international character of the Hague rules, brought their complaints formally before the Consuls of the Powers at Pretoria. President Steyn, in November, 1899, in reply to Colonel Kekewich's complaint of the abuse of the white flag by the Boers, emphatically denied that the Boers had even once violated the usages and customs in use amongst civilized nations. He followed up this denial by making a formal appeal to each of the Consuls of foreigners in the Free State to assist in making a thorough inquiry into the abuse of the white flag by the British troops.

THE DESTRUCTION OF PROPERTY.

**(g) To destroy or seize the enemy's property, unless such destruction or seizure be imperatively demanded by the necessities of war.**

The necessities of war must be construed according to Sir John Ardagh's declaration, page 11, and discussion, p. 17. Where private property is seized or destroyed it must be restored or paid for at the end of the war. (See Articles XLVI. and LIII.)

**Article XXIV.—Ruses of war and the employment of methods necessary to obtain information about the enemy in the country are considered allowable.**

All that is necessary to say on this head is that it distinctly differentiates between a ruse of war and the killing or wounding treacherously of individuals forbidden in the previous article.

**Article XXV.—The attack or bombardment of towns, villages, habitations, or villages which are not defended is prohibited.**

Considering that we have burnt down four towns which were not defended, and that we have attacked, blown up with dynamite, or destroyed by arson hundreds—the Boers say thousands—of buildings which were not defended, we need go no further than this article in order to see how well justified was the phrase “methods of barbarism.”

The next two articles relate to bombardment, upon which no complaints have been made on either side.

#### NO PLACE TO BE SACKED.

**Article XXVIII.—The pillage of a town or place, even when taken by assault, is prohibited.**

Considering that our troops have pillaged two-thirds of the farms in the Free State and the Transvaal, it would be interesting to hear how Mr. Brodrick would reconcile our wholesale looting with Article XXVIII. Note also that the French Government only last month issued a new decree formally interdicting the taking of loot by French troops under any circumstances, in order that they may bring the regulations of the French army into accord with the usages of our more civilized times.

The next three articles relate to spies, and need not be quoted here, neither need we trouble ourselves with those relating to the flags of truce.

Article XXXV. relates to capitulations.

Articles XXXVI. to XLI. lay down the regulations for armistices.

#### EFFECTIVE OCCUPATION.

Then we come to a very important section, “On Military Authority over Hostile Territory.” Article XLII. runs as follows :—

**Territory is considered occupied when it is actually placed under the authority of the hostile army. The occupation applies only to the territory where such authority is established and in a position to assert itself.**

This article is very important, for it is a definition of what constitutes effective occupation. It is not enough to overrun a country in order to claim that you are in occupation, much less that you have annexed it. Occupation can only be regarded as effective when the territory is actually placed under the authority of the invaders, and that authority is established and in a position to assert itself. This demolishes with one vigorous blow the whole of the ridiculous pretension that we are in occupation of the Orange Free State and the South African Republic. We are in occupation of the railways and of the towns served by the railways, and of two or three outlying stations, but all the rest of the country is in the occupation of the Boers.

**Article XLIII.**—The authority of the legitimate power having actually passed into the hands of the occupant, the latter shall take all steps in his power to re-establish and ensure, as far as possible, public order and safety, while respecting, unless absolutely prevented, the laws in force in the country.

NO COMPULSION TO TAKE THE OATH.

**Article XLIV.**—Any compulsion of the population of occupied territory to take part in military operations against its own country is prohibited.

This, which is sternly prohibited by the Rules of War, was authorized by the proclamations of Lord Roberts. In the proclamations of May 31st, 1900, he threatened with confiscation and destruction of property all those "who have not done their utmost to prevent" any attack upon property by the Boers. In the proclamation of Aug. 14th Lord Roberts warned the burghers to acquaint Her Majesty's forces with the presence of the enemy upon their farms. Otherwise "they would be regarded as aiding and abetting the enemy." This compulsion upon the inhabitants to act as British spies and to report to the Intelligence Department the movements of the invading army was followed up by a more serious infraction of this Rule in the proclamation of Oct. 24th, which requires all the burghers to do scouting duty every night in the vicinity of their farm, in order to prevent sniping. Failure to comply with this order subjects the farmer (1) to a fine of £200, and (2) to the burning of his farm.

NO COMPULSION TO HELP THE INVADER.

**Article XLV.**—Any pressure on the population of occupied territory to take the oath to the hostile Power is prohibited.

In March, 1900, when Lord Roberts occupied Bloemfontein, he issued a proclamation declaring that the burghers, with certain exceptions, "who are willing to lay down their arms at once, and to bind themselves by an oath to abstain from further participation in the war, will be given passes to allow them to return to their homes, and will not be made prisoners of war, nor will their property be taken from them."

These terms imply that if the burghers did not take the oath to the British Government, binding themselves to abstain from giving any assistance whatever to the Governments of the Republics, they would have their property taken from them. This proclamation, therefore, was a threat that the private property of burghers in the field would be confiscated unless they deserted their own army and took the oath to the hostile Power.

Lord Roberts supplemented this proclamation of March by another proclamation on Aug. 14th, which says nothing concerning the confiscation of property, but which threatens the burghers with transportation if they refuse to take the oath. The exact text of the proclamation is:—

"Further, all burghers living in districts occupied by the British troops, unless they surrender and subscribe to the neutrality oath prescribed by me to meet such cases, will be treated as prisoners of war, and will be transported."

In some cases the oath was enforced by the simple process of presenting a revolver at the head of the unarmed Boer.

NO LOOTING.

**Article XLVI.**—Family honours and rights, individual lives and private property, as well as religious convictions and liberty, must be respected.

Private property cannot be confiscated.

**Article XLVII.**—Looting is formally prohibited. “Le pillage est formellement interdit.”

It is interesting to recall the discussion which took place on the exemption of private property from seizure. At the Conference of 1874, the Belgian delegate, M. Lambermont, declared that the supercession of the old maxim that war should nourish war, by the new formula that pillage was formally forbidden, marked one of the most glorious conquests of civilization. Against the interdict upon pillage no voice was raised, and the unanimous feeling of the Conference was so strong that looting was interdicted even in the case of towns which had been taken by storm.

In 1874, when the rule forbidding destruction of private property was under discussion, the Belgian delegate proposed specifically to add destruction “or burning”; but this was ruled out, on the ground that destruction included burning, though there was no question as to the unanimity of the opinion of the civilized Powers that burning of private property should be placed under the ban of international law.

As to the method in which private property has been respected and looting suppressed in the British army, I must refer the reader to the chapter on the Policy of Devastation.

Proclamations already noticed under the heading of the Exaction of the Oath prove that private property was confiscated by order of the British authorities as a method of compelling the burghers to take the oath of neutrality. But in a war in which every full-grown male is legally enrolled as a member of the national army, and is compelled to take his place in the commandoes, these proclamations amount to a declaration that all private property is confiscated unless the soldiers desert their colours.

NO REQUISITION WITHOUT RECEIPT OR PAYMENT.

**Article LII.**—Neither requisitions in kind nor services can be demanded from communes or inhabitants except for the necessities of the army of occupation. They must be in proportion to the resources of the country, and of such a nature as not to involve the population in the obligation of taking part in military operations against their country.

These requisitions and services shall only be demanded on the authority of the commander in the locality occupied.

The contributions in kind shall, as far as possible, be paid for in ready money; if not, their receipt shall be acknowledged.

Lord Roberts, on Oct. 3rd, issued a proclamation in which he formally proclaims a policy of pillage. In the proclamation published in the *Official Gazette* Lord Roberts says:—“The stock and supplies of those on commando are to be taken without any receipt being given.”

That this was obeyed is proved by the letter of the Deputy Adjutant-General to Lord Roberts, who, writing to Colonel Victor Milward, M.P., says that “sheep, horses, cattle, and carriages were requisitioned by proper authority; payment was only withheld when the owner was still in arms against us”—which is an official admission that whenever the burgher

remained true to his flag his property was confiscated, his farm was pillaged, in utter disregard of Articles XLVI., XLVIII., and LII. Mr. Chamberlain admitted (speech in House of Commons, Dec. 6th, 1900) that cattle were taken without payment or receipt when the owners "*were guilty of acts of war against us*"; in other words, obedience to the orders of their Government to serve in the army of national defence is treated as a crime justifying the confiscation of their private property by the invading army.

In October, 1900, this policy of confiscation was applied more generally by Lord Kitchener, who in that month issued orders for the seizure of the standing crops of all burghers who were still in the field. The official instructions state:—

"These crops become the property of Her Majesty's Government, and no purchase of produce will be allowed from the wives of men who are fighting."

On Oct. 15th Lord Kitchener issued instructions to general officers as follows:—

"All available men, waggons, and tack-gear within reach of your post are to be collected from farms, leaving none whatever for farming or other purposes. Patrols to search all farmhouses, and report the result."

#### NO COLLECTIVE PENALTIES.

**Article L.—No general penalty, pecuniary or otherwise, can be inflicted on the population on account of the acts of individuals for which it cannot be regarded as collectively responsible.**

This, which is forbidden by Article L. of the Hague Convention, was explicitly authorized by Lord Roberts in his proclamation of June 16th. The following official proclamation, No. 602, was issued by him at Bloemfontein:—

"NOTICE.—Whereas by Proclamation, dated the 16th day of June, 1900, of Lord Roberts, Field-Marshal Commanding-in-Chief Her Majesty's Forces in South Africa, it was notified to, and the inhabitants and principal residents of the Orange River Colony and the South African Republic were warned, that whatever wanton damage to public property, such as Railways, Bridges, Culverts, Telegraph Wires, &c., took place, the houses of persons living in the neighbourhood would be burned, inasmuch as such destruction could not take place without their knowledge and connivance. Now, therefore, it is hereby notified for general information that the following sentences have been passed in connection with destruction of Property, Railways, &c., in the Orange River Colony, and have been approved by Field-Marshal Lord Roberts.

"Sentence.—The following persons to have their farms burned." Then follow thirty-eight names with several others unmentioned.

"Sentence.—The following persons to pay a fine of 2s. 6d. per morgen of the area of their farms." Then follow sixty-three names and others not named, almost all in the first list being included in the second list. The fines must be about one-eighth of the whole freehold value of these farms.

Considering that the destruction was usually effected by the Boer

commandoes, acting in accordance with the laws and usages of war and provided with artillery, it is obvious that the unarmed inhabitants within a range of five miles could not have prevented the destruction of the railway for which they were held responsible. This order was issued in June, when the regularly organized armies of the Boer Republics were still in the field. On Sept. 2nd, in a letter to General Botha, Lord Roberts endeavoured to justify his order on the ground that there was no longer any properly organized Boer armies in the Transvaal and the Orange Free State. He says:—

“3. In order to put these views into practice, I have issued instructions that the Boer farmhouses near the spot where an effort has been made to destroy the railroad or to wreck the trains shall be burnt, and that from all farmhouses for a distance of ten miles around such a spot all provisions, cattle, &c., shall be removed.”

In addition to this policy of devastation carried out in the regions where property had been destroyed, other districts were marked out for denudation, in accordance with the following order issued by Lord Kitchener:—

“In order to ensure public security in the country, it is considered advisable that mobile columns should act in certain districts, with the object of putting down any open rebellion, of removing all horses and forage, and of collecting cattle and live stock belonging to all those who, after laying down their arms and taking the oath of neutrality, have again gone on commando, or whose sons may have gone on commando.”

We have, therefore, under the hand and seal of British commanding officers proclamations laying down principles of action which constitute a reversion to the savage practices of the seventeenth century. Against these General Louis Botha, Commander-in-Chief of the Boer forces, has entered his solemn protest, in a letter addressed to Lord Roberts on Sept. 6th:—

It is already known to me that barbarous actions of this kind are committed by your troops under your command, not only alongside or near the railway, but also in places far removed from railways. Wherever your troops move not only are houses burned down or blown up with dynamite, but defenceless women and children are ejected, robbed of all food and cover, and all this without any just cause existing for such proceedings.

The order restricting farm-burning issued in November, and disregarded ever since, will be found in a subsequent chapter.

**Article LIII.**—Any army of occupation can only take possession of the cash, funds, and property liable to requisition belonging strictly to the State, depôts of arms, means of transport, stores and supplies, and, generally, all movable property of the State which may be used for military operations.

Railway plant, land telegraphs, telephones, steamers, and other ships, apart from cases governed by maritime law, as well as depôts of arms, and, generally, all kinds of war material, even though belonging to companies or to private persons, are likewise material which may serve for military operations, but they must be restored at the conclusion of peace, and indemnities paid for them.

Note here that even depôts of arms and war material if belonging to companies or private persons must be restored at the conclusion of peace, and indemnities paid for them. Yet in South Africa the fact that a farm has been used as a depôt of arms is often triumphantly

alleged as ample justification for destroying the farm. Every farm so destroyed will have to be rebuilt by Britain at the conclusion of peace.

**Article LV.**—The occupying State shall only be regarded as administrator and usufructuary of the public buildings, real property, forests, and agricultural works belonging to the hostile State, and situated in the occupied country. It must protect the capital of these properties, and administer it according to the rules of usufruct.

**Article LVI.**—The property of the communes, that of religious, charitable, and educational institutions, and those of arts and science, even when State property, shall be treated as private property.

All seizure of, and destruction, or intentional damage done to such institutions, to historical monuments, works of art or science, is prohibited, and should be made the subject of proceedings.

Of what proceedings it is not stated. If proceedings could be taken against us for the seizure and destruction of private property, the Courts would be busy indeed.

It is evident from this brief survey of the contrast between the Hague Rules and the methods of barbarism employed in South Africa that the civilized nations of the world are therefore face to face with a grave situation created by the deliberate and persistent violation of the recognized usages and rules of civilized warfare. If this reversion to barbarism is allowed to pass by without protest, it will become an established precedent governing the conduct of troops in the field in future wars.

Should this result follow, we may expect to see that in the next European war the private property of every citizen who is summoned to the defence of his country will be confiscated, his house razed to the ground, and his women and children left without food or shelter in a country overrun by a hostile army or herded in pestilential camps where they will die like flies. It will also be regarded as legitimate to menace with ruin or exile all those who refuse to take the oath to the invading Power; and it will further be considered in accordance with the usages of warfare to compel non-combatants to assist in the conquest of their own country by acting as spies for the invading force, by using their utmost efforts to prevent the attacks on the property of the invader, and by undertaking scouting duty for the purpose of discovering and driving off the patrols of their own army. Finally, it will also be considered permissible for the commander of an invading army to burn down every house and destroy all private property in the territory of the enemy against whom he is operating. Such a principle would justify a second devastation of the Palatinate, and authorize atrocities the like of which have been happily unknown in Europe for a hundred years.

There is no need for further pleading of the case for intervention than this demonstration of the reversion Great Britain has made to methods of barbarism, and no more effective method can be conceived of popularizing the Hague Convention than by showing that its provisions may be invoked to check the barbarous practices of which Great Britain is proved guilty before the world.

It is well before closing this subject to note the extraordinary ignorance of our Government as to the Hague Convention. Mr. Brodrick told the House of Commons that the Hague Convention

expressly allows the destruction and seizure of an enemy's property if imperatively demanded by the necessities of war. But no one at the Hague ever dreamed that this clause would be invoked to cover the wholesale devastation of a whole country and the systematic destruction of the private property of non-combatants. But Mr. Brodrick entirely ignores the fact that the destruction of private property, no matter what the military necessities may be, is never authorized unless compensation is paid to the owner of that private property, either in money down or in receipts to be honoured at the close of the war. It may be worth while to quote here the *Times'* report of the questions and answer which brought out this astonishing theory of the Hague Convention, which would be repudiated by all its signatories. I quote from the *Times* of June 14th, 1901:—

DESTRUCTION OF PROPERTY IN THE ORANGE RIVER COLONY.

Mr. Dillon asked the Secretary for War whether he had official information that General Rundle in his march through the north-west of the Orange Free State blew up mills, destroyed ovens, ploughs, and other implements for the preparation of foodstuffs; and whether such proceedings had the sanction of the Government as being in accordance with the customs of civilized war recognized by the Hague Convention.

Mr. Labouchere (Northampton) and Mr. Flynn (Cork, N.,) had questions on the paper relating to the same subject.

Mr. Brodrick (Surrey, Guildford).—No official report has been received as to the facts alleged. They would involve no breach of the Hague Convention, which expressly allows the destruction and seizure of an enemy's property if imperatively demanded by the necessities of war.

Mr. Flynn asked whether that regulation applied to fixed property such as mills and places of that kind.

Mr. Brodrick.—Anything which is likely to enable the enemy to obtain supplies in order to carry on the war comes under the Hague Convention.

Mr. Dillon asked whether the right hon. gentleman held that the poisoning of wells would come under the same rule.

No answer was returned to Mr. Dillon's question. It could only have been answered in one way. The question is a *reductio ad absurdum* of Mr. Brodrick's contention.

Mr. Brodrick relies probably on Sub-section (g) of Article 23, which declares that "it is specially prohibited to destroy or seize the enemy's property," but, adds the proviso, "unless such destruction or seizure be imperatively demanded by the necessities of war." But this probably refers to the property of the enemy, that is, the belligerent State. If, however, it is held to refer to the private property of non-combatants, the articles regulating this are XLVI., XLVII., LIII., LVI., which assert in most uncompromising terms, "No destruction without full compensation." Even when public property is seized it must be protected and administered according to the rules of usufruct. The law is absolute. According to the Hague Rules, no private property can be confiscated in war.

## CHAPTER III.

## HOW THE PRISON CAMPS WERE FILLED—AND EMPTIED.

"These camps are voluntary camps formed for protection. Those who come may go. The protected persons are not prisoners of war."—Mr. Brodrick in the House of Commons, Feb. 25th.

"I think that the great majority of the women and children have gone into the camps by their own desire. Lord Kitchener has informed me that a sufficient allowance has been given to all families, and that they are satisfied and comfortable."—Mr. Brodrick in the House of Commons, March 1st.

SUCH was the mendacious misrepresentation by which Mr. Brodrick deceived the House of Commons as to the real nature of the prison camps which on his responsibility Lord Kitchener had established in South Africa. Every specific statement was false. For months past systematic razzias had been made in all parts of the Free State and the South African Republic, thousands of women and children had been taken by force from their homes, carted across the veldt, and thrown against their will and violent protest into camps where they did not receive a sufficient allowance, and where they were neither satisfied nor comfortable. It is unnecessary to characterize further such a misleading of the representatives of the nation, the majority of whom are only too glad to swallow any glozing falsehood that may blind them to the real nature of the devil's work which is being done in their name in South Africa. A week later Mr. Brodrick repeated his statement, and said that he did not think his questioners need be under any anxiety about these people, that Lord Kitchener had himself gone into the question and found that the people in the laagers were satisfied and comfortable, and we must, said Mr. Brodrick, rely upon his assurance. Curiously enough, within a week of this assurance Lady Maxwell, the wife of the Military Governor of Pretoria, was so distressed by the scenes of misery and discomfort which she had witnessed in the camps under her husband's control that she wrote the following letter to the editor of the *New York Herald* :—

Military Governor's Office, Pretoria,  
March 13th, 1901.  
British Residency.

To the Editor of the *Herald* :—

Will you be so kind as to insert this letter in your paper, so that my appeal may reach my fellow-countrymen through your columns?

I am raising a fund for the purpose of providing warm clothing for the Boer women and children in the refugee camps in South Africa, many of whom are totally destitute and unable to provide against the cold weather which is now setting in.

It is in the name of the little children, who are living in open tents, without fires, and possessing only the scantiest of clothes, that I ask for help. There are something over twenty-two thousand refugees in these camps in the Transvaal alone, all of which are under my husband's (Major-General Maxwell) care. Though I have done what I can for them locally, the question is too large a one to be carried out without outside assistance.

England has been so exhausted by funds in aid of her own soldiers and their wives and children, that I turn to my American compatriots, among whom I know there is much sympathy for the Boers, to ask for assistance for these homeless women and children.

Even if peace should be proclaimed sooner than we hope, it will hardly alter the condition of many of these women, whose husbands have been killed and their homes destroyed by the cruel experiences of war, and any such funds as we may have on hand will be devoted to assisting them to some means of subsistence.

I would be most deeply indebted to any American papers that would kindly copy this letter, so that my appeal may reach all those who have pity on little suffering children.

Contributions of warm clothing, addressed to the Military Governor, Pretoria, South Africa, will be most gratefully received and distributed among them.

LOUISE S. MAXWELL,

Wife of the Military Governor, Pretoria, Transvaal.

This letter is sufficient answer to Lord Kitchener's complacent assurances as to the content and comfort of the inmates of the prison camps. But it was not until months later that the ghastly truth was officially admitted. Mr. Brodrick, speaking in the debate raised by Mr. Lloyd George on June 17th, declared that it was absolutely necessary to clear the women out of the country, inasmuch as every farmhouse became a fresh recruiting agency for the enemy, a depôt from which they got supplies and stores, and from which they obtained information as to the movement of our troops. He still stuck to his story that there were some refugees, but there was no longer any concealment of the fact that of the 60,000 women and children in these camps the immense majority were there against their own will, in camps surrounded by barbed wire and guarded by sentries, exactly as if they were prisoners of war. Even of the small minority who are said to have come in voluntarily, the majority must have been compelled to do so because their farms were burned down, all means of subsistence destroyed, and they were left homeless and foodless upon the veldt. By no excess of charity can we believe that Ministers at home were unaware of the fact that the creation of these camps was the direct result of the policy of devastation and denudation of the country. Lord Kitchener, very shortly after his taking over of the command from Lord Roberts, made what is called a conciliatory address to the Burghers' Peace Committee, in which we had a distinct declaration that the country was to be cleared, in order to destroy the means of subsistence of its inhabitants, lest such means of subsistence should be shared by the commandoes.

Lord Kitchener, after explaining the system of concentration which he was going to adopt, thus declared and defended the policy of denuding or devastating the country. He said:—

It was *essential* that the country should be thus cleared, because *so long as means of subsistence remained in and on the farms*, so long small commandoes were enabled to continue in the field.

He added:—

If the conciliatory methods he was now adopting should fail, he had other means at his disposal, and would find himself obliged to put them in force.

The process of collecting these unfortunate victims under the policy of clearing the country will be found described in detail by those who were the victims and by those also who had the execution of the orders, in the chapter headed "The Policy of Devastation." The following statistics were telegraphed from Bloemfontein by the *Times* Special Correspondent on June 18th:—

Up to the end of May there were twelve refugee camps under the Orange River Colony administration—at Brandfort, Vredfort Road, Norval's Pont, Bloemfontein, Winburg, Springfontein, Heilbron, Aliwal North, Kroonstadt, Harrismith, Kimberley, and Bethulie. A temporary forwarding camp has also been established at Ladybrand. Distributed over these camps are 24,800 odd refugees. Bloemfontein and Aliwal North are the largest, with 4,000 odd each.

As the result of crowding these destitute people into camps, an

epidemic set in, and the death-rate mounted rapidly to the following figures, according to the *Times'* correspondent before quoted :—

The death-rates per 1,000 per annum are as follows :—Brandfort, 74·64 ; Vredefort Road, 162 ; Norval's Pont, 69·96 ; Bloemfontein, 383·16 ; Winburg, 103·2 ; Springfontein, 177·6 ; Heilbron, 25·92 ; Alival North, 34·92 ; Kroonstadt, 159·36 ; Harrismith, *nil* ; Kimberley, 166·8 ; and Bethulie, 49·56. The average for all the camps is 116·76.

This appalling mortality at last stirred even Mr. Brodrick to communicate with Lord Kitchener, and see whether it was not possible to act on Miss Hobhouse's suggestion, and to permit the unhappy women and children to leave the camps if they had any means of subsistence or any friends who would charitably take them in. After much delay, a promise was given that reliable men and women and children who could show that they had means of subsistence would be allowed to leave the camp. As the means of subsistence of most of them had been utterly destroyed before they were incarcerated, it is plain that this concession can do little to empty the camps. The real process of emptying can only be by the gaol delivery of death. The *Daily News* published statistics of the death-rate in the Johannesburg camp for five weeks ending May 13th. The numbers were 10, 15, 30, 24, 26 ; or 105 in the five weeks, which is equivalent to a death-rate of 364 per 1,000 per annum. The reason why they died at this rate is explained in the following letter written by an English lady to the *Westminster Gazette*, in which she describes the camp at Irene, in the neighbourhood of Pretoria :—

When I left Pretoria, on May 23rd, there were 5,000 men and children in the camp at Irene, and 1,000 were reported to be sick. The camp itself is on the site of a camp previously occupied by the British soldiers when they were prisoners in Pretoria. The ground is high and sloping. The camp is surrounded by a fence of barbed wire, and guarded by sentries, who refuse to permit any entrance or egress excepting under military pass. There is no truth in the statement, which to my surprise I find repeated in London, that the women and children went to the camps by their own consent, or are willing to remain there. In almost every case these women, with their little ones, have been taken by force from their homes at a moment's notice. They have not even been allowed to take with them a morsel of food, or to be removed in their own carts. They were taken by the soldiers, and put into open cattle trucks and waggons, while their own beautiful waggons, carts, and vehicles were burnt before their eyes.

The work of the destruction of the goods of these unfortunate people was not by any means confined to foodstuffs or to houses that might shelter the enemy. Thousands of bales of valuable wool, in the Standerton and Ermelo districts, were destroyed by first saturating them with paraffin oil, and then setting them on fire. Bales of wool cannot be used as food.

The impression seems to prevail in this country that the work of farm burning has ceased. Nothing could be further from the truth. When a sweeping operation takes place, and a column goes out for the purpose of denuding the country of supplies, the farm-houses are uniformly first gutted and usually set on fire. When Mrs. Botha received permission from Lord Kitchener to visit her husband she crossed the country in a Cape cart, and stayed each night at a farmhouse en route. After staying five days with her husband she set out to return to Pretoria. She could not come back the way she went, because all the houses which had given her shelter had been burnt to the ground in that brief interval. The work of destruction is usually done in a desperate hurry, for the soldiers are afraid that they may be surprised by the Boers in the midst of their work. They therefore usually set a house on fire or blow up the walls with dynamite if it is strongly built. The crops are destroyed, hundreds of bags of grain are ripped open and trampled under food, fruit trees are cut down, and all this has to be done in a few hours. In most of these houses which have been destroyed are stored excellent tents used by the young people of the Boers when they go out into the veldt to pasture their cattle. If they had been permitted to remove them they would at least have had shelter over their heads, but no woman was allowed to bring with her a tent to protect her from the sun by day or the cold by night. The tents were burnt with all the other furniture of the household ; and, thus beggared and homeless, they were carted off across the veldt, and consigned to the camps, in which they remain prisoners to this day.

When I left Pretoria it was already very cold, even inside my own home. What it must have been outside in the tents on the bleak hillside I shudder to think. Yet that was only the beginning of winter. The number of deaths occurring among the children is appalling. Unless the death-rate is checked, there will be no children in the camp when the winter is over. The women and children sleep on straw mattresses, on the bare ground. The tents are without lining, and they afford hardly any protection against wind, nor have the women adequate clothing. Some were allowed to snatch a blanket from the bonfire which was made of all their goods and possessions, but if they had only been allowed to bring their bedding they would at least have been saved some of the intense misery to which they are at present doomed. As a rule, they were allowed to bring nothing with them but the clothes which were on their backs. There is also hardly any fuel in the camps, it being exceedingly scarce.

While the shelter is miserably inadequate, the rations are very bad. The military authorities have entered into an arrangement with a contractor by which he supplies the camp with food for adults. No special food is supplied for children. The rations supplied by the contractor, which are by no means the regular Army rations, consist of flour that is often bitter and unfit to be eaten. Even if it were good, the women are not accustomed to white flour, and do not like it. They have always used either whole ground meal or Boer meal, but white flour many of them touched for the first time when their day's ration was handed to them. The coffee is hardly deserving of the name, and appears to be made largely of roasted acorns. The sugar is the result of the skimmings of the sugar boiler. The food is quite inadequate for adults, and the poor children simply starve and die. The mortality among children is really terrible. From one farm alone ten children have died, and there are cases in which every child in the family has perished. How can it be otherwise? Children under seven years of age require to have some kind of milk diet. Of course, I am well aware that milk fresh from the cow is impossible. Every milch cow is commandeered for the use of the sick in the military hospital, but that is no reason why children should not be supplied with condensed milk and Mellin's food. The statement that it is impossible to supply condensed milk to the prison camps may be made here, but I never heard of any such excuse in Pretoria. I know of my own certain knowledge that there is any amount of condensed milk in Pretoria. I brought my own baby up on it for the last two years, and never had any difficulty in procuring as much as was wanted, with the exception of the first four months after the occupation of Pretoria. Not only is there any amount of condensed milk in Pretoria, but a Hollander Charitable Committee, which was formed for the purpose of relieving the distressed women and children, actually kept many children in the camp alive by distributing condensed milk and other foods to the little ones; but for some reason or other—I think it was about the month of April—the military authorities withdrew the licence by virtue of which the Hollander Committee had been able to distribute these necessaries of life to the children, with the result that the children are dying like flies. Why they should be deprived of condensed milk and other food necessary to keep them alive I do not know. But you can hardly be surprised if it is misinterpreted by the Dutch. They are aware that the authorities did, as a matter of policy, order that the women and families of the men still fighting should only receive half rations and no meat whatever. Since I came to this country I hear that the rescinding of this inhuman order was attributed to pressure brought to bear on Ministers in the House of Commons. We knew nothing about that in Pretoria. All that we knew was that the foreign Consuls protested against the refusal of full rations to the women and children whose husbands were still on commando, and the distinction was blocked in deference—so we always understood—to the representations of the Consuls. A few nurses are allowed in the camp, but the doctors do not understand the language of many of their patients, and obstacles have been placed in the way of the granting of a licence to the Hollander society which undertook to supply medical relief to the sufferers.

The camps, therefore, were filled by dragooning the women and children within the barbed-wire enclosures after we had burnt their houses and destroyed all their means of subsistence. They are being emptied by the diseases which have been induced by the insanitary conditions and the privations which have been suffered.

Many pages might be filled in describing the difficulties which have been placed in the way of inquiries for information in the House of Commons and elsewhere. Ministers have concealed the facts, they have prevaricated, they have shuffled, and resorted to almost every expedient for the purpose of concealing the dread reality from the eyes of the world. Now, fortunately, the truth is known, and they stand branded

by the strong, true phrase of Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman as having employed "methods of barbarism" in South Africa.

The order given by Lord Kitchener that the women and children whose men are on commando should only receive half rations lends only too much confirmation to the suspicion of the Boers that we are deliberately exploiting their affection for their women folk and their children in order to induce them to desert the cause of their country. So far the effort has been a signal failure. But till the end of time that child's sob in the darkness will be heard when the echoes of our Mafficking have long since died away.

On June 21st the *Daily News* published the following letter of mine under the title "Child Torture, Wholesale and Retail":—

There is a very excellent society in this country, the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children. It has a large revenue and devoted officers, and is directed by the Rev. Benjamin Waugh, a man with a veritable genius for organization, and almost Divine compassion for the sufferings of little children. Every year this society conducts prosecutions in the Assize Courts of this realm, prosecutions directed against those persons who starve, ill-treat, torture, and do to death little children.

I do not know how many thousand years of penal servitude have been passed upon these individual offenders at the instance of this excellent society, but there is probably not a prison in the United Kingdom at this moment whose cells do not contain one or more of the heartless ruffians who have been laid by the heels, thanks to the activity of this admirable society. But what I want to know, what many others are asking, is, why should the zeal of this society be directed solely against cruelty in retail? Why should it expend its great funds and its splendid enthusiasm solely for the punishment of individual offenders who ill-treat, starve, torture, and do to death a little child here and there, while nothing whatever is done to lay by the heels and sentence to penal servitude those infinitely worse criminals who are conducting in South African prison camps a system of cruelty to children which for comprehensive far-reaching torture it would be difficult to parallel in the annals of Mr. Waugh's society? Why should Bill Jones be sent to gaol for six months' hard labour for starving his stepchild, or Mrs. Scroggins shut up for a year for starving children in her baby-farm, when others are allowed to go at large, although it is officially admitted that they are jointly responsible for a policy which has resulted, is resulting, and will continue to result in doing to death by slow torture not ones, or twos, or threes, but hundreds of inoffensive little children? Why should this distinction between child torture, wholesale and retail, be insisted upon any longer?

I cannot conclude this chapter without quoting the letter in which Lord Ripon denounced the abominations of these methods of barbarism:—

Sir,—I have just been reading Miss Emily Hobhouse's report on the so-called refugee camps in South Africa, and I am filled with shame that such things as are there described should be possible in a country under British administration.

This is no political question; it has nothing to do with the justice or injustice of the war; it is a question of the fair fame of our country, and of the reputation for manliness, to say nothing of chivalry, of our people.

Miss Hobhouse is an unimpeachable witness, writing with the utmost fairness, and giving credit, where credit is due, to the officers who have the management of these camps. Speaking generally, it is not the men, but the system which is to be blamed.

For that system no condemnation is too strong. It is cruel in the present, and inconceivably foolish in regard to the future. We now know it in all its details; if we allow it to continue, the full responsibility will be ours. One strong word from the British people will sweep the whole thing away. Have we the courage to speak it?—I have the honour to be, Sir, your faithful servant,

RIPON.

9, Chelsea Embankment, S. W., June 19th, 1901.

Judging by Sir Edward Grey's eulogy of the exceeding humanity (!) of our methods of warfare in South Africa, we have not got that kind of courage. Of the Ananias variety of courage, as the same speech shows, we have no lack.

## CHAPTER IV.

## MISS HOBHOUSE'S REPORT.

MISS EMILY HOBHOUSE, a relative of Lord Hobhouse, of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, was sent out to Africa to dispense relief on behalf of the Fund formed in London for South African Women and Children. She went out in December, 1900, and returned in June, 1901.

Miss Hobhouse's Report is not a report so much as a string of letters and depositions strung together in chronological order. The pamphlet in which this collection of impressions of travel and results of observation is printed consists of 39 pages of close print. Those who are interested in stopping systematized child-murder will read the report in full. Those who prefer to allow the authorities a free hand to use whatever instrument of pressure they desire in order to crush the resistance of the burghers will find an easy excuse for ignoring the evidence collected by Miss Hobhouse because of the singularly chaotic fashion in which it is presented to the public.

The following is a condensed summary of Miss Hobhouse's correspondence from each of the camps which she was permitted to visit in the Cape Colony and in the Orange Free State. She was excluded from the camps in the Transvaal. That privilege was reserved for the Rev. Adrian Hofmyer, whose qualifications to be allowed the free run of the women's camps appear to have been his propagandist zeal on behalf of the invader and the unfortunate lapse which liberated him from the restraint of pastoral work.

Writing on February 27th, Miss Hobhouse reported that Lord Kitchener had twice distinctly refused her permission to go farther north. But on April 22nd she records a hope that she would still be able to get up to Kroonstadt, where "no help has been given." The hope was disappointed. On June 1st she reports that permission to do this, or to go farther north at all, was refused. Her report, therefore, is confined to the camps in the Free State and the Cape Colony which she had time to visit.

THE POPULATION OF THE ORANGE RIVER AND CAPE PRISON CAMPS,  
APRIL 27TH, 1901.

Miss Hobhouse, writing on June 1st, says :—

Still the camps continue and increase. Below are the returns up to the end of April

for those under O.R.C. control. By this time those numbers are already left behind. More and more families are to be brought in.

## REFUGEE CAMPS, O. R. C.

(Return for the week ending April 27th, 1901.)

	Whites.	Natives.	Total.
Brandfort ... ..	1,022	2,147	3,169
Vredefort Road .. ..	1,373	1,859	3,232
Norval's Pont .. ..	1,596	—	1,596
Bloemfontein ... ..	3,689	1,459	5,148
Winburg... ..	1,145	—	1,145
Springfontein ... ..	3,011	—	3,011
Heilbron... ..	1,304	1,219	2,523
Aliwal North ... ..	1,786	1,859	3,645
Kroonstadt ... ..	2,502	—	2,502
Edenburg ... ..	—	3,048	3,048
Harrismith ... ..	275	252	527
Kimberley ... ..	1,200	200	1,400
Bethulie ... ..	1,125	—	1,125
Ladybrand ... ..	361	—	361
Krommelleboog... ..	23	—	23
	20,412	12,043	32,455

Increase during the week : 2,897.

A letter from the Governor of Pretoria tells me of 25,000 in Transvaal camps.

## 1.—BLOEMFONTEIN CAMP.

To this camp Miss Hobhouse paid several visits between January 26th and June 1st. Writing on the latter date, she says:—

During the past three months effort has undoubtedly been made to improve the Camps, but difficulties of transport, scarcity of supplies and tents, limited means for outlay, tie the hands of those in authority. Added to this, the incompetence of some Superintendents and an over-centralized system which impedes good work that could and would be done by capable and resourceful local heads of camps. Another bar to advance is the interlacing of civil and military authority, and the unfitness of most military men (however good their intentions) for positions which involve the ordering of the lives of women and children.

Thus the improvements have in many cases been swamped, partly by these things, and partly by the rapid influx of people. For instance, a great blunder was made by bringing an extra 2,000 people into Bloemfontein Camp, already known to be unhealthy and full of fever.

## FIRST IMPRESSIONS.

The following extracts from her notes are given in order of date:—

Jan. 26.—The exile camp here is a good two miles from the town, dumped down on the southern slope of a kopje, right out on to the bare brown veldt, not a vestige of a tree in any direction, nor shade of any description.

Imagine the heat outside the tents, and the suffocation inside! We sat on their khaki blankets, rolled up, inside Mrs. B.'s tent; and the sun blazed through the single canvas, and the flies lay thick and black on everything; no chair, no table, nor any room for such; only a deal box, standing on its end, served as a wee pantry. In this tiny tent live Mrs. B.'s five children (three quite grown up) and a little Kaffir servant girl. Many tents have more occupants. On wet nights the water streams down through the canvas and comes flowing in, as it knows how to do in this country, under the flap of the tent, and wets their blanket as they lie on the ground.

## EXPECTANT MOTHERS.

Mrs. P. is very brave and calm. She expects her confinement in about three weeks, and yet has to lie on the bare ground till she is stiff and sore, and she has had nothing to sit on for over two months, but must squat on a rolled-up blanket. All her baby linen was in readiness at home, but all is lost. This is but one case, quite ordinary, among hundreds and hundreds. The women are wonderful. They cry very little and never complain. The very magnitude of their sufferings, indignities, loss, and anxiety seems to lift them beyond tears. These people, who have had comfortable, even luxurious homes just set themselves to quiet endurance and to make the best of their bare and terrible lot; only when it cuts afresh at them through their children do their feelings flash out. Mrs. M.,

for instance. She has six children in camp, all ill, two in the tin hospital with typhoid, and four sick in the tent. She also expects her confinement soon. Her husband is in Ceylon. She has means, and would gladly provide for herself either in town or in the Colony, where she has relations, or by going back to her farm. It was not burnt, only the furniture was destroyed; yet here she has to stay, watching her children droop and sicken. For their sakes she did plead with tears that she might go and fend for herself.

#### MURDER TO THE CHILDREN.

I call this camp system a wholesale cruelty. It can never be wiped out of the memories of the people. It presses hardest on the children. They droop in the terrible heat, and with the insufficient, unsuitable food. Whatever you do, whatever the authorities do—and they are, I believe, doing their best with very limited means—it is all only a miserable patch upon a great ill. Thousands, physically unfit, are placed in conditions of life which they have not strength to endure. In front of them is blank ruin. There are cases, too, in which whole families are severed and scattered, they don't know where.

If only the English people would try to exercise a little imagination—picture the whole miserable scene. Entire villages and districts rooted up and dumped in a strange, bare place.

To keep these camps going is murder to the children. Still, of course, by more judicious management they could be improved; but, do what you will, you can't undo the thing itself.

#### THE DAILY RATION.

Now I must tell you their rations:—

Daily—

Meat,  $\frac{1}{2}$  lb. (with bone and fat).

Coffee, 2 ozs.

Wholemeal,  $\frac{3}{4}$  lb.

Condensed milk one-twelfth of tin.

Sugar, 2 ozs.

Salt,  $\frac{1}{2}$  oz.

That is all, nothing else to fill in. Once they sometimes had potatoes, seven potatoes for seven people, but that has long been impossible. Soap also has been unattainable. All say, if released, they would make a living somehow, and shelter beneath the ruined home would be as good as these often rotten tents. It is hard enough that, but countless children's lives would be saved thereby.

#### WATER SUPPLY AND MILK.

We have much typhoid, and are dreading an outbreak, so that I am directing my energies to getting the water of the Modder River boiled. As well swallow typhoid germs whole as drink that water—so say doctors. In spite of small water supply, and it is very spare, all the tents I have been in are exquisitely neat and clean, except two, and they were ordinary, and such limitations! Next we want forage for the cows. Fifty have been secured, but they only get four buckets of milk out of the poor starved things. Some people in town still assert that the camp is a haven of bliss. Well, there are eyes and no eyes. I was at the camp to-day, and just in one little corner this is the sort of thing I found. The nurse, underfed and overworked, just sinking on to her bed, hardly able to hold herself up, after coping with some thirty typhoid and other patients, with only the untrained help of two Boer girls—cooking as well as nursing to do herself.

#### SCENES IN CAMP.

Next, I was called to see a woman panting in the heat, just sickening for her confinement.

Next tent, a six months' baby gasping its life out on its mother's knee. The doctor had given it powders in the morning, but it had taken nothing since. Two or three others drooping and sick in that tent.

Next, child recovering from measles, sent back from hospital before it could walk, stretched on the ground, white and wan; three or four others lying about.

Next, a girl of twenty-one lay dying on a stretcher. The father, a big, gentle Boer, kneeling beside her; while, next tent, his wife was watching a child of six, also dying, and one of about five drooping. Already this couple had lost three children in the hospital, and so would not let these go, though I begged hard to take them out of the hot tent. "We must watch these ourselves," he said. I sent — to find brandy, and got some down the girl's throat, but for the most part you must stand and look on, helpless to do anything, because there is nothing to do anything with.

#### "LIKE FADED FLOWERS."

Then a man came up and said: "Sister" (they call me "Sister," or "Di Meisie van England"), "come and see my child, sick for nearly three months." It was a dear little

chap of four, and nothing left of him but his great brown eyes and white teeth, from which the lips were drawn back, too thin to close. His body was emaciated. The little fellow had craved for fresh milk; but, of course, there had been none till these last two days, and now the fifty cows only give four buckets, so you can imagine what feed there is for them. I sent — for some of this, and made him lay the child outside on a pillow to get the breeze that comes up at sunset. I can't describe what it is to see these children lying about in a state of collapse. It's just exactly like faded flowers thrown away.\* And one has to stand and look on at such misery, and be able to do almost nothing.

#### CAMP LIFE BAD FOR GIRLS.

Feb. 17.—I want very much to take the best class of young girls out of camp and place them in boarding schools. The mothers cannot bear to see their girls, month after month, idle in these camps. The life seems to be very demoralizing, owing to its purposelessness, and this camp in particular is quite bad for young girls. We all feel that. I can rig them out with clothes from my store.

#### THE RESOURCEFUL DUTCH.

The Dutch are so very full of resource and so clever. Then, too, they can make their own soap with fat and soda, and, though the Government permit has at last come to supply soap in the rations, yet it might be cheaper to supply the materials and employ a few women to make the necessary supply for the camp.

At last, too, the tanks have come, and now we shall be able to begin boiling all the water before giving it out, and I hope this may lessen the fever. The throat complaints are, the doctor says, owing entirely to the bad smells resulting from the bad sanitary arrangements. One side of the camp the odour is unbearable.

I have been interested in a little baby, born this week in a wee tent so poverty-stricken. The mother asked me to name it with a name suitable to the times. I suggested "Dolores," or, what I thought would be better still, "Hope." But the sad, sick mother can see no hope, and chose "Dolores" for her little child. As she could not do her washing, we got another woman to do it for her, and the father cobbled that woman's shoes by way of payment. In Irene Camp I hear there have been 200 cases of midwifery alone, so the baby outfits come handy everywhere.

I am very worried about the lack of mattresses, but if the military will give me hay or straw I will set the people to work to make them themselves. No other kind of stuffing in any quantity seems obtainable, and so, failing this, the majority must lie upon the hard ground.

#### REFUGEES OR PRISONERS ?

Feb. 18.—We want a larger supply of tents, so that there may be less overcrowding. At present it averages six to a small bell-tent, which, of course, means nine and ten in many cases. The capacity is under 500 cubic feet; so even for six persons, imagine the atmosphere at night!

It is such a curious position, hollow and rotten to the heart's core, to have made all over the State large, uncomfortable communities of people whom you call refugees, and say you are protecting, but who call themselves prisoners of war, compulsorily detained, and detesting your protection.

Those who are suffering most keenly, and who have lost most, either of their children by death or their possessions by fire and sword, such as these reconcentrated women in the camps, have the most conspicuous patience, and never express a wish that their men should be the ones to give way. It must be fought out now, they think, to the bitter end.

#### AFTER-EFFECTS OF CAMP LIFE.

Feb. 22.—In the morning word came that the four girls I selected had been let out of camp, and allowed to come to the boarding school, and I had to go and see they were clothed and shod. Poor girls, they said it had been such a treat to sleep in a bed once more after seven months in the camp on the ground. One of them, who had a slight tendency to deafness, has now become, I fear, permanently deaf in both ears; she caught such chills from the draughts and damp coming under the tent. Consequences such as this, which don't appear in the death-rate or anywhere else, will be very common results of this whole camp system.

\* Miss Hobhouse's simile recalls Ebenezer Elliott's famous hymn:—

When wilt Thou save the people?  
 O God of mercy, when?  
 Not kings alone, but nations?  
 Not thrones and crowns, but men?  
 Flowers of Thy heart, O God, are they:  
 Let them not pass, like weeds, away—  
 Their heritage a sunless day.  
 God save the people!

## THE NEED FOR CLOTHING.

Feb. 27.—I am beginning to think a good deal about the future, and my best plan of procedure. The demand for clothing is so huge that it is hopeless to think that the private charity of England and Colonial working parties combined can effectually cope with more than a very small proportion of it. The Government recognize that they must provide necessary clothes, and I think we all agree that, having brought these people into this position, it is their duty to do so.

So far, five camps are, and have been, open to me; but several more remain in this State, and very large and important ones in the Transvaal.

## DISEASE.

You know we have three tin hospitals, each containing sixteen beds, always full—for men, women, and children—also two or three marquees for other cases.

The Sister has done splendid work in her domain, battling against incessant difficulties. She has worked in this camp since its formation. When I tell you we have already had some seventy cases of typhoid, besides an epidemic of measles, pneumonia, tonsillitis, and other cases, you will realize what the strain on her has been.

## OVERCROWDING THE CAMP.

April 22.—Here I am again in Bloemfontein. I arrived yesterday, taking two and a half days from Kimberley. The camp grows so vast and so rapidly that I feel it is almost impossible to cope with it. Here there are now about 4,000, or double the number I left six weeks ago. At Springfontein I left a manageable little camp of 500, now it has swelled to 3,000, and as we passed along yesterday morning there was a trainload in the station of 600 more. It was pitiable to see them—massed in the train, many of them in open trucks. It was bitterly cold, and I was wrapped in a thick grey Welsh shawl. All night there had been a truly torrential downpour of rain, and water stood everywhere in pools. On the saturated ground they were trying to dry themselves and their goods.

Some women were pushing their way to the platform to try and buy food for their children. The soldiers would not permit this. I expostulated. The men said they were sorry, but they had to obey orders.

## CHILDREN CRYING FROM HUNGER.

A nice-looking woman with a very white face spoke to us. They had been travelling two days and no food given, and the children were crying with hunger. I gave my friend some money and told her to buy all the food she could in the station and take it down to them, and devote the day to it, leaving alone church. The girl promised, and I had just time to jump into my train. I would have stayed myself and seen to it, but my permit was not stamped to break journey, so I could not do so. I know she will do her best. She is only fifteen, but very womanly. As there was not additional shelter of any kind at Springfontein, I heard the whole lot were to be sent on to Bethulie. For now a camp is forming there. It is endless and hopeless. I have just heard from a man who met the same trainload at Edenburg that four children died on the journey.

If only the camps had remained the size they were even six weeks ago, I saw some chance of getting them well in hand, organizing and dealing with the distress. But this sudden influx of hundreds and thousands has upset everything, and reduced us all to a state bordering on despair.

## RESULTS OF "SWEEPING" MOVEMENTS.

More and more are coming in. A new sweeping movement has begun, resulting in hundreds and thousands of these unfortunate people either crowding into already crowded camps, or else being dumped down to form a new one where nothing is at hand to shelter them.

About food, too. The superintendent of a camp is getting in rations for such a number, and suddenly 200 more mouths are thrust in upon him, and things won't go round. Last Saturday 200 or 300 families were without meat in Bloemfontein Camp for that day and Sunday. This would not matter if there were an alternative food, but there is only the ordinary supply of coarse bread to fall back upon, with black coffee and sugar.

No wonder sickness abounds. Since I left here six weeks ago there have been 62 deaths in camp, and the doctor himself is down with enteric. Two of the Boer girls who had been trained as nurses, and who were doing good, are dead too.

## 2.—NORVAL'S PONT CAMP.

Feb. 10.—I am glad to be able to report that the camp at Norval's Pont is far superior to the camp at Bloemfontein. The spot chosen is a slope, surrounded by hills, about a mile from the station.

The population of this camp is about 1,500, and it is well laid out in rows and streets with numbers, so that you can find your way about. There are only a few marquees, and

those are put in a row on one side to accommodate some of the true refugees. As these people are quite in a minority, it is wholly absurd to call the camps by their name, "Refugee"; and even they can hardly be said to have come quite of their own free will, only they were told their particular town was to be emptied out, and they would starve if they did not come. The people who were in reality taken as prisoners of war occupy the centre and great bulk of the camp, and beyond a broad space on the other side are pitched the tents of the single men, people who have surrendered, or such like.

Much to my delight, I found that there was much less overcrowding in Norval's Pont, and that each tent was supplied with a low wooden bed, a mattress, bench, table, utensils. Consequently, the whole aspect of the people was different. There was no violent outbreak of sickness, though I understand that almost all the cases nursed in the hospital had died. This I attribute (and so did the people) to bad nursing.

The heat was very great. Even the large, cool, breezy marquee was often 104 degs. Fahrenheit, and the bell tents, with single canvas, rise to 108 to 110 degs. The doctor said he could not use his clinical thermometer in them, as it would not go down at all.

Sir Alfred Milner is sending round the Education Commissioner to arrange about schools in each of these camps. In Norval's Pont two large marquees are set apart, and mistresses duly certificated are available from the camp population.

Now the need of clothing for the children is very great. The Commandant had been so unhappy about the clothelessness that he had ordered £150 worth and given it out.

The death-rate, though very high, is not so high as in Bloemfontein. Less overcrowding and better water.

### 3.—ALIWAL NORTH CAMP.

Feb. 12. —Poor little Aliwal, with only 800 inhabitants, had, within four weeks to receive and provide for a population of nearly 2,000, nearly three times its own number. And it does them credit, for it is well organized, and, as far as that goes, the misery is alleviated. The Commandant could not speak highly enough of the people—their patience, good conduct, and uncomplainingness under their privations and losses. His camp can barely be called a prison; he has no soldiers or sentries, and most of the people are free to walk into the town, or to receive visits from the people in the town, without passes. The towns of Smithfield, Rouxville, and Zastron are all here, and, so far, only two deaths have taken place. But the camp has only been forming a month. Everything is beautifully arranged and provided for. He gives two tents to large families, and offers sail cloth to any who care to put up wooden framework to make extra rooms. He encourages them to come and state their needs. The rations here are better. Compressed vegetables were given, and 1 lb. of potatoes twice a week (and potatoes are 6d. per lb., or eight times as dear as in London).

Clothing for children is much needed, especially now the school is likely to open, and I chose some women to receive and distribute the goods. The great lack has been soap. Neither in this camp nor in Norval's Pont has any been supplied, and those without money have been unable to wash clothes or person properly. Men don't think of these things unless it is suggested to them; they simply say, "How dirty these people are!"

I bought some soap in the town, and sent it in for immediate needs: also material for the women to make up themselves. Many have brought their sewing machines when they saved nothing else.

### 4.—SPRINGFONTEIN CAMP.

Mar. 4. —I have several days' work here. It is a comparatively small and recent camp, but the people are poorer and more utterly destitute than any I have yet seen.

The Commandant is a kind man, and willing to help both the people and me as far as possible, but his limitations (and mine), through lack of material, are woeful. Fortunately, I brought three cases of clothing with me; but it is a drop in the ocean of their needs. All day I have sat in a farmhouse stoep, and had each family in succession brought to me from the tents, fitting each in turn with clothes as far as possible, just to cover their nakedness. Each woman tells me her story.

#### THE MOODS OF THE CAPTIVES.

Some are scared, some paralyzed, and unable to realize their loss; some are dissolved in tears; some, mute and dry-eyed, seem only able to think of the blank, penniless future; and some are glowing with pride at being prisoners for their country's sake.

A few bare women had made petticoats out of the brown rough blankets—one had on a man's trousers. Nearly all the children have nothing left but a worn print frock, with nothing beneath it, and shoes and socks long since worn away. Shoes we must have—it is hopeless until we can procure rolls of sole leather and uppers, lasts and sprigs, and then men can make veldtschoone, a simple kind of rough shoe.

I clothed about fifteen families to-day, or about sixty persons, and hope to do the same to-morrow, and I may collect some old clothes from the residents here to help us along.

## NO FUEL.

The crying need in this camp is fuel. Wood there is none; a little coal is served out, but so little that many days the people cannot cook at all, and their rations are raw meat, meal, and coffee, so each of these needs fire. At Springfontein you would at once realize the hopelessness of getting any fuel—a bare veldt, covered with short sparse vegetation, ringed by barest kopjes, stony, and without even grass. Except at the farm where I sat there are no trees, and these have been grown with greatest pains. So there is nothing to burn.

Women to whom I have given nothing, nor offered to, and who neither ask nor wish for charity, express deepest gratitude for the bare tidings that any English people feel for them. They are very sore at heart, and are really helped by the knowledge that we understand at all the aspect of affairs as it appears to them.

## ADDING INSULT TO INJURY.

They are tired of being told by officers that they are refugees under the "kind and beneficent protection of the British." In most cases there is no pretence that there was treachery, or ammunition concealed, or food given, or anything. It was just that an order was given to empty the country.

One woman told me to-day that a waggon load of her goods was brought away by soldiers, and followed their convoy. She begged hard for a favourite chair of hers, but was refused.

Though the camps are called refugee, there are in reality a very few of these—perhaps only half-a-dozen in some camps. It is easy to tell them, because they are put in the best marquees, and have had time given them to bring furniture and clothes, and are mostly self-satisfied and vastly superior people. Very few, if any of them, are in want.

## 5.—KIMBERLEY CAMP.

March 13.—All to-day I have been in the camp—fortunately only twenty minutes' walk from my hotel. It is the smallest in area that I have seen. The tents too close together, and the whole enclosed in an 8-foot high barbed wire fencing, which is supposed to be impregnable, and cost £500. Sentries at the gate and walking inside. No nurse; an empty, unfurnished marquee, which might be a hospital; overcrowded tents; measles and whooping-cough rife; camp dirty and smelling; an army doctor, who naturally knows little of children's ailments; fuel, almost none.

A terrible evil just now is the dew. It is so heavy, and comes right through the single canvas of the tents, wetting everything. The night I slept at Norval's Pont I found this out for myself. Though in a marquee, with double canvas, all my clothes were damp through, and these people have to put their things on saturated day after day. All the morning the gangways are filled with the blankets and odds and ends, regularly turned out to dry in the sun. The doctor told me to-day he highly disapproved of tents for young children, and expected a high mortality before June.

April 13.—I have just returned. At Warrenton I found only about 150 people left, the rest were being sent on. At the station were two trainloads full of them, quite half in open coal-trucks, all piled up and wedged in with such goods as they had been able to bring. They were tired and hot.

There were 240 packed in, and they followed us and our armoured train. On arriving here I saw the superintendent, who was at hand to meet the arrivals. He told me that, after begging, borrowing, and buying, he had scraped together twenty-five tents for the 240 persons. So there will be more overcrowding. I ran up to one of the committee women to see if anything could be done in the way of getting them a meal after their journey, but nothing had been known of their coming, and late Saturday night we could not tell where to turn to procure either fuel or kettles, &c., to supply such an inrush of people.

April 15.—Seven children died here the few days I was at Capetown, and two since my return besides.

Mrs. — has been taken to the hospital in town. She is very ill from a kick in the stomach by a drunken soldier. Something internal. He was punished, I believe, but that does not cure her.

April 15.—All the afternoon I was kept in Mrs. L.'s tent by a downpour of rain. Half the tent floor was a pool of water, which the Kaffir boy was vainly trying to bale out. Two pails caught the pourings from the tent door. All around and above it dripped, making pools on the bedding and on the mats as we sat huddled up—two Kaffirs, five children, Mrs. L., and myself—in the steamy atmosphere, till I began to turn sick, as I generally do in the tents. When it rains at night, as often it does, it drips on them all night, and makes little pools on the beds. No wonder children sicken and die. The cloth of the tents seems so very thin and poor.

6.—**MAFEKING CAMP.**

April 9.—I felt obliged to come, having learnt there were about 800 women in this camp, besides those at Warrington, en route. I felt uneasy, for I could learn no details at all about the people here, except that the camp was four miles out of town. At Warrenton there were only about 370 pushed into the church and school, as tents are well-nigh unobtainable, but now, only yesterday, many hundreds more have been brought in there—in fact, the town of Hoopstadt.

April 10.—To-day I have been out in the camp all day. I had to take a Cape cart and drive out, for it is full six miles—a lonely, lonely spot. Mafeking itself feels like the very end of the world, and the camp seems like driving six miles into space. There are 800 or 900 people, and it is the oldest of all the camps I have visited. In fact, nearly a year old. They were very glad to see me. The hospital nurse said it had put new life and courage into her. She was feeling so downhearted about it all. I found some very nice people whose relations I had made friends with in Bloemfontein camp and also in Kimberley. It is quite interesting sorting out the people and telling them where their relations are. The Mafeking camp folk were very surprised to hear that English women cared a rap about them or their suffering. It has done them a lot of good to hear that real sympathy is felt for them at home, and so I am glad I fought my way here, if it is only for that reason. The camp was specially interesting to me as being the first I have seen under Transvaal rule. For rations of food and fuel it is far the best I have seen, but, as usual, no soap. The superintendent is a Scotchman, thoroughly capable and suitable, but, alas! likely to be removed ere long. The rations are better than in any other camp—accidentally, too long a story to dilate upon in this short letter. They are badly off in blankets (many have none), also soap and candles and clothes, and in having no one to visit or care for them from the outside. For miles round no habitation can be seen, and Mafeking folk are too bitter to do anything to help them.

## THE DANGER OF GENERALIZATIONS.

March 10.—I wish you could impress on the English public that one can't speak generally about these camps, or the conditions of the women therein. One is very different from another. I mention this because there is likely to be any amount of assertion and contradiction on this subject. All are different, and the amount of discomfort depends upon various matters. (Firstly) The Commandant. (Secondly) Natural conditions, proximity of wood and water. (Thirdly) Distance from a base and stores. (Fourthly) Presence of public opinion. (Fifthly) Date of commencement.

The earlier camps, of course, had opportunities of getting many necessaries, which are no longer attainable.

## MISS HOBHOUSE'S SUMMARY.

June 1.—Among the things pressing hardest, and which tend to undermine the health and constitutions of the women, are the following:—

**Lack of Fuel.**—Imagine three small sticks of wood 18 inches long, or small stony coal enough to fill the well of a soup-plate, for daily cooking. The weekly baking becomes almost impossible, and often the meat cannot be cooked and the bread is sodden because underbaked.

In Kimberley charity has supplied the bulk of the fuel. In Springfontein mist (dried manure) ekes out the scanty ration, and the women root up a small weed to try and heat their clay-built ovens. Oil stoves would help if oil in any quantity could be procured.

**Lack of Beds and Mattresses.**—Only a few have beds or mattresses—the great majority lie on the ground. Even if each tent had a bed it would not accommodate more than one or two inhabitants of the tent. Meanwhile the damp of the ground, the occasional streams of rain that run through, the draughty night air coming beneath the flap of the tent, combine to lower the health of the children and to kill them off in convalescent and delicate stages.

**Lack of Soap.**—This necessary was not given in any camp. After much urging and requisitioning, a very occasional and quite insufficient quantity is now doled out.

**Diet.**—The food is monotonous and does not suit children. Some vegetable diet is greatly needed. It presses hard when the meat (as often) is maggotty and the coffee coppersy and undrinkable.

**Water.**—In Bloemfontein the supply is insufficient, and it is also bad. The clothes of thousands have for months been washed in a small dam of stagnant water only occasionally freshened by rain. It is foul. Many other camps need washhouses.

**Overcrowding.**—This is very great. Privacy is impossible. In some camps two, and even three, sets of people occupy one tent, and 10, and even 12, persons are frequently

- herded together in tents of which the cubic capacity is about 500 c.f. In Mafeking and Norval's Pont this trouble is not nearly so bad.
- Shoes, Clothes, and Blankets.—At first khaki blankets were plentiful. Now they are getting scarce, and there is much need in various places. The nights are very cold. Warm clothes are universally wanted. Those people burnt out are, of course, very bare, and have only been relieved by English, Colonial, and Dutch help. Recent importations have been allowed to bring more with them of both bedding and clothes. Quite recently the Government has provided a little flannelette and dress stuff. Shoes are needed everywhere.
- Sanitary Accommodation.—This is very inadequate to the number of people. They are separate for men and women, but otherwise wholly without privacy, open to the sun and the rain. When properly looked after by the authorities, all is sweet and clean; but elsewhere, notably Bloemfontein, the effluvia is terrible, making it impossible to approach within fifty yards, unless with nose and mouth tied up. The effluvia reaching one side of the camp makes those tents at times unbearable, and has resulted in tonsillitis and various throat troubles. The people feel these places a terrible degradation.
- Each camp has now rough but useful little hospitals. Many necessaries were lacking in these, which I have supplied. The death-rate in most of the camps is high. In Bloemfontein it is terrible; 172 deaths had occurred up to the date of my leaving. On Sunday, April 28, fifteen persons died in that camp. It figures out to about 25 per cent.
- The camp life is felt to be purposeless and demoralizing. Mothers are anxious to get young girls out of such an atmosphere if the means were forthcoming to place them in boarding schools.
- Education is now provided in a partial way for some of the children in some of the camps. Accommodation cannot be got for all. This is due to the energy of Mr. Sargent, Education Commissioner. There have been a few abortive attempts at recreation here and there, but most lack heart to enter into them. Something should be done in this direction.
- To sum up: There is no doubt that the general discomfort could be vastly alleviated by attention to the points mentioned, but it should be clearly understood that they are suggested only by way of amelioration. The main thing is to let them go. The ruin of most is now complete, but let all who have friends or means left go. Above all, one would hope that the good sense, if not the mercy, of the English people will cry out against the further development of this cruel system, which falls with such crushing effect upon the old, the weak, and the children. May they stay the order to bring in more and yet more. Since Old Testament days was ever a whole nation carried captive?
- The following recommendations are those which were forwarded by me to the War Office by request of the Rt. Hon. St. John Brodrick.—I have, &c.,

EMILY HOBHOUSE.

June, 1901.

---

### RECOMMENDATIONS.

Having, by the kindness of Lord Milner, been enabled to visit various women's camps, and bring succour to the people therein detained, I venture to urge the following improvements:—

1. In view of the hardening effect of imprisonment upon the hearts and resolution of the women—of the imperfect supply of tents or other shelter—of the scarcity of food—the difficulty of transport—and the appalling effect of camp life upon the life and health of the people, and in support also of recent statements made in the House of Commons, I urge:
  - (a) That all who still can, should be at once allowed to go, viz. :—
    - (a) Those who, themselves penniless, yet have friends and relatives in Cape Colony;
    - (b) Those who have means and could support themselves in Cape Colony, or in towns on the line;
    - (c) Those who have houses in towns to which they could go;
    - (d) Those divided from their children who wish to find and rejoin them.
  2. Free passes into towns for all equally wishing to find work there.
  3. Equality of treatment, whether the men of the family are fighting, imprisoned, dead, or surrendered.
  4. In view of the size of the camps, the sickness and mortality, a resident minister in every camp, or free access to any one living close by.
  5. That, considering the countless difficulties ahead, and the already overcrowded state of the camps, no further women or children be brought in.
  6. That, considering the mass of the people are women, and seeing the success in

organization of the matron at Port Elizabeth, a matron, conversant with both languages, be appointed in every camp. Many would undertake this voluntarily. I do not consider this so necessary in the case of Norval's Point.

7. That, considering the congested state of the line, and the great lack of fuel, any new camp formed should be in a healthy spot in Cape Colony, nearer supplies and charitable aid.

8. That, because all the above, and much more, including the economical distribution of clothing, demands much careful organization, detailed work, and devoted attention, free access should be given to a band of at least six accredited representatives of English philanthropic societies, who should be provided with permanent passes—have the authority of the High Commissioner for their work—be absolutely above suspicion, and be responsible to the Government, as well as to those they represent, for their work. Their mother-wit and womanly resource would set right many of the existing ills.

9. That the doctor's report on the state of health of the children in Bloemfontein Camp be called for and acted upon.

10. That the women whose applications are appended be at once allowed to leave. Their health is failing under the long strain. All three are good, respectable women.

By request of the Right Hon. St. John Brodrick, these recommendations were forwarded to the War Office.

I would like to add one more recommendation, which I consider of great importance, and which was unfortunately omitted from those sent to Mr. Brodrick.

11. That, considering the growing impertinence of the Kaffirs, seeing the white women thus humiliated, every care should be taken not to put them in places of authority.

---

Miss Hobhouse's report was published on June 19th. On the previous Monday a debate had taken place in the House on Mr. Lloyd George's motion on the subject of the Relief Camps.

On the following Monday Miss Hobhouse was to have spoken at the Queen's Hall in London. Owing to the violence of the organized attack made by the Jingoës upon the Merriman-Sauer meeting held in the same place on the previous Wednesday, the lessee of the hall cancelled his contract and refused to allow Miss Hobhouse the use of his building. A proposal to allow her to speak at Westminster Chapel was frustrated by the veto of the church committee, which feared to expose the chapel to the attack of the mob. So, thanks to one thing and another, no place could be found in which Miss Hobhouse could plead for the children, not even in the buildings dedicated to the worship of Him who said, "Let the little ones come unto Me." Silenced in London by the brutality of the many and the cowardice of the few, Miss Hobhouse began the tour of the Provinces. At Oxford she addressed a meeting under the protection and support of Principal Caird. There she was not disturbed. But at Hull and at York the police and local authorities capitulated to the menace of ruffians, who foamed at the mouth at the mere suggestion that it might be possible to avoid torturing children to death in order to bring pressure to bear upon their fathers. So long as they were only Boer children it did not matter. At Scarborough and at Southport Miss Hobhouse was able to speak in the Friends' Meeting House; and at Manchester also her meeting was a great success. As the result of the representations, the Unionist ladies in London began tardily to collect subscriptions for the relief of misery which their party had created, and, as already stated, a reluctant assent was at last wrung, at the beginning of July, from Lord Kitchener for the release of those prisoners who had friends to whom they could go.

## CHAPTER V.

## THE POLICY OF DEVASTATION.

"All wanton destruction and injury to peaceful inhabitants are contrary to British practice and traditions, and will, if necessary, be vigorously repressed by me. It is the desire of Her Majesty's Government and my intention to conduct this war with as little injury as possible to peaceful inhabitants and private property."—LORD ROBERTS' letters to the Presidents, February, 1900.

LAST December I published a pamphlet entitled "How not to make peace," an examination of the evidence concerning farm burning in the Transvaal and the Orange Free State. Since that time seven months have elapsed, and during the whole of that period the diabolical work has been going on unchecked. Concerning this there is absolutely no manner of doubt. The official telegrams from Lord Kitchener, which report little else than the despatch of columns to sweep and denude the country, with details as to the number of head of stock they have been able to steal as the result of their cattle-raiding operations, make it impossible for any one who cares to ascertain the truth to doubt what has actually taken place. Farm burning in a strictly technical sense may have been forbidden. Farm destruction in the real sense has gone on merrily all the time. Nothing more distinctly showed the moral and political decadence of Mr. Henry Asquith than the passage in his speech at Liverpool Street Hotel, in which he referred to farm burning as a thing which had lasted for some weeks last year, and had been finally put a stop to. His only reason for saying this was that the War Office published an absurdly imperfect return, giving particulars of some 630 farms which had been burnt in five months last year and the two months of this. As the return contained no particulars of any farm burning after February, it was complacently assumed that no farms had been destroyed since then. As a matter of fact, it is probable that more farms have been destroyed since February than there were before. The proof of this is to be found first in Lord Kitchener's telegrams as to the operations of his destroying columns; secondly, in the letters of soldiers engaged in that work of devastation; and, thirdly, in the official report made by the State Attorney Smuts, as well as several letters from Boer sources. The result, we are assured by correspondents in Pretoria, is that two-thirds of the two Republics are a blackened waste to-day. Before proceeding to describe the farm destruction that has gone on since the issue of the War Office return, it may be well to note that that return effectually demolishes the plea which is put forward in justification of house burning. In only 77 cases is there even a pretext that any justification existed for the burning of farms. In over 500 cases the farms are described as being burnt for reasons which are in flat contravention of the Hague rules. The Government stand convicted of employing methods of barbarism on their own official returns. But this return is obviously incomplete. It is not brought up to date, and we have records of many farms which have been burnt by our troops about which the report is discreetly silent. The farms that have been burnt by our

troops may be numbered by thousands, not by hundreds, and the fact that a man trained in the law and as expert as Mr. Asquith with the sifting of evidence will allow himself to be befooled by so transparent a fraud as the War Office return is a melancholy illustration of mental and moral wreck.

Figures, however, convey very little idea to the mind. In order to understand what the policy of devastation is, it is better to give concrete instances. Now, fortunately, we have a very vivid picture of one of the most famous instances of barbaric methods—the burning of an entire town, which is painted by one who took part in it, and who entirely believed in the necessity of the work in which he was engaged. I therefore quote here extracts which cannot be accused of being garbled, inasmuch as they carefully preserve all the passages, the omission of which led to such a dishonest outcry on the part of the Jingo press. Lieut. Morrison is a Canadian editor, who contributes at great length to his paper a description of the burning of the town of Dullstroom. A local correspondent summarizing this lengthy epistle, for *New York Sun*, omitted any reference to the fact that Lieut. Morrison approved of the work of devastation he described so graphically, and also omitted to mention that when the houses were burnt there were several explosions of gunpowder, showing that the Boers of Dullstroom, like the rest of their burghers, had obeyed the law which required them to keep a certain quantity of powder in their houses. The letter *in extenso* deepened rather than weakened the effect of the summary. But I have not room for it here, and I therefore make my own extracts from the original, and defy the most hypercritical person to say that in doing so I have garbled or suppressed anything necessary to enable the reader to understand either the crime which Lieut. Morrison described or the sympathy with which he recorded the criminal act:—

Belfast, Nov. 21.—Bright and early on Tuesday morning we marched off. Colonel King commanded the advance and General Smith-Dorrien the main body. We were bound for the Stelpoort Valley, north of here, and were to come round by Wilpoort and Dullstroom, half-way to Lydenburg. The valley is about six miles wide and twenty-five miles long. It is fertile and well watered, and full of fine farms. When our little force used to go out on reconnaissance and get into the rough and rocky hills overlooking the valley the well-fed burghers would swarm out of the farms in the valley and have a bit of fun with us. That we did not have many casualties was not their fault. It was also some of them who killed two of the Dragoons by dressing up in khaki and enticing them over to a kopje, where they shot them down in cold blood.

The advance guard had just got into the hills when our friends were out as usual with their tails up, sniping from behind every rock, but when the guns and pom-poms came into action at a gallop and soused the kopjes with shells, they discovered that this was the time they were up against it. They retreated from one position to another, and we followed them up all day, the advance guard on the right and the main body on the left. About four o'clock the main body debouched into the big valley, and we sat on the hills and covered the transport, becoming in turn the rear guard towards night. The heavy rain on our faces wakened us several times during the night, and it was a very wet, muddy, stiff and bedraggled crew that old Sol sighted when he peeped over the hills in the morning.

There were a number of very fine farmhouses near by, and we saw the Boers leaving them and making off. The Provost Marshal came up from the main body, removed the Boer women and children with their bedding, and proceeded to burn or blow up the houses. From that on during the rest of the trek, which lasted four days, our progress was like the old-time forays in the Highlands of Scotland two centuries ago. The country is very like Scotland, and we moved on from valley to valley, "lifting" cattle and sheep, burning, looting, and turning out the women and children, to sit and cry beside the ruins of their once beautiful farmsteads. It was the first touch of Kitchener's iron hand. And we were the knuckles. It was a terrible thing to see, and I don't know that I want to see another trip of the sort,

but we could not help approving the policy, though it rather revolted most of us to be the instruments. I am glad to say the artillery were exempt from it. During the days that followed it was our duty to go into action on the hills and cover with our guns the troops who did the burning. We did not get anything like a fair share of the loot, but I don't think my men objected to that. We burned a track about six miles wide through these fertile valleys, and completely destroyed the village of Wilpoort and the town of Dullstroom. The column left a trail of fire and smoke behind it that could be seen at Belfast. Some of the houses that were too solidly built to burn were blown up. Away off on a flank you would see a huge toadstool of dust, rocks, and rafters rise solemnly into the air and then subside in a heap of *débris*. Ten seconds afterwards a tremendous roar like the report of a cow gun would rend the air, and the dust would blow slowly away. Many of the houses were surrounded by beautiful gardens abloom with roses, lilies, and hollyhocks, and embowered in fruit trees. As we sat by the guns we could see a troop of mounted men streaming off towards a farm. With my glasses I could see the women and children bundled out, their bedding thrown through the windows after them. The soldiers would carry it out of reach of the flames, and the next moment smoke would commence curling up from the windows and doors—at first a faint blue mist, then becoming denser, until it rolled in clouds. The cavalry would ride rapidly away, and the poor women and children, utterly confounded by the sudden visitation, would remain standing in the yard or garden watching their home disappearing in fire and smoke.

The column marched into Wilpoort, a pretty little village surrounded by hills. The guns were placed on the hills and trained on the place, and the cavalry and mounted infantry rode into it and looted and burned every house and shop except one belonging to a British subject. The flour mill was blown up. We sat on the hills and watched the scene. When the mounted troops rode back they looked like a gang of dissolute pedlars. Their saddles were hung like Christmas trees with shawls, clocks, mandolines, tea-kettles, lamps—every sort of imaginable article—besides chickens, ducks, geese, sucking pigs, vegetables, and agricultural products galore. All we gunners got was the merry "Ha, ha!" and such unconsidered trifles as the bloated cavalry chose to donate to us.

On the third day out, about nine o'clock, the guns were called up in a hurry to a position overlooking a pretty valley full of farms and cattle. Then the General sent the R.C.D.'s down, and they got 150 head of cattle and 500 sheep. As cattle are worth £20 a head and sheep £4 each to the army, it was calculated that our half-hour's work netted about £4,000 to the British Government. The cavalry were sniped at a good deal in getting in the stock, and they burned all the houses in the valley. As soon as we were through the General pushed on my guns, and left the cavalry to lift the cattle.

On the following morning the troops were up long before daylight and marched off at four o'clock. In the dim, early dawn the column, nearly all mounted troops, moved swiftly north. We were going to sack and burn the town of Dullstroom. Nobody who was there will ever forget that day's work. About seven in the morning our force seized the town after a little fight. The Boers went into the hills around, and there was nobody in the town but women and children. It was a very pretty place, nestling in a valley. The houses had lovely flower gardens, and the roses were in bloom. It was another grand place, but I wasn't introduced to Evangeline if she was there. We seized a hill overlooking the main street and placed all the guns on it, while the cavalry galloped through and skirmished up the hills beyond. The Boers drove in our outposts on the flank and began sniping the guns, and we all had to turn loose, and amid the row of the cannonade and the crackle of rifle fire the sacking of the place began. First there was an ominous bluish haze over the town and then the smoke rolled up in volumes that could be seen for fifty miles. The Boers on the hills seemed paralyzed by the sight and stopped shooting. When the lull came General Smith-Dorrien invited the artillery officers to go down into the place with him on a sort of official appearance—"just tell them you saw me" style of thing. The main street was full of smoke and fiery cinders, and as the flames belched out in huge sheets from one side or the other our horses shied and plunged from side to side. The place was very quiet, except for the roaring and crackle of the flames. On the steps of the church were huddled a group of women and children. The children didn't seem to know whether to cry or be diverted by the spectacle. The women were white, but some of them had spots of red on either cheek, and their eyes blazed. Not many were crying. The troops were systematically looking the place over, and as they got through with each house they burned it. Our Canadian boys helped the women to get their furniture out, much as they would do at a fire in a village at home. If they saw anything they fancied they would take it ("muzzle not the ox that treadeth out the corn!"), but they had not the callous nerve to take the people's stuff in front of their faces. Of course, in the case of shops it was different. But you should see the Royal Irish on the loot! They helped the people out with their stuff by heaving bureaus bodily through the window, putting pickaxes through melodeons. You'd hear one yell, "Begorry, Tim, here's a noice carpet. Oi think o'll take it home for the odd woman. Lind a hand here." R-r-r-ripp! Up would come a handsome pile carpet in

strips. And so the work went on, the officers standing by laughing at the fun their men were having.

I went into a very pretty little cottage standing in a rose garden on a side street. The M.R.'s and R.C.D.'s were looting it, but really helping the woman out with her stuff more than sacking the place. The woman was quite a good-looking ladylike person, and the house was almost luxuriously furnished. She was breathlessly bustling about saving her valuables and superintending the salvage operations. A big Dragoon would come up to her and say in a sheepish sort of way, "What you want next, lady?" And she would tell them, and they would carry it out. As I stood looking on she turned to me and said, "Oh, how can you be so cruel?" I sympathized with her, and explained it was an order, and had to be obeyed. She was a good-looking female in distress, and had quite the dramatic style of an ill-used heroine. I certainly was sorry for her—we all were—until the house began to burn, and a lot of concealed ammunition exploded, and nearly killed some of our men. But all the same, it was a sad sight to see—the little homes burning and the rose bushes withering up in the pretty gardens, and the pathetic groups of homeless women and children crying among the ruins as we rode away.

I prefer to leave this as it stands, as the best picture yet painted of the realities of war in the period covered by the War Office returns. Since farm burning was officially supposed to have been countermanded, our military operations have consisted in little but the despatch of columns in various directions with instructions to sweep the country. These columns have gone out, and they have swept the country; they have swept it clean of cattle and sheep, of its old men, its women and children. They have, however, spared most of the Kaffir kraals, a fact which entirely destroys the value of the policy of denudation, for as there are 700,000 Kaffirs in the Republics, each of whom requires at least two good meals every day, it is quite obvious that the Boer commandoes would never be at a loss for mealies and meat so long as there is still in the country sufficient food to nourish forty times their number of Kaffirs. The policy of sweeping the country was therefore absolutely futile from the point of view of depriving the Boer commandoes of means of subsistence. It may have had a certain value in removing women who could be relied upon to give information to the commandoes as to the movements of the British troops.

It is alleged against them that they gave false information to the English and true information to their husbands and brothers—possibly a fault in ethics, but one which hitherto has never been regarded as justifying the recourse to such methods of barbarism as the destruction of their personal property and their concentration in prison camps, without adequate shelter, food, or drink.

Before the sweeping movement began, the women were supporting themselves. They asked no charity from us; they did not seek to be protected against the Kaffirs, with whom they appear to have lived on very good terms. They fed themselves and brought up their children. They were non-combatants in the strictest sense of the word. They had no arms with which to fight, nor did they manifest the slightest disposition to take the field. Nevertheless, in order to carry out a policy of calculated brutality, and to bring pressure to bear upon the burghers still in the field by harrying and torturing their unfortunate women folk, columns were sent out in all directions with instructions to sweep the country bare. It was the devastation of the Palatinate repeated at the beginning of the Twentieth Century on a smaller scale, and will consign Lord Kitchener and the generals who obeyed his orders to the same infamy as that which has overtaken the generals who obeyed the orders of Louis XIV.

The following is the official report of the State Attorney Smuts as to the result of those sweeping operations in the district which he traversed:—

*25th June, 1901.*

TO HIS EXCELLENCY STATE PRESIDENT STEYN,  
District Potchefstroom, South African Republic.

MOST HONORABLE STATE PRESIDENT,

In order to inform your Honour about the unlawful deeds committed by the enemy in the Western Districts of the South African Republic, I wish to give here a detailed account of some facts, mentioning at the same time such particulars as will serve to illustrate those facts. Your Honour is, of course, to understand that these particulars are derived from evidence, given on oath or from my own observation, so that I can fully vouch for the truth of them; they, however, do not constitute a complete account of all the shameful and unlawful deeds committed by the enemy, but are only a few typical cases picked from an amount of material to enumerate and explain which time is wanting at this moment.

During the month of July, 1900, I was ordered by my Government on a mission to the Western districts, which had been cut off from communication, and from Balmoral Station set out for these districts, but on arriving at Elandsriver I was recalled by the Government on pressing business and returned by way of Bronkhorst-spruit Station. I arrived here late in the afternoon, and on that high tableland, and in the middle of winter, it was so fearfully cold that I could hardly bear it, and (according to official reports) many English soldiers had succumbed there with starvation.

Hardly had I arrived there when I saw in a cart two women and some little children. One of the two women was an old widow, Mrs. Heethling, of Tierpoort, the mother of the magistrate (landdrost) of Klerksdorp and a relation of the much-respected clergyman of Stellenbosch; the other woman was her daughter, Mrs. Du Toit, and her children. Their condition in that bitterly cold climate was most heart-rending, without any food, without any covering, with nothing else about them than the clothes on their backs. That old mother, over seventy years old, told me the following things:—Tierpoort, some weeks before, had been lying in the field of battle during the skirmishes which preceded and followed upon the great battle of Donkerhoek, and from the fields behind her dwelling our men had repeatedly fired at the patrols of the enemy. At one time some Boers had ventured as far as the house, and she had given them a loaf of bread; when one evening, a short time afterwards, an English officer came to the house with a strong patrol, and gave her notice to leave her house that same night, as the place was to be burnt down next day. She called his attention to the fact that this would be impossible, as all the cattle and the carts had been taken away by the English, and that she was too old to walk so far to the Boer lines. He remained inexorable, and was so impudent that the grown-up daughter of Mrs. Du Toit, who was her interpreter, told him that he ought to feel ashamed of persecuting defenceless women and children in this way, instead of fighting the Boers; upon which he in so far forgot who he was that he gave her a slap in the face. As he would not give in, a messenger was sent to the Boer forces that same evening to fetch an ox-cart. When the cart had arrived, this knightly officer (an Australian Colonist) refused to allow that some food, clothes, or bedclothes were put in the cart, and in this wretched condition these poor people had to be sent out into the wide, wide world.

Her youngest son, Johannes Heethling, was with me at the time, to her immense joy, and whatever I could spare I gave her to take along with her on her journey to the Boschveld. Having only in the world her daughter and grand-daughter, she was, however, full of courage and strong in faith, and even succeeded in cheering us up. I do not mention this as a rare case, but as a typical example of what happened in hundreds of other places. And this happened even in the best of times, when Lord Roberts was still negotiating about a general surrender, and was full of expectation about reaching his aim. But when circumstances made it certain for him that we would keep up the struggle till we had regained our liberty or had died arms in hand, it was then as if all bounds of civilization and humanity had been broken down by a wild hurricane of unbridled rage. I cannot help acknowledging when I reflect upon what I

witnessed and experienced since in the Western Districts, that I feel altogether incapable of giving a description, even a mere sketch, of the devastation brought about by the enemy, of the pains and troubles caused to us, which have touched the hearts of our women and children as if they had been pierced by steel.

Let me take as an example that part of the Krugersdorp district situated between the Magalies and Witwaters Mountains, one of the most beautiful, most fertile, and best cultivated parts of South Africa—the so-called “fillet.” When I came to these parts in July, 1900, the land was green with an uninterrupted series of cultivated fields, gardens, and charming houses and farmsteads, a delight to the eye and a proof of what our people had been able to do with respect to agriculture in half a score of years. And now? It is now a withered, barren waste; all the fields have been destroyed, the trees of the gardens cut down or pulled up by the roots; the homesteads burnt down, the houses in many cases not only destroyed by fire, but blown up by dynamite, so that not a stone was left unturned; a refuge only for the night owl and the carrion birds. Where, till lately, everything was life, prosperity, and cheerfulness, death now reigns. No living animal, no woman, no child, not even a Kaffir woman, is seen but with the traces of anxiety, misery, nay, even with starvation distinctly visible in their faces.

Oh! one needs the pen of Isaiah or Jeremiah to be able to describe these horrors of destruction. I do not think that since the Thirty Years' War, and the devastation caused by the armies of Tilly and Wallenstein, such a scene of total destruction has been witnessed. How often did not I sit on the slope of the Magalies Mountain and looked down upon the many farmhouses, fields, barns, and warehouses as one pool of fire and flames. When we wanted to fight the enemy the troops took refuge behind the dwellings in which our women and children were, so that it was impossible for us to fire at them. When we wanted to shell their camps they were full of our women and children kept there as prisoners. Old men with one leg in the grave were taken prisoners in the basest manner, and driven along before the troops. Old Gert Oosthuizen, seventy-five years old, was sent with a flag of truce by General Clements to General de la Rey, to request us to confer with him (General Clements) on the state of the country. When we positively declined to hold such a conference on the state of our own country, devastated by them, he flew into such a passion that he ordered the old man to be seized and to be removed as a prisoner of war. Even children of twelve years have been taken prisoners because, in the opinion of the English officers, they looked too much like warriors!

And what about the women and children and all the sufferings to which they were and are subjected. In the pocket of an English officer, who fell in the battle of Boschfontein, we found a letter in which he explained in a humorous way how he went about it. In a house he had called together the women and children, and they were compelled to hear “God save the Queen” being played on the piano accompanied by the singing of the soldiers who were present, after which the house and whatever it contained was set on fire. In another place the women and children were told that they might remove from the house whatever they liked, as the house was to be burnt down. They were allowed one hour to do it in. When they had carried everything outside and piled it up there, this lot was also set fire to. And this officer tell these things as if it was regular fun. Truly the insults, the scorn, and the contempt, the brutal rudeness with which these innocent women and children were treated, and are being treated, is beyond a man's comprehension. If this is the way in which officers think and act, what then is to be expected from a common soldier, what from a Cape boy and the Kaffirs, with whom the English army is infested. Very often women and children are beaten by them, as the case of the old widow, Mrs. Coetzee, of Elandsriver, Rustenburg, whom, after the English forces had left, I found in a deplorable condition on account of the ill-treatment she had undergone.

But I want to give another example of the manner in which our dear country is being destroyed.

In the afternoon, when I had left the said Mrs. Coetzee, I went on a scouting tour along the Doornriver (a tributary of the Elandsriver) which part had been visited by the army of General Douglas the day before. I was well acquainted with this neighbourhood, as our forces had encamped here when the camp of Col. Hore on the Elandsriver had been besieged. It was night, but the moon was out when I arrived there. My companion and myself came to the first farm and found that everything had been destroyed and burnt down here. I came to the second farm, which had not been burnt down, but plundered, and not a living soul was left in it.

That same night I passed by some twelve or fourteen farms successively which had all been burnt down or looted, and not a living being left behind in them. Truly, it rather resembled a haunted place than that magnificent thriving neighbourhood which I had left in all its glory about a month before. Late that night I lay down to sleep in the yard of one of these deserted places. Everything in that beautiful property (Doornkom) had been plundered and destroyed. The owner, Mr. Mostert, is a prisoner of war in St. Helena, his wife has died, and some little orphans were left behind alone, with some relations. But even their innocence and youth and the exile of their father could not satisfy the vindictiveness of the enemy. That night I reflected upon the fate of the many families of that district, and in the morning I found to my great surprise that they all appeared from the neighbouring hills like badgers from the ground. The women had fled with their children to those parts, thinking that they were safer with the wild beasts in the fields than under the protection of the colours and armies of Her Majesty. Some of the women in these parts had been cruelly ill-treated, even dishonoured by Cape boys, and had fled among the mountains on horseback for three hours, hiding themselves at Boksloof. Truly, the most unfeeling person cannot help shedding tears of compassion at this state of unutterable misery. That afternoon I rode from Boksloof to Costerriver, where I met with the same devastation and misery. No fewer than seven families, consisting of women and little children, were living under the trees in the open air, in spite of the heavy rains. Even the tents had been burnt. This destruction had been brought about by Generals Paget and Plumer.

By entering into all the details I should only tire your Honour. I shall, therefore, mention only one more case, to show how the women and children were treated by the forces of these generals. When the enemy had come to Groenfontein on the Costerriver, brave old Luikes van de Werve, contrary to the orders of General De la Ray, had ridden on and had fired at the hostile scouts from behind a wall on his estate. His wife left the house to beg him not to do so. She was at once fired at and mortally wounded in the head. Her husband then carried her into the house and was immediately taken prisoner there, and transported to the English camp. The dying woman and her three or four little children were then carried out of the house, and the house and its surroundings burnt down. She was taken to the house of one Mr. Albert Bibier, where also a number of little children were. She had scarcely arrived there when the house was plundered in a most horrible manner, so that not a rug or pillow was left for the dying woman, and all the food destroyed by fire. Mrs. Bibier protested against this violence and asked the soldiers how she was now to feed her little ones and the little orphans, to which they replied, "Let the Boers look after you and give you food." She was allowed to save only a double handful of mealie flour from the flames.

The estate of Cijferfontein, belonging to Paul Grobler, had not only been looted and burnt down, but his mother-in-law, an old widow over seventy years of age, who more than once had told me the sad story of the pioneers of Natal and the Orange Free State, whom she had accompanied at the time of settling there, had been ill-treated in a horrible manner. The soldiers had thrown her down on the ground, partly undressed her, and then by violence taken from her all the money and objects of value which for safety's sake she had hidden about her person. They left her for dead. I mention this case only as an example of what happened almost daily and is happening still. I see from the foreign newspapers that the way in which the refugee women and children of burghers in the field are being treated causes considerable excitement in the Colonies, but if abroad a hundredth part of what is done within the boundaries of the Republics were known, all Christendom would rend their clothes and utter an immense cry of woe in the face of heaven, as a protest against this indescribable barbarity.

What surprises me most is the unflagging perseverance of these ill-treated women, and this perseverance, so tragic, so immensely grand, owes its origin not only to an unshaken belief in the great future which is before our people, but a firm reliance on God. A person one day told me that while an English officer was setting fire to a house and all it contained, the woman called her children around her and began to sing in the open air, "Praise the Lord with cheerful voice." Even that officer was moved to tears, but he was obliged to finish his task. The very martyrs of the Middle Ages never showed a more firm belief and greater perseverance than the Boer women of to-day. There is no doubt that such women must be one day the mothers of a bold race. I can declare to have heard almost everywhere that the

enemy now rather relies on the consequences of starvation than upon his own arms. Therefore articles of food are being destroyed, carriages, carts, mills, ploughs, tread and thrashing machines are burnt, weirs broken down, even the coffee-mills broken to pieces, because the women used them to grind their corn. It will be of no use to the enemy to do all this, and our women will rather live the life of termites than give up their struggle for their sacred rights on account of hunger.

It is not necessary that I should enumerate the names of all the other parts and districts that have been ravaged. The whole country, the whole Republic has been destroyed to the root. The same scene of annihilation and misery is seen everywhere. Poor women and aged ones are seen everywhere flying with small herds of cattle which the enemy has not yet been able to seize; diseases reign freely, for our Boer doctors have been taken prisoners, and all their medicine taken by the enemy; and the doctors who were on the English side have gone over to the enemy.

I shall therefore speak of another subject—namely, how the enemy avails himself of the help of Kaffirs to make our women and children suffer greater pains. I do not intend to speak about the old story how natives were enlisted and imported by the British officers along the Western and Northern borders of the land, which your Honour knows has been proved by documents now in possession of the Government. The massacre at Derdepoort, and at other places on the Western border, have been surpassed by what has happened since May last. The Kaffir chiefs having joined the enemy, crossed the Western border and committed murders and cruelties from which even English soldiers shrank back. The consequences were that the greater part of the Western and Northern districts had to be abandoned by us, because the women and children were constantly exposed to being murdered. Camps for the women were then made in the central parts of the Western districts, and the women provided with carts, tents, food, and placed under the protection of old men who were less fit for military service. It was expected that the enemy, from a sense of pity, which is even found with animals, would have left these camps for women alone. But not at all! He repeatedly marched upon them, burnt the carts, tents, and the food, seized the age 1 guards who had not been able to fly, and caused so much misery as cannot be described. And where he did not appear himself, the enemy sent the Kaffirs, or rather the hordes of Kaffirs that always formed a wing of the British forces, and completed the work of destruction which had been undertaken by the English troops. Many a time it was my task to visit these women camps, and I cannot help saying that I had never expected to be a witness of such scenes of misery—the women and children suffering, almost every one of them, from malaria, fever, and other diseases, in consequence of privations and bad food, without physicians, without medicine, without any consolation in this world, almost without any clothes, and, after hostile raids, without any food at all. And all these women did not belong to the poorer and lower classes, but some of them belonged to the richest families of our country. But privation could not curb the spirit of these noble martyrs, and by one consent they advised me and the burghers to persevere to the bitter end.

It would bore your Honour if I were to enter upon details; I only wish to give an example to show how the British and the Kaffirs co-operate in this satanic work. Commandant Riekert, of Rustenburg, is much hated by the enemy, as your Honour will know. His wife, a lady of whom our people ought to be proud, had established a hospital at Rustenburg at her own expense, where she nursed some fifteen sick and wounded persons, left behind there by Commandant C. R. De Wet on his memorable march from Bethlehem. Whether this was an unpardonable sin in her I do not know, but the fact is that when, some time afterwards, the enemy re-took the village of Rustenburg he invented for her a refined chastisement, and sent her into exile with her daughters and daughters-in-law seven miles beyond Rustenburg, to the farmstead Paardekraal, in the neighbourhood of the robber Kaffirs. Here lived no other white being than an old greybeard, Hermitage. She complained in vain that she had no food, and should have to perish with hunger or be murdered by the barbarians. The English paid no attention to her complaints, for it was this very punishment they had invented for her. After having suffered immensely, she was one night obliged to fly to save her life, and a woman in nightdress got as far as Rustenburg informing the people there that every soul at Paardekraal had been murdered. Afterwards it fortunately appeared that only old Hermitage had been murdered; but the agonies these poor women had had to bear I need not describe. After all, these women and fifteen others and their children were sent off to the Boer ranks, because the enemy thought that there at least they would be starved to death.

That this way of waging war against defenceless non-combatants and the destruction of private property, which only indirectly has connection with the continuation of the war, are against the articles of modern international law need not be proved. Numerous English lawyers of name, minutes and conventions signed by England in all solemnity, not only condemn these deeds, but most seriously forbid them. The teachings of Wheaton, Phillimore, van Hall, are one with the war regulations of the Brussels Conference, and the rules laid down by the late Peace Conference of the Hague approved of and signed by the British Government; and each and all say by one consent that private property or estates, not being contraband, are unassailable, and non-combatants must be left alone. To justify himself, Lord Roberts in his proclamation appeals to our supposed way of waging a war which he calls guerilla. He says that he will make use of every means employed by civilized nations under such circumstances to put an end to this guerilla. I deny that we do keep up a guerilla; but if we did, would it justify what English officers have done? The legal authorities and the solemn conventions do not distinguish between a guerilla and other lawful ways of carrying on a war. The question is, do we wage a lawful war, and are we acknowledged combatants, and, as such, protected by the international military laws? We do! And it is acknowledged and confirmed by English proclamations. We are no brigands or criminals, but lawful combatants, and as such appeal to the international law and the conventions signed by England. I openly claim to be as well informed about the law as those on whose advice the proclamations and the doings of the British Government and the military authorities were based; and passing over, of course, acknowledged barbarities and strange doings disapproved of by the best legal authorities, I deny that in the annals of civilized warfare precedents are to be found to justify a general burning down of country seats and villages, destroying all food, treating women and children as prisoners of war, and that they are banished to foreign parts, without even mentioning more horrible treatment.

And I deny that we carry on a guerilla. Was it guerilla warfare when, on Dec. 3rd, near the Sterkatroom and on the ground where this terrible destruction took place, General de la Rey and myself took the English camp and captured 130 heavily-laden carts, more than 3,000 oxen, that more than 100 men of the enemy were killed and wounded, and more than 100 captives fell into our hands? Or was it a guerilla war when, on Dec. 15th, the Generals de la Rey, Beyers, and myself attacked the camps of the Generals Clements and Legge in their fortified positions on the Magalies Mountain at Nooitgedacht, and defeated them after one of the fiercest battles fought in this war; that we took away their camp and made about 300 prisoners of war, and there were more than 400 killed and wounded English soldiers, among whom General Legge, who had been slain, who fell into our hands? I will not even speak of the other great battles fought in the two Republics in the last months.

This is truly no guerilla where large armies of the enemy are cut to pieces in this way. The truth is, a new way of waging war has been developed by us, to which the enemy wrongly applies the old name of guerilla. After fighting in the old-fashioned way during the beginning of the war with all our forces and convinced that the superior numbers of the English were too strong for us, we have made a new plan, in which strategy, mobility, and the disposition of small forces over extensive grounds are of much more importance than fighting a pitched battle, but not in the guerilla manner. We are always in touch with the other parts and divisions of the army, and when time and place are favourable we can always concentrate our troops, with the effect that we can crush the enemy. We do not carry on a guerilla war, the Boers will never be able to do so, their character and their ideas of soldiership are contrary to it. That they are properly ordered troops, as well as the humane way in which they have persevered till now in this war, which is such a bitter but sacred struggle for them, does not excuse the enemy in the least from committing his atrocities.

This barbarity, however, has had this advantage for us, that it has placed in the background all the subordinate interests of our burghers and such of their aims as were against the fulfilment of their duties. They have no longer any estates or worldly property to protect; many even have no women and children to provide for. Pressed down by the yoke laid on their shoulders, they now feel what their independence is worth, and are full of a sacred fire to deliver their beloved ones from oppression, to set free the colonial brethren imprisoned yonder for the sake of our independence,

and to bring about most carefully a peace for the whole of South Africa which will not be unworthy of the many precious lives that have been lost and the great sacrifices that have been made, the blood and tears not only shed by our ancestors, but principally by that blood and those tears shed in this struggle.

I have the honour to be,

Your Honour's most obedient servant,

(w.s.) J. G. SMUTS,

State-Attorney and Assistant Commandant-General of the South African Republic.

I have quoted Mr. Smuts' letter at length, because of the character of its author and because otherwise it would never meet the eyes of the public. It is probable, however, that a more vivid idea of the kind of devastation which has gone on in the Transvaal and the Orange Free State will be gained by the simple narratives of those whose houses have been destroyed and the blunt straightforward stories told by the men who have been engaged in the operation. The chief source for the narratives of the sufferers is the appendix of Miss Hobhouse's pamphlet. Soldiers' letters, on the other hand, have never been collected, excepting for the first period of the war. In a volume entitled "Pen Pictures of the War," published by Horace Marshall & Sons, there is a copious collection of soldiers' letters which give a more vivid account of the actual fighting and campaigning than any of the letters of the special correspondents, but this volume only comes down to the battle of Colenso, and no second volume was ever published. Comparatively few letters are now published from the front, partly because under the rigorous censorship very few are written, and partly because the novelty of soldiers' letters from the front has long ago disappeared. Nevertheless, newspapers from time to time do contain letters, and occasionally interviews, which shed a vivid light upon the extent of devastation which is going on. Here is an extract from a letter by Mr. McCormick on St. Patrick's Day, 1901, to Mr. W. E. Jones, the Branch Secretary of the National Union of Dock Labourers. Mr. McCormick on the 17th March was in Potchefstroom Hospital, and in this letter, after describing how they had burnt a town in the Transvaal merely because the Boers had captured it, he gives the following interesting account of the state of the country through which he passed :—

I suppose you have read about Kitchener's proclamation telling the Boers to lay down their arms and go to their farms. Well, I have travelled through the Free State and the Transvaal and I can say, for a fact, that there is not a farmhouse fit for habitation in the Free State or Transvaal. They are nearly all burnt, and those that are not burnt are deprived of all wood-work, such as window frames, doors, and beams. Wood is very scarce here. As for pigs and fowls, there won't be one left in the two countries when the war is over. Every one who has a fowl has to get wood to cook it, and they go to farmhouses and wreck them for wood. In January we were a month burning houses. When the prisoners are released from St. Helena and other places and see the state of their farms and houses, they will have a stronger hatred against the British nation than ever they had.

From which it would seem that Private McCormick has more statesmanship in the head of him than most of our rulers and governors.

On the 26th June last the *Daily News* quoted from the *Warwickshire Advertiser* an interview with a Warwickshire Yeoman who had just returned from the war. I am particular to give the dates, because the pretence is still kept up in some quarters that farm burning ceased long ago. This yeoman, whose name is not given, but who is personally known to

the editor of the *Warwickshire Advertiser*, spoke very frankly and to the point on this subject. He was attached to Paget's column, and he told the editor that since Christmas, and apparently down to the time of leaving Africa in May last, save for periodical encounters with isolated bodies of marauding Boers, Paget's column had been occupied with the burning of farms. In reply to a question as to whether the farms were burnt because of acts of treachery or concealment of arms, this yeoman replied :—

"I don't know about finding Boers or arms. All I know is this, that some days we would start off early in the morning and try, during the whole day, to burn as many farms as we could. I never saw one in some districts that was spared. We used to ride up—half-a-dozen of us—to the farm door, dismount, and rap loudly with our rifles on the wood. We didn't wait for an invitation. In we went with a rush and said to the woman, 'Come on, pack up, missus; there's a cart waiting for you.' And we gave her ten minutes to get a few things together, and then, with the youngsters, she was packed into the open waggon and driven off to the nearest camp."

"Did you ever find Boers or ammunition hidden away?"—"Never, during the whole time, except a few loose bullets lying about in different rooms."

"Then why did you burn the farms?"—"By the General's orders. We used to have plenty of fun. All the rooms were ransacked. You can't imagine what beautiful things there were there—copper kettles, handsome chairs and couches, lovely chests of drawers, and all sorts of books. I've smashed dozens of pianos. Half-a-dozen of us would go up to as fine a grand piano as ever I've seen. Some would commence playing on the keys with the butts of their rifles. Others would smash off the legs and panels, and, finally, completely wreck it. Pictures would be turned into targets, and the piano panels would be taken outside and used as fuel to boil our tea or coffee. After this we would set the building on fire, and as we left, riding together or detached over the sandy waste, we could see the flames rising up, and soon there would be nothing left but black smouldering embers. We would do the same with the next farm we came across."

The speaker then went on to describe how news of their approach had often been carried to the inhabitants of the farm, and before the punitive party arrived the house had been deserted, and all the cattle and valuables carried off. On these occasions they undertook the task of making a bonfire of the building with even greater relish than on ordinary occasions.

Another of the returned Yeomen, alluding to the same subject—farm burning—said many curious finds were made in the Boer houses. Copies of the *Sphere* and the other weekly London illustrated papers had often been picked up, all carefully preserved, and plentifully dog-eared Dutch books of instruction were common. "But," he added, "it would be useless detailing the contents of the houses. All you have to do is to imagine yourself with a number of chums walking casually into a respectable gentleman's house in Warwick and pocketing what you thought you wanted. It's just the same out there."

Another of the Warwickshire men found, whilst overhauling a box of trinkets, £40 sterling. Smaller sums in gold were often met with on these predatory expeditions.

The account given by these soldiers exactly tallies with the stories told to Miss Hobhouse by the women whom she interviewed.

As late as May 30th last the work of farm burning was going on merrily around Standerton. A private soldier, writing on that date from that neighbourhood, says that he had been for three weeks with Brigadier-General Remington :—

He is a splendid soldier. We have been chasing Hans Botha, and capturing cattle, sheep, horses, &c., and burning down the farms and grass all over the country.

Yet Mr. Asquith can speak of farm burning as an episode that happened for a few weeks last year.

On May 21st, 1901, a soldier belonging to the 2nd Queen's R.W., Surrey, writes :—

We only went out for five or six days. We burned down about thirty farms and brought in the wives and families, and burnt all the grass and everything that came in the front of us; and they are doing the same everywhere now. We took all the cattle they had, smashed all the furniture, and then burnt the lot, and so I expect they won't be able to stick that for all the winter.

To whichever part of the seat of war we turn it is the same story. Farm burning was going on all through April and May. At Lydenburg a correspondent of the *Westminster Gazette* says :—

The Transvaal, but particularly that portion between Pretoria and Lydenburg, presents a very desolate appearance. Every farmhouse is demolished, trees cut down, fences torn up, and what was once a happy homestead is now the ruins of one.

From Ficksburg a private in General Rundle's division wrote on May 10th :—

Since we left Harrismith we have been on the march, burning farms and houses and everything we come across.

A trooper in the sharpshooters' corps of the Imperial Yeomanry, writing on May 7th an account of the operations of his column after it left Standerton, says :—

We have been very busy to-day and yesterday burning farms. We take all the fowls, &c., and then set light to the houses. It is rather beastly work, but very necessary, in spite of what our home critics may say.

Two days later Trooper Tom Molloy, of the 17th Ayrshire Company of Imperial Yeomanry, wrote from Senegal :—

We had some good fun at Reitz ; we burnt the place so that you would not know it. We broke all grates, pans, &c., and the furniture. We turned the pianos upside down, picked the notes to pieces, and then threw them out of the windows.

On May 10th a soldier in the C Squadron of the Field Force under General Sir Bindon Blood says :—

We had a fine time burning all the farms and houses and destroying everything.

A Royal Engineer, writing from Machadodorp on May 14th last, said :—

When we come to a farm we take the women and children to the nearest refugee camp, and then burn the house. It is the only way we can prevent them from helping the Boers.

From a letter from a reservist in the Oxford Light Infantry, published by the *Boston Guardian*, it would seem that native kraals share in the general devastation. The writer dated from Heilbron on April 17th last, and his brief account of his doings is undoubtedly interesting and suggestive :—

The first day out from here was quiet, but we burned all farms, native kraals, outbuildings, and other places that might afford shelter for the Boers in bad weather ; we also killed all fowls, ducks, geese and pigs, turkeys or any kind of poultry, and collected all horses, cattle, and sheep into herds, and drove them along with us ; and I could not help thinking what a waste it was to kill good things for the sake of killing, after we had halted ; but it was grand sport chasing young cockerels and chopping geese's heads off, hearing pianos play as they were rolled upside down on to a fire lit in the middle of a room, piling pictures and brackets, &c., on a deal table and then putting a straw mattress underneath to start the blaze.

On the second day we had over twenty fires on the go before nine in the morning, and had got about six or seven miles from our last halting place when we got a check for a couple of hours, as we had to clear the front before we could get any further.

Next morning . . . we destroyed the nicest residence I have seen in the country. I forget his name that used to live at it. He was next in position to the President of the late Orange Free State Republic. It took us all the afternoon to get it all destroyed.

The threshing machine made the best fire, but the most interesting part for me was to see the explosion of a traction engine that worked all the farm machinery. It was built in England, and it was over an hour from the time the fire was lit before the boiler burst.

On Nov. 16th Lord Roberts issued the following order:—

As there appears to be some misunderstanding with reference to burning of farms and breaking of dams, Commander-in-Chief wishes following to be lines on which General Officers Commanding are to act: No farm is to be burnt except for act of treachery, or when troops have been fired on from premises, or as punishment for breaking of telegraph or railway line, or when they have been used as bases of operations for raids; and then only with direct consent of General Officer Commanding, which is to be given in writing. The mere fact of a burgher being absent on commando is on no account to be used as reason for burning the house.

The foregoing letters show that no attention was paid to this. Writing on Feb. 6th last, Sergeant Manger, of the Border Regiment, said:—

The burning of farms has turned out a failure, and has been discontinued. It has been a cruel and useless destruction of property.

In the same letter it may be noted incidentally that Sergeant Manger throws a little light on the question of the arming of the natives. He says:—

I see it noted at home that we arm the natives. We certainly don't arm large bodies, but the black scouts carry Lee-Metfords, and are supposed to defend themselves when attacked.

But the good sergeant was mistaken in believing that destroying farmhouses was discontinued. Many references in the soldiers' letters show that they do the work of devastation with sinking hearts. For instance, a Kerry soldier, who had been employed in General Settle's column last year, according to his own account, was marching through the Free State into the Transvaal "and burning every house that came in our way." He says:—

To tell the truth, I did not like to see the poor women and children turned out of their homes, as it reminded me of dark days in my own country, but I, as a British soldier, must trample on all these thoughts.

Corporal J. B. Wild, of the Oldham Yeomanry, writing on Dec. 7th, three weeks after Lord Roberts's order, to a friend in Oldham, concerning the march of General Settle's column from Ramah to Edinbro' in the Orange Free State, says:—

We marched *viâ* Luckhoff, where we set fire to all disloyal subjects' houses and took all their cattle away from them. That was what we did all along the line of march. It will mean that the Boers will have nowhere to go and nothing to eat.

The son of James Cooke, Clerk of Petty Sessions, now Town Butler (*Fermanagh Times*, Jan. 31st), writing a week later when *en route* for Durban, Dec. 14th, 1900, says:—

I have enjoyed the experience of the last few months immensely. . . . We were known as policemen, but our duties were very different from those of the policemen you have in Belfast. Most of my time was employed in burning Boer farmhouses and forage, and commandeering cattle and sheep, &c., around Potschefstroom and Frederickstadt. So you see I have been having a rare time of it. The most disagreeable part of our work was the turning of the Boer families out of their homes. The women made pathetic appeals, but we had to carry out our instructions.

In many cases the destruction of property seems to have been prompted by motives of vengeance without any regard to questions of policy. For instance, Mr. Hervey de Montmorency, dating from Duke Street, on June 20th last, says:—

When we retreated from Rustenburg in August of last year, after the evacuation of that town, every building in the neighbourhood of the northernmost road to Commando Nek was burned to the ground without discrimination. No single act of treachery on the part of the Boers occurred on the road.

It is a melancholy fact that no English or Scotch Chaplain accompanying the forces appears to have written one solitary letter of protest against this monstrous reversion to "Practices of Barbarism." Fortunately for the credit of the cloth, the Rev. Father Timoney, Chaplain to the Australian Bushmen, had a tender heart. He wrote on Oct. 14th last from Loon's Farm, Molopo River, as follows:—

Then began the most diabolical work I have yet witnessed. Every house in the valley, probably twenty in all, was burned to the ground. Women and children stood in groups, the children rending the air with their cries. They were allowed to move their furniture before the match was put to the building. The women were admirable. Not a tear bedewed their eyes. They stood there defiant, neatly dressed in black, with snow-white aprons and bonnets. It was only when I said a few sympathetic words to one woman that she melted into tears. "You," she said, "do not approve of this?" "I loathe it," was my reply. "I am," she said, "a British subject from the Protectorate. We rented this farm from an Englishman, to whom it belongs. We have nothing in the world but these crops, which your horses have destroyed, and—God help us!" I asked her the age of her baby, whom she carried in her arms. "One month yesterday," she replied, showing me the innocent face of the infant. "Will you," she said, "try to save my house from the fire?" "I shall do so at once," I answered, and I kept my promise, but my pleading was of no avail. The woman stood there on the green-sward, one child in her arms and three others hanging to her skirts, while her home was falling into ruins and the flames rose forty feet high. I told the heroic woman that I had tried to save the house. "Will you shake hands with me?" was her reply. I did so right heartily, and she called me aside to show me the relics of a new white apron. "It was from this," she said, "I tore the bandages for one of your wounded men (Beaumont). I carried him in my arms from the field and bandaged his arm. He lay on my bed until the blankets were sodden in blood. And this," she said, "is my reward"—waving her hand towards the house in flames—"this is the work of the Australians. They are not soldiers, they are house burners and looters." I begged to disagree with the woman, but her face was now livid, and her eyes sparkling with rage. "My boy, Otto," she continued, placing her hand on her head, "is only ten years old, but I trust I shall live to see him handle a rifle, and avenge this insult on his mother."

The next house belonged to the man whom the sentry shot on Thursday night. "My husband was shot by one of your men last Thursday night," she said; "I am left alone with these four children. Surely the blood of my husband should wipe out the crime of which he is guilty—fighting for his country." Her pleadings were in vain. Her house was burned down, and she looked on proud and tearless, the *beau idéal* of a valiant woman. But why should I weary you by repeating the harassing, heartrending scenes I witnessed that day? There were probably 100 women and children left homeless in one afternoon. They were ordered to leave the wooded valley and cross the Molopo river, there to live on the treeless plain.

The wisecracks say that this vandalism will terminate the war. My opinion, shared by every intelligent man, is that it will prolong the war indefinitely. I might refer to the open theft which is called looting, and which is daily indulged in by our troops. The Turks would shrink from such barbarism. Even the Kaffirs do not burn houses. And I am not giving hearsays. I am just recounting in a hurried way a part of the horrors I have myself seen. My belief is that during the present war the Boers have shown more mercy, more honour, and more honesty than many of our troops who are not immediately under the eye of Lord Roberts.

The war was not at an end. The Transvaal may be crushed for a time, it will never be conquered. Captain M'Dermott, from Dublin, a nephew of Charles Stewart Parnell, was so indignant at the barbarism that he asked me and Dr. Kelly to come away.

The narratives of the Boer women which are reported in the appendix to Miss Hobhouse's report refer, for the most part, to incidents which happened last year. They are therefore not of value as proving that the destruction of farms has been systematically carried out down to the present time, a fact which is sufficiently attested by the evidence quoted from the soldiers' letters; but they are very interesting as showing how the operation appears to its victims. Before quoting any of the letters, it is worth while to note what Miss Hobhouse says concerning the women who have been burned out of house and home,

and whom she found treated as prisoners of war in the camps which she visited. She says: "The farmers' wives in this country compare very favourably with English ditto. They have less book learning and less fashion, but mostly speak the two languages freely, and with far more dignity and breeding. You feel at once that they hold the position of ladies in their own country, and they behave as such." Of course the sufferings of the poorest working woman are as much worthy of attention as those of the finest lady in the land. But, human nature being what it is, the fact that we have turned Tommy Atkins loose to burn and destroy the houses of ladies of dignity and refinement will probably appeal more to our own people than anything else. One of the innumerable falsehoods which have been palmed off upon the House of Commons by Mr. Chamberlain and others was the statement that the Boer houses were miserable hovels built of mud, which cost nothing to build, and the destruction of which need cause no concern. This is certainly untrue in the light of the report which Miss Hobhouse brings back with her from South Africa.

For instance, "at Boshof, old Mr. N. reports that he left his wife on the farm, a large one of ten rooms, costing £2,000 to build. Since he arrived here in Kimberley word was brought that the farm had been burned, but the Commandant says that it was done by mistake." There appear to have been many houses of this kind that were burned. The fact that the soldiers repeatedly report the destruction of pianos, and mention that in some of the houses there were more than one, is the best proof that the burghers did not live in rude shanties. It was ladies and their children who were living in comfort, if not in luxury, who were seized by the soldiers, mounted in waggons, thrust into coal trucks, and sometimes into cattle trucks which were still reeking with the filth of their late occupants, and then flung into prison camps, in many cases to die of misery, sorrow, and privation. A narrative signed Phillipine, which appears in Appendix C of Miss Hobhouse's report, gives a very vivid account of the destruction of a farm as witnessed by its late occupants:—

On the 7th February, Phillipine writes: We were awakened by the roar of cannon. We got up and hastily dressed ourselves. We were very frightened. We sat down to an early breakfast, but could eat nothing. I could not do anything, but wandered aimlessly about, thinking of the dear ones of whom we know absolutely nothing. On going out I saw black objects on the hills. Running back hastily, I fetched the telescope, and to my horror saw that they were horsemen coming nearer every minute. Ah! how my heart throbbed with pain as I went to break the news to my poor delicate mother. Many of our neighbours' houses were burned down months ago, while some of the women and children were left on the open veldt, and others were taken prisoners. We were until then left undisturbed, but I instinctively felt, when I saw horsemen coming nearer, that our turn had come at last. About half-an-hour later a number of horsemen, accompanied by a small waggon drawn by mules, came up to the house. Their corporal came to the front door, while the troopers stormed in at every door. I went to the corporal. But oh! how cruelly his words pierced my heart! His greeting was: "I've come for you. Be ready to start in about fifteen minutes." I pleaded and begged to be left at home. I told him to take everything and burn the house, but leave us there; but all in vain. His answer was, "If you don't come, I'll let the men put you in the waggon." Then all was confusion.

When they came out of the house they found that the troops had killed all the poultry and pulled up the flowers and plants. They had cut up the beds and pillows, and the whole place was white with feathers. They moved away leaving their dear old large comfortable house behind them, where they had everything they needed, and were carted across

the veldt. At their stopping place they looked back, and saw the smoke of the burning farm and furniture, which we can well imagine was very painful to them.

Mrs. V. R., who was only given a quarter of an hour's notice to leave her house, was a wealthy woman.

Captain W. had given her a note of protection, but Captain D. took no notice of it. She has a receipt for six loads of goods taken by Brabant.

Her farm cost £2,560 to build. The house was 70 ft. long and 40 wide, and had thirteen rooms. The roof was taken off, doors, windows, and all woodwork destroyed. Flooring torn up. Piano and organ cut to pieces, best furniture carted into Ladybrand to furnish an officer's house. Seven hundred bags of wheat burnt, large quantities of mealies, 3,000 sheep (17 were German sheep imported, and worth alone £450), 100 horses, with a valuable imported stallion, a new buggy, waggons, cattle, &c. The farm was only 1,800 morgen, but they had another in Winburg district, where the cattle mostly were.

The worthlessness of the English note of protection occurs again and again in the narrative. Mistress F. B., of Winburg, whose house was burnt by the order of General Macdonald, had received a pass stating that they were under British protection. In September the British troops came along, and on presenting the pass to the officer he said that they were safe. The next day, however, notwithstanding the pass, the house was burnt to the ground. Mrs. F. B. says:—

Next morning, Sept. 18th, before 9 a.m., a captain and eight men appeared. "You have five minutes," he said. "I am come to burn the house." They pleaded. But he said, "These are my orders. I shall be shot if I don't obey." He then sent Mr. P. to find the General, Hector Macdonald, under whom he served, saying he would be found passing in such a place with the column. In less than half an hour, before the farmer could get back, the Captain set fire to the house. Mr. P. said she cried and prayed and pleaded, all in vain. He told her to get out her things, and she hastily began pulling out chairs, chests of drawers, &c., with the children's clothes. Then he began to smash the furniture, saying he could not wait for that. She got out a box with her husband's clothes, and containing a small box packed with trinkets. These were:

- 1 gold watch.
- 1 silver watch, with gold chain.
- 1 diamond ring.
- 2 plain rings.
- 1 pair earrings.
- Set of silver studs.
- Silver bangles.

All of these were stolen, besides her husband's shirts, and other clothes.

In answer to her distress the Captain gave her a paper (unsigned). It is a somewhat poor exchange for a burnt home:

This continual recurrence of breach of faith explains and justifies the angry outburst of Mrs. B., of Brandfort. Miss Hobhouse says:—

Mrs. B., a really handsome woman, with a fine family, was one of those who, early in the year, went out from Brandfort to ask the Boers to give up. They refused. Now, she says, we are a ruined people. We will fight through. Roberts's first proclamation, if kept, would have ended the war, but it has been lies, lies, lies.

Another lady, whose narrative is the last in the report, gives the following account of her experience of the value of Lord Roberts's word:—

On May 14th I went to my neighbours with Lord Roberts's proclamation, and said to each, "Read this proclamation. If you live on your farm no harm will be done to you. So trust to what I say."

But what was the result?

The first column that came, with which Captain B. was, took from all those who had remained in their homes all they had of cattle and horses.

Fourteen days afterwards a Major came along with a lot of armed

Kaffirs and carted them away to the camp. I am glad to note the following expression of indignation from an Australian who witnessed the incident:—

“Madam, so many lies have been told in our land about the uncivilized ways of your people, but the shame is the way the women are treated.”

The excuse for this piece of bad faith was that the burghers had taken off her son-in-law. She says:—

I brought it before the justice of the General that I had told Captain G. I was not responsible for my son-in-law. . . I told the Captain over and over again I am not answerable for Mr. S., my son-in-law. He said, “Yes, you are.” I requested if I might stay by my husband’s grave in my garden, which I and my two daughters had cultivated, and which was doing well, and we could have lived out of it.

The Captain agreed, but Kitchener’s orders were we women must all be removed, or the Boers would not give in.

Mrs. Combrink, who had been a widow for nineteen years, was held responsible for her son, a man of fifty years, who was fighting. She had everything taken from her—she had not even a dress. Everything was also taken from me.

The third narrative describes the burning of a village and the deportation of the men who had taken the oath of neutrality as prisoners of war to Greenpoint, Ceylon, and St. Helena.

In Miss Hobhouse’s narrative there are not many complaints concerning the misconduct of the soldiers, although in some cases they seem to have acted with little consideration, as, for instance, in the case of Mrs. S., of Jacobsdal. After describing how they had burnt down her house and eighteen others in the village that day—“First all was smashed. Girls pleaded for dead father’s likeness enlarged. Threatened to shoot Mrs. S. if she pleaded”:—

We poor women sufferers will never forget the next day. Early that morning we were informed that the General had orders from Lord Roberts to burn down the village. Half of the Boer women received orders at one o’clock to be ready on the market square at two o’clock, also telling us not to take too many things with us. If we did take too much will not be allowed to take anything. It was dreadful to see how they destroyed the houses—breaking up floors (even the floor of the Dutch Reformed Church was broken up for firewood), breaking out doors and windows, pulling down verandahs, saying they require these things for fuel. Everywhere one could see them stealing and taking everything they could lay their hands on, even taking the small bundle the poor woman thought of taking with her. Having taken our everything, even this they took from us. Wherever one looks misery is to be seen. It was heartrending [sic] to see how they ill-treat the animals—driving cows and leaving the young calves behind. When we asked them, for pity’s sake, to take the poor calves with them, they said the calves were only a nuisance.

In some cases the sufferers had been actually the hostesses of the soldiers who burnt their houses. Here, for instance, is the story of Mrs. Potgieter, of Uitzicht:—

6.—Compelled. Captain P. had been often in her house, and very kind—a real gentleman. He had meals often with her, and had said her house, &c., should be safe. But some Generals came and camped near the farm where there was a fight, and the Boers passed along the main road near her farm. She could not help it, and the British were pursuing. Next day, ten a.m., a lot of men came and turned her out. It was raining hard, and she wept and prayed mercy for the children’s sake. House was burnt, and she was put into a waggon. She saw seven neighbours’ houses burning as she went. She tried to take some furniture, &c., but it dwindled as she went, and got left behind here and there. Her house had five large rooms. At Kroonstadt she was put into the church with twenty other families, and guards all round. Kept there three days. Then they were brought down to Bloemfontein and put into camp. Was well off, has nothing now.

A few weeks after telling me the above, Mrs. Potgieter, who could not stand the life or the diet, grew very weak, sank rapidly, and died.

In some cases the destruction of property was ordered expressly in

order to induce the women to ask their husbands to surrender. Here, for instance, is the story of Mrs. K.—, of Boshof:—

Was living in the house of a Widow S., who had two sons on commando. English suspected either her or the house. For five months before her arrest, English kept taking away her food to force her to make her husband surrender. During this time she had a baby. Three times they came and searched the house, and the fourth time came when baby was only two days old, on which occasion tore up the floors, broke doors, windows, ceilings, &c. At last broke all the furniture, and when baby was two months old she was brought to camp. Would not ask her husband to surrender.

This indomitable spirit seems to have animated many of these Spartan women. Here, for instance, is Miss Hobhouse's note of the evidence of Mistress J. E., of the village of Jacobsdal:—

Husband on commando. Field cornet, an Englishman by blood, son of English parents; an English officer, Major E., fought against him at Magersfontein; it was his cousin. After the fight, Oct. 25th, the English, under Colonel J., burnt her house. They would not believe her that no Boers were in the house, so burnt, and found none. Drove her from her house, and would not listen to her pleadings. The 29th the Boers came back. She saw her husband, and he his blackened home. He was silent first, then lifted his hand and said, "The Lord will provide, but now I will never, never, never give in." She has not seen him since. Nov. 7th English returned. She was locked in the school for several days, and no food or drink given. Early in February Mrs. E. was asked if she would take Kitchener's proclamation to her husband. She replied, "Though you give me 2,000 troops and £100 (and I have nothing), I will not do it." A second time she was urged, or if not she would be sent to Kimberley Camp. "Very well, then," she said, "it must be the camp." Four other prominent women were urged to ask their husbands to surrender—in vain.

It is necessary to quote no further. In the extracts already given I submit to any impartial reader that it stands demonstrated beyond any possibility of doubt that the policy of house-burning, while ostensibly discontinued, has been carried on without any intermission right down to the last day upon which we could have any information from the seat of war. Further, that the houses have been burned without any colourable pretext, such as treachery, the harbouring of the enemy, or their use as storehouses for the supply of troops with munitions of war. It is, of course, obvious that troops passing through a country, whether Boers or British, would seek refreshment and shelter at the nearest house on the line of march. But it is not even alleged that the Boers had made any more use of the houses that were destroyed than our own troops. In many cases every farmhouse seems to have been burned down, either because it was on the line of march, or in vengeance, or pure wantonness. Further, that in many cases, the threat of the destruction of property and the burning was deliberately used as a means of pressure to induce the wife to persuade her husband to desert his colours. It is unnecessary to characterize conduct so unchivalrous, so inhuman, and so absolutely contrary to the practices of civilized war. Here, indeed, we have a "method of barbarism" which is worse than anything that can be alleged against us by our enemies abroad. And yet the astonishing fact is that, notwithstanding all this persistent and continuous policy of pressure brought to bear on the women and children of the invaded country, no attempt appears to have been made to make reprisals. The Boers had ample opportunity in Cape Colony and in Northern Natal to retaliate in kind had they felt disposed. But not even the bitterest Jingo vilifier of the Boers has been able to mention a single instance in which the Boers burned the houses of English colonists or

attempted to put pressure upon English women and children to induce their relatives to desert the British armies.

I conclude this chapter by quoting from a very remarkable manifesto published on this subject by President Steyn and General De Wet. We are accused of describing the British troops as monsters and painting the Boers as archangels. The accusation is absurd, but the impression is probably due to the remarkable contrast between the system of conducting warfare by the British and the Boers. Actions speak louder than words, and the facts speak for themselves. The impression produced by the facts is deepened by the official utterances of the heads of the contending parties. Contrast, for instance, the speeches of Mr. Brodrick and Mr. Chamberlain with the sentiment of the following manifesto:—

BE IT HEREBY MADE KNOWN TO ALL: That the war which was forced on the Republics by the British Government still rages in the Orange Free State, as well as in the South African Republic; that in this way not only all customs of civilized warfare, but also conventions concerning the same, such as those of Geneva and the Hague, have not been observed. He did not scruple, contrary to first-mentioned convention, to capture our doctors and ambulances and deport them, in order to prevent our wounded getting medical assistance, and the ambulance and the material appertaining thereto. He did not hesitate, contrary to the recognized primitive rules of warfare and contrary to his solemn agreement of the Hague, to arrest neutrals and deport them, to send out marauding bands to plunder, burn, and damage the private property of the burghers. He has in this State, as also in the South African Republic, armed the Kaffirs and natives, and made use of them against us in the war. He has been continually kept busy capturing women, children, and old and sickly men. Many women's deaths have been occasioned thereby, because our so-called Christian enemy has not even had any consideration for women on a sick-bed, or those whose state of health should have protected them against any rough treatment.

Honourable women and tender children were not only treated in a rough manner, but also treated and ill-treated in an insulting manner by soldiers by order of their officers; moreover, old mothers and women were raped. Even the wives, children, and the property of prisoners of war—yes, half even of killed burghers—are not respected, in many instances the mother and father are taken away from the house, and their unprotected all is left to fate, an easy prey to the savage. The world is untruthfully informed by our enemy that he is obliged to carry out this destruction because the burghers blow up the line and cut the telegraph lines (wires), or because misuse is made of the white flag. Nearly all the houses are destroyed in the O.F.S. and S.A.R., whether there be a railway line in the neighbourhood or not. As far as the misuse of the white flag is concerned, it is simply the continuance of the everlasting calumny against which the Afrikaner has had to strive since the time that God brought him in contact with the Englishman.

Robbing his opponent only of his goods does not satisfy him, and he will not be satisfied before robbing him of his good name also, then he wishes to inform the world that the Republics are conquered and that the war is at an end, and that only here and there are small plundering bands to be found who continue the strife in an irresponsible manner. It is an untruth, the Republics are not yet conquered, the war is not finished; the burgher forces of the two Republics are still led by responsible leaders as from the commencement of the war, under supervision of the Governments of both Republics. The fact of their Lordships Roberts and Kitchener choosing to call our burgher forces "marauding bands" does not make them such, similarly their saying that the war is over does not put an end to it while fighting is still continually being carried on. When, then, was this war over? After the battle of Spion Kop, or that of Paardeberg, or after the occupation of Bloemfontein or Pretoria, or is it perhaps after the battle of Dewetsdorp on the 23rd of last December, on both of which occasions their guns were captured and our enemy totally vanquished? The burghers of the Orange Free State and the South African Republic would be less than men if they allowed the enemy to go unpunished after ill-treating their wives and destroying their homes from the lust of destruction.

Therefore a portion of our burghers have again been sent into the Cape Colony, not only to wage war there, but also to be in a position, when necessary, to take reprisals, as we have already done in the case of ambulances. We, therefore, warn the officers of Her Majesty's troops, as we have already done, that unless they cease this destruction of property in the Republics we shall wreak our vengeance by destroying the property of Her

Majesty's subjects who are not kindly disposed towards us ; but to avoid being misunderstood, we hereby openly declare that the wives and children of Her Majesty subjects will always be left unmolested by us, in spite of anything that may be done to ours by Her Majesty's troops.

We do not request anything from our brothers in the Colony, but we simply call on them, as well as on the civilized world, to assist on behalf of our joint civilization and Christianity in putting an end to the barbarous manner of warfare of our enemy.

Our prayer is always that the God of our fathers will not desert us in this unrighteous strife.

(Signed) M. I. STEYN,  
President of the State.

(Signed) C. R. DE WET,  
Chief Commandant of the Orange Free State Forces.

*In the Field, Jan. 14th, 1901.*

Yet though the destruction of property in the Republics has been carried on, and is being carried on to this day, and the warfare against women and children is waged unceasingly by our devastating armies, the burghers have kept their promise that "the wives and children of Her Majesty's subjects will always remain unmolested, in spite of anything that may be done to ours by Her Majesty's troops." Only in these last days have the Boers in Cape Colony burned any houses. They chiefly confined their reprisals to public buildings, and they spared the furniture. Altogether they are not even accused of having burned ten buildings of any sort since the war began. But Mr. Chamberlain, whose emissaries have burned thousands of farmsteads in the execution of the policy of devastation, held up his hands in holy horror in the House of Commons on July 22nd at these "acts of brigandage." Truly is it said in the adage, "One man may steal a horse, while another may not look over a wall." Lord Roberts and Lord Kitchener may burn a thousand farms, and it is legitimate war. But if the Boer burns one or two public buildings as reprisals it is an "act of brigandage"!

## CHAPTER VI.

### THE VEIL OF THE CENSORSHIP.

“They loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light.”—John iii. 19.

THE right vested in all military commanders to prohibit the despatch of news calculated to give information to the enemy as to impending military movements is universally admitted, but such a right should be rigidly limited. Ministers have repeatedly made declarations publicly and privately to the effect that the censorship which has been established at the seat of war does not violate this fundamental principle. But the evidence is so overwhelming to the contrary that the declarations of Ministers will soon be regarded as false as dicers' oaths. The evidence of residents in South Africa, correspondents, and visitors to that distressful country shows that no Russian censor has exercised more arbitrarily or more stupidly the powers originally vested in that censorship for one specific purpose. There is a censorship both over letters going in and letters coming out. We have an interdict placed upon many newspapers and periodicals; the *Review of Reviews* is seized in the post, and stolen by soldiers or officials, just for all the world as if they were in the service of the Grand Turk. At present the *Review of Reviews* lies under the ban of two authorities, and only two in the whole world, the Sultan of Turkey and the military authorities in South Africa. Private letters are opened as unscrupulously as they ever were in the worst days of espionage in St. Petersburg. In fact, there are hardly any privileges which Englishmen in times past have regarded as sacred in relation to the freedom of the press or the inviolability of letters that have not been trampled under foot in South Africa.

This, however, is only in keeping with everything else that has gone on since the war broke out. What is more to our immediate purpose is to call attention to the fact that while considerable liberties have been taken in order to prevent letters and periodicals published in England entering South Africa, they are nothing compared with the stringent measures used to prevent the transmission of letters which are calculated to throw any light upon the deeds of darkness which were being perpetrated at the seat of war. The story of the way in which information has been smuggled across the frontier recalls the worst days of reactionary Europe. Letters are carried in the soles of boots; they are secreted in all imaginable receptacles; private soldiers have been warned that it would be better for them not to write any letters at all; war correspondents have been banished, excepting those favoured individuals who can be guaranteed to act as the convenient conduit pipes for official information. The British public is supposed to be making this war; it is certainly paying for it. Our sons and brothers are dying in the field, in order to secure its success, and yet the nation is kept almost absolutely in the dark as to what goes on. The only news which we get from South Africa from official sources, with the exception

of the meagre bulletins from Lord Kitchener, reporting the success of cattle-lifting operations and the progress of the policy of devastation, are the Casualty Lists. To such lengths have the authorities gone, that travellers on entering or leaving the Transvaal have been given the option of leaving their boots behind them or allowing the soles to be cut open in order that the authorities might be satisfied that no secret missile was being carried from the African inferno to the outside world.

The effect of this is naturally to intensify the general impression that things in South Africa are a great deal worse than any one outside can imagine. Yet while all these high-handed proceedings are the order of the day in South Africa, at Westminster Ministers profess the greatest indignation at the suggestion that any steps whatever are taken to prevent the freedom of communication so long as that communication does not relate to forthcoming movements of the troops.

Now it so happened that in the course of last month I had the good fortune to receive the report of a trial which had taken place in Pretoria, all information concerning which had been rigorously suppressed, although it was a public trial, and was for a week the talk of the capital of the South African Republic. This is the trial of a Hollander of the name of Spoelstra, a trial which is likely to live in history, because of the glimpse which it gives of the hellish panorama over which the military wisely, in their own interests, draw a veil. Spoelstra was a Hollander who contributed from time to time correspondence to the Dutch press. He appears to have been, not unnaturally, a somewhat violent partisan of his kinsfolk, and his views of the action of the British authorities were naturally coloured by his sympathies. But whatever may be said of the faults, either of his temper or of his style, there was not one word in his correspondence that gives a particle of information to any one as to the possible movements of British troops. His letter, however malicious and insulting it may have appeared to the British officers who tried him, did not come under the category of communications imparting information calculated to endanger the success of operations in the field. Spoelstra wrote his letter, and gave it to a trusty messenger, who endeavoured to convey it across the frontier to its destination. Unfortunately, the messenger was suspected in Natal, seized and searched, when the letter was found on his person. He was sent back to Pretoria, and it was decided to try Mr. Spoelstra by Court-martial. There was nothing in the letter more than what is constantly appearing every day in the British press. Spoelstra had not published the letter, although he had despatched it with a view to its publication, and this was held to be sufficient to justify a count in the indictment charging him with attempting to publish a false and malicious libel on the British. The real head and front of his conviction, however, was his evasion of the iron rules of censorship. I print the indictment in full.

#### INDICTMENT.

J. Spoelstra, a native of Holland, is charged with that whilst being a resident in Pretoria, a town in the Transvaal, and during the time the said town was under martial law, he did--

1. Evade the military censorship regulations in force in the Transvaal by

giving a certain letter written by himself to one N. J. Van Rooyen to be carried by him to Holland and there to be published in a newspaper.

2. And that he did attempt to publish certain false, malicious, and defamatory statements in the said letter concerning the conduct of His Majesty's forces in South Africa.

3. And that he did break his oath of neutrality, sworn to on the 27th June, 1900, in that having promised on oath that he would remain quiet, he did attempt to have published certain false and defamatory statements respecting His Majesty's forces in South Africa, with a view to inciting public opinion against His Majesty's Government.

The following is the text of the incriminating letter :—

#### LETTER FROM THE TRANSVAAL.

DEAR EDITOR,

You and the readers of your respected paper will certainly not be indifferent to news as to the state of affairs here. To insure letters having contents such as this one reaching Holland entails some trouble. They cannot be sent through the post, for when opened by the English censor the letter is firstly destroyed, and the writer himself receives notice to attend at the station, sometimes within a few hours, in order to be sent across the border. One has, therefore, to await the opportunity of a friend or acquaintance voluntarily leaving for Holland, or being obliged to do so, in order to secure the certainty of a letter reaching Holland.

In the first place, dear Editor, I wish to write about the shameful treatment by the English of women and children. The Commander-in-Chief of the British forces has ordered that no women and children of Boers, whether or not the latter are prisoners of war, "hand-uppers" (those who have surrendered their arms), or are still fighting, are to remain on their farms. Large camps, where they are allowed to live, have been made for these women and children and old men who have been taken from their farms. Food is supplied them by the British Government, but their cattle are taken along with them by the soldiers as spoils of war. Their crops are trampled down or destroyed, for fear that the Boer commandoes would use same as food for man and beast. The house is pulled down and blown up with dynamite, and what may still remain is taken away by the neighbouring Kaffirs, at the suggestion of the civilized British, so that for miles around one often sees no farming operations. More! even women in advanced pregnancy are loaded on to transport carts, so that in many cases the women give birth on the so-called transport, the vehicle not being stopped, and stared at by the soldiers, who see fun in such things. Deaths of the sick who are brought along, of women and even of children, are not infrequent. Time is not allowed to bury the dead until the next outspan, when only the burial may take place. The convoy is as speedily as possible (as the same might be attacked by the Boers, and fear gives wings) brought to a railway station, when everything is shoved into a truck, which is conveyed to the places where the camps are. Such is the treatment by the civilized Briton of the women and children of his not half conquered enemy. The Uitlanders were, according to British report, very much oppressed before the war by the Boers, and the Uitlanders were repeatedly appealed to by the British to demand equal rights with us for all inhabitants.

The petition sent by the British subjects to Queen Victoria was also headed in large letters, "Equal rights for everybody." Let us now see, now that they are themselves under the Government in places like Johannesburg, Pretoria, &c., what they do for the oppressed Uitlanders, and how they carry out their equal rights for all inhabitants. A few examples will suffice. The Government here allow English firms to import as much goods as possible, while firms of other nationalities are not allowed to import any or very little, by which the latter sustain heavy losses. The Uitlanders (no English) who still remain here are put to all manner of inconvenience in order to get them put out of the country. The Hollanders are the chief sufferers. To be a Hollander is a crime in the eye of the noble Britons. The Hollander hatred is not confined to the soldier only. It is stronger in those in authority. The following is an instance: An English officer had a conversation with a highly educated lady. When departing the former said, "You are surely English by birth, and not a Colonial?" (Cape Colony is here meant). "No," the

lady replied, "I am Dutch." Thereupon the son of Mars sneered, as evidence of his contempt. The lady noticing this, said, "Is it, then, a crime to be Dutch?" Departing, the hero said, "No, not quite a crime, more of an accident."

The Englishman is, generally speaking, very low down the scale in this respect. Compared with the chauvinistic Germans or the unenlightenment or immorality of other nations, the Englishman excels them all, except in what appertains to nobility and greatness, wherein he is inferior to all. In this war, and here also it has become apparent, that the Englishman will do anything to attain his object. Treachery and bribery is dearer to them than risking and eventually losing a battle.

Note the following as an instance of English littleness. The proclamation of Edward VII. as King of England was celebrated here as well as in other places. After the reading, "God Save the Queen" was played. It appeared that all the spectators were required to remove their hats. Naturally many did not comply with this, and the writer also did not experience the necessary desire and respect. The result was that he was arrested, and, after being locked up for four hours, was released on bail of sixty florins. This arrest was made by N. B., a sergeant of police, who endeavoured to explain to him, that Hollander or not, every one had to remove his hat when the music played and the three hurrahs were given for the new King. Added he, "We now live in the Transvaal under English law." The Dutch Consul, who had been informed of the above, interested himself in the matter, and the following day the accused was liberated and had his bail refunded to him. The oath of neutrality was demanded from every one a few days after the capture of Pretoria by the British.

Whoever declined to take the oath was sent across the border as an Uitlander, and in the case of a burgher was locked up or sent to Ceylon. We Hollanders who had taken the oath of neutrality and abided by same thought that the British would now treat us as neutrals, but what do they do? First of all our newspapers were retained, and now the Consuls have gone the length of destroying letters from members of our families in Holland. For longer than five weeks the letters from Holland were not delivered, and our letters addressed to Europe were destroyed to a great extent. Their littleness is even so manifest that they prefer destroying letters in which are enclosed drafts or photographs. One could do nothing in the matter. The letters do not reach the addressee; they have therefore gone astray, or they say perhaps the Boers have taken them. **BEHOLD THE GREATNESS OF THE ENGLISH PEOPLE.** The English who are insignificant, in many things very insignificant, are great in something, viz., lying. Lord Roberts, the great general, months ago already cabled to England, "The war is practically over." And what do we now notice? The war is fiercer than it ever was. A lie, therefore, that cannot be forgiven a man like Roberts. More than six months ago Lord Roberts said to the soldiers, "Within a few weeks the majority of you will be able to return home." With the exception, however, of the City Imperial Volunteers, no others except invalids have gone to England, while troops continue to come out. Another English lie. Roberts annexed the Free State and Transvaal, stating that he held the country. This is the worst lie ever uttered by an English general. When one takes up the maps of the Orange Free State and Transvaal we can see that only two-thirds is with much trouble held by the British, while the Boer commandoes are in all the districts. Regarding the holding of the Transvaal, the places adjoining the railway (the Pretoria-Pietersburg line excepted) only are held by the English, and a few other places like Klerksdorp, Potchefstroom, and Rustenburg are in turn held by the Boers and English. Only last week the Boers took possession of Krugersdorp, where, besides taking 280 prisoners, they captured a large quantity of provisions and ammunition. On the 1st February the Boers visited Sans Souci, situated a couple of miles from Johannesburg. Three miles outside of Pretoria the Boers took away the cattle from the farms of the "hand-uppers." The two largest districts, viz., Water- and Zoutspansberg belong entirely to the Boers, together with the railway passing through them from Pietersrivierstation to Pietersburg, also in the district of Lijdenburg (town) the Boers are planting, sowing, and farming freely. A large portion of the Ermelo district, including the towns Amsterdam and Piet-Retief up to the Portuguese border, belong entirely to the Boers. The Boers further hold a small portion of the Marico district and a large portion of the Rustenburg district, including the Magaliesbergen

and a portion of the Witwatersrand. The Boers, having taken from the English the provisions and ammunition in the last-mentioned places, they abandon the places as soon as a strong English force approaches. They did this with Klerksdorp, Potchefstroom, Rustenburg, Krugersdorp, Balmoral, Vlaklaagte, &c. This tires the English forces, and enables the Boers to continue the war. The capturing of trains also provides the Boer commandoes with food, clothes, sweets, of which they are very fond. One sees plainly, therefore, that it was nothing but bluster and lies on the part of Lord Roberts when he declared the Free State and Transvaal British territory. As to Lord Roberts himself, what he has done could have been accomplished by any corporal. With a ten times larger army, he advanced, taking only the railway line in order to get to Bloemfontein, Johannesburg, and Pretoria, probably believing that when Pretoria was in his possession the war would also be over. Buller had a much more difficult journey. Had Roberts been in Buller's place he would have done worse than the latter. In this crisis England has proved that she possess only diplomatists and bad generals.

Lord Roberts is a politician. He advanced by forced marches and made a name. In order to become popular he provoked attacks upon himself. When his popularity was not sufficiently great, he, just before his departure for Capetown, allowed himself to fall from his horse in order to make his entry into Capetown as a wounded soldier, with his arm in a sling. Now that the dirty work is in hand, however, he wisely leaves it to Kitchener, while he himself, the hero of Kandahar and South Africa, leaves Johannesburg secretly at half-past four in the morning in an ambulance train.

As proof of the hatred by the English for the Hollanders note the following also: The village of Dulstroom was entirely Dutch, there being not a single person with British sympathies. Dulstroom was inhabited by Hollanders and men who had ceased to be Netherlands subjects. Of the whole village only two houses are left standing, everything else being destroyed or burnt. This Hollander settlement was a thorn in the sight of the civilized Briton. Is it surprising that many here cry out, "Better Turkish than English"?

As I am only dealing in this chapter with the question of censorship, it is unnecessary for me to refer either to the second or third counts in the indictment at present; but I simply call attention to the prosecution and the proclamation on which it was based, in order to show how rigorously censorship is enforced in Pretoria. The prosecution relied largely upon a proclamation which had been issued by Governor Maxwell, the terms of which Spoelstra was said to have violated. That proclamation was as follows:—

Government Notice, No. 31, of 1901; date of *Gazette*, April 17th, 1901.

#### EVASION OF CENSORSHIP.

In consequence of the numerous instances of the evasion of the censorship regulations by individuals carrying letters, notice is hereby given that all persons are strictly prohibited from carrying letters by rail or road, or from giving letters to other persons with a view to their being so carried or delivered, and any persons contravening this notice will be dealt with under martial law.

(Signed) J. G. MAXWELL,

Major-General, Military Governor.

*Pretoria, March 14th, 1901.*

Major Lingham, who conducted the prosecution, set out the law of the censorship as it is understood by those who have to carry it out in Pretoria. He said:—

It is not necessary for me to prove to the Court that Pretoria is under martial law, it is a fact; it is known to the mind of the Court, it is within their judicial knowledge, it is not for me to prove that letters leaving the Transvaal must be censored. It is a fact known to the Court.

I will prove this from the opening paragraph of his letter, the subject of this

charge (see Charge I., Annex A). . . . So that the prisoner knew that he was doing something contrary to the Military Law or Martial Law.

Now, Mr. Berrange mentioned the proclamation of the 17th April of this year.

Now, this proclamation of the 17th April was to impress better and better on the minds of the public the great risk they ran if they tried to send letters out of this country and evade the censor. No persons would surely say that, under martial law, because there was no proclamation there could be no offence. I will show absolutely no necessity whatever for a proclamation. Quoting, "It must be noted that no proclamation is required. When the country held by the evading forces (? invading) Martial Law prevails, &c. Martial Law is the immediate and direct effect and consequence of the occupation, &c."

Returning to the first charge, I do not think it will be necessary for me to show, therefore, to the Court that there were such things as military censorship regulations, and that the prisoner evaded these regulations. There is also no doubt that his letter did not go through the post—you have the evidence of the Provost-Marshal. He tells you that in the course of his duties he received this letter from Natal, where it had not gone through the proper channel, but was found on a man who had been arrested. The Provost-Marshal also tells you that in the course of different interviews with the prisoner the prisoner at no time attempted to show that he did not attempt to evade the censorship regulations.

The text of the letter which led to this remarkable prosecution was accompanied by a covering letter, which ran as follows:—

Pretoria.

DEAR EDITOR.—With great thanks I am able to send you this. Send me merely a post-card acknowledging receipt, and send any of the numbers in which this might appear to M. Spoelstra, boatswain of the Royal Netherlands Marine Department, Batavia, or elsewhere.

Respectfully yours,

(Signed) J. SPOELSTRA.

Mr. Spoelstra, when interrogated by the Provost-Marshal before the trial, wrote the following justification of the contents of the letter, which, although not of much intrinsic importance, may be quoted as illustrating what Spoelstra had to say for himself, and in justification for the minor charges brought against the British in his letter.

Translation.

THE PROVOST-MARSHAL, PRETORIA.

SIR,—In reply to your request, addressed to me to give you an explanation or proof regarding a letter sent by me to Holland, I beg to previously draw your attention to the fact that most of the sentences and expressions appearing in the letter have been given to me by persons, and I have taken up their expressions in the letter, and it is therefore totally impossible for me to find those people, whom I only know by sight, in order to ask them from where the reports came. Further, I beg to remark that the said letter has not yet been published, and therefore, to all intents and purposes, was the private property of the writer. The act, namely, the publishing and bringing to the notice of others of the expressions and sentences in the said letter had not yet taken place, and for that reason the whole letter is, in my opinion, cancelled; only when the above-named letter had been published, and thus become public property, it might have led to an investigation.

Notwithstanding, I am willing, so far as possible and feasible, to give an explanation on the several points appearing in the above-named letter.

(1) Why did I not send letter by post? Because I have repeatedly found that letters posted by me did not reach the addressee, and by sending the letter in question the way I did I had the assurance that it would reach its destination.

Besides, no proclamation had appeared with regard thereto.

(2) Regarding the ill-treatment of Boer women and children.

(3) Regarding the taking away of cattle from non-fighting Boers.

(4) Regarding the destruction and blowing up of houses by means of dynamite

and regarding the remainder being carried away by Kaffirs, at the suggestion of the English.

(5) Regarding the conveyance of children, and pregnant women being confined on transport waggons, as also the non-burying of children dying *en route* until the first outspan.

Ad. 2 will be dealt with by me together with Ad. 5.

Ad. 3 and 4. Mr. N. Straub, formerly of one of the ambulances, has personally told me this. I may further refer to the English translation of the Steyn and de Wet manifesto sent to Port Elizabeth, Feb. 20, namely, to where the manifesto says: "Nearly all the houses in the O. R. C. are destroyed, whether there be railway lines in the neighbourhood or not," &c., &c.

Ad. 2 and 5. These also have been given to me by Mr. Straub and by the wife of a refugee, whom I met at the relief committee at St. Andries Street.

I further refer to the above-mentioned manifesto, commencing as follows: "He has been continually kept busy capturing women and children and old and sickly men.

"Many women's deaths have been occasioned thereby, because our so-called Christian enemy have not even had any consideration for women on a sick-bed," &c.

And again, "Honourable women and tender children were not only treated in a rough manner, but also treated in an insulting manner by soldiers by order of their officers, &c."

And again, "Even killed burghers are not respected, &c."

Ad. 6. English firms are protected or enjoy preference in importing goods to Uitlander or Hollander firms. My reply to this is, if his Honour, the Provost Marshal will inquire of the director of supplies, he will find that the number of tons of goods imported by others, even comparing the quantity of goods imported by either before the war, there are even firms who have not been allowed to import any goods at all yet.

Ad. 7. Treatment of Uitlanders in general, and of Hollanders in particular. I may say that with regard to the last portion of section 7 that an application for work addressed by a Hollander to the director of the Pretoria-Pietersburg Co., he got the reply: "No, you are a Hollander."

Ad. 8. Where I spoke of treachery and bribery rather than honest battle that might be lost by the English. I can reply to this that prisoners brought into Pretoria told everybody who would hear it that the ex-Boer general Schoeman, in the course of his defence declared that he had been bribed, and that he was told at the same time that this way, viz., that of bribing, was better than the battle of Magersfontein, it costs less money and less people.

Ad. 9. That we are forced to take the oath of neutrality. I regret to say that this is so. If we refused to take this oath we should be put over the border. As an example the following: A person formerly in the employ of the *Volkstem*, who on the ground of his religious convictions was not allowed to take an oath, or to make a promise, was put to the alternative, "over the border or swear."

Ad. 10 and 11. Regarding the words used by me, "The cowards have destroyed the letters coming from Holland, their littleness is remarkable, &c., that they destroy letters containing photos and drafts."

I will acknowledge that the word used might have been a little softer or might have been left out, but that does not alter the fact. It is a fact that, according to a letter I luckily received from a friend, my mother has regularly written to me during the last eight months, one letter per month; so far I have only received one of these letters, the others must still turn up. Also letters from others have not yet been received by me.

During the month of November I sent to Holland three letters, one with photos and one with a second bill of exchange and an ordinary letter.

The first two have not come to hand, although I posted them at the same time.

I take it from this that the letters must have been destroyed, as under the South African Republic I regularly received my correspondence, and my own letters were always received by addressees.

Ad. 12. Where I wrote, "They are insignificant in many things, but great in lying." As an example I will only refer to the following incident: I was arrested in January (28), the reason of this being that I did not take off my hat while the

English National Anthem was played. Let out on bail, I was discharged the next day, as there were no grounds for punishing me.

The only words that I spoke to the magistrate after judgment were, "I thank you."

Yet some days later a Natal paper contained the following lie regarding me: "Referring to the Dutchman who posed as a German subject and made himself obnoxious to a Tommy, who civilly invited him to take off his hat while 'God Save the King' was being played, when he was brought up before the sitting magistrate, the culprit displayed contrition, and was let off with a severe admonition."

Furthermore, I can refer to the Steyn-De Wet manifesto, where it says, "The world is untruthfully informed by our enemy that he is," &c.

Ad. 13. Where I wrote that Lord Roberts left Johannesburg on an ambulance train. This information I obtained from a person named Mathwes, or Mathis, presumably an English Afrikaner of Johannesburg.

Ad. 14. Where I wrote that the Boers took Krugersdorp, with 230 prisoners, ammunition, and provisions. If this report is untrue, I cannot be blamed for it, as the report appearing in the Natal papers was to the following effect: "Near Krugersdorp" (this "near" is in Dutch, *bij* or *naast*), and I consider that the incorrectness of my report disappears thereby.

Ad. 15. The last. Why Dullstroom, a village chiefly inhabited by a people with no sympathies for the British, ex-Hollanders and Hollanders, was for the greatest part destroyed because it was Dutch, is very acceptable in war time, the fact, viz., destruction, half or entirely, remains. I might state as an example that the English village Klerksdorp never underwent a similar fate, as far as I am aware.

Recapitulating these fifteen points, I beg to bring to your Honour's notice that the statements I have made I am not the only possessor of, but that they may rightly be called "the public secret."

Much of what I have said your Honour can find in *Reynolds' Newspaper*, issued in England itself. Furthermore, other paragraphs might be found in an article trooper Harris wrote to the *Wolverhampton Gazette*, of Oliver Schreiner in a Natal paper, of November, 1900, of Joh. Butterworth, of the 1st King's Royal Rifles, in the *Hull Eastern Morning News*.

I have the honour to be

Your obedient Servant,

(Signed) J. SPOELSTRA.

To this may be added his appeal to Lord Kitchener not to deal too hardily with him, on account of the services which he had rendered to the British wounded.

[Translation.]

His Excellency Lord Kitchener,  
Commander-in-Chief of the British Army.

SIR,—The undersigned begs leave to bring the following to your notice.

That on account of a letter which has not been published, and which he had handed to a second party, he will have to stand his trial for circulating false reports concerning His Majesty's troops.

The undersigned should wish your Excellency very much not to pursue the matter further, on account of the services rendered to His Majesty's troops on former occasions, namely, in that he, in October, 1899, as assistant in the hospital at Lichtenburg, has given help and medicines, without being asked to do so, to the wounded prisoners of war of Kraaipan, who passed there; that he took the wounded acting officer, as also the sergeant, Williams, and other wounded, to the district doctor to be dressed, &c.; that he took the wounded engineer, Booth, without being asked to, into the hospital, and nursed him there. Further, that he, as Lieutenant of the Pretoria Field Ambulance, has dressed and brought to a place of safety, his own life being endangered thereby, on and from the battlefield of Magersfontein, the wounded Highlanders of the Black Watch and Seaforth regiments, and that he thereafter, with great danger to his own life, went out with the

ambulance waggon to fetch the wounded from the battlefield; that he nursed the most badly wounded for over four weeks with the utmost care; and that, as Assistant and Lieutenant of the Ambulance, he on several occasions rendered assistance to British prisoners of war. To testify to this he refers you to Lance-Corporal Lester, Soldier Slokky, Soldier Fitzpatrick, and others whose names have escaped him, whom he has nursed in the above-named Field Hospital.

On account of this, the undersigned requests your Excellency to stay the matter for which he has been accused.

I have, &c.,  
(Signed) J. SPOELSTRA.

The Court-martial found him guilty and left the sentence to Lord Kitchener. Spoelstra was sentenced to hard labour for a year and a fine of £100, or, in default of payment, a further term of six months' imprisonment. The year's imprisonment has been remitted by Lord Kitchener.

## CHAPTER VII.

## A GLIMPSE OF THE HELLISH PANORAMA.

"Shall I not visit for these things, saith the Lord, and shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this?"—JEREMIAH v. 9.

MR. MORLEY some time ago spoke of the "hellish panorama" which was unfolding itself in South Africa. In all its fulness and horror that panorama is perhaps mercifully hidden from the eyes of men. "War," said General Sherman, "is hell," and with that terrible dictum the men who have let hell loose in South Africa airily dismiss all complaints as to the atrocities which they say are inseparable from military operations. It is a curious fact that when war is in the making, and the nation is summoned with blare of trumpets and beat of drum to embark upon hostilities, we are assured that war is the most humanizing, chivalrous thing in the world. But after the war has been begun, and ugly incidents occur which are neither humanizing nor chivalrous, its advocates drown all remonstrance by the cynical observation that, after all, war is war, and war is hell, and there is no more to be said. Notwithstanding this attempt to stifle examination into the infernal panorama, it is necessary to insist that although it lies beyond the power of human pen or artist's pencil to portray the whole or even a tenth part of the ghastly abominations which are done in our name, it may nevertheless be profitable, and tend to the sobering of our national delirium, if we take advantage of the lifting of a corner of the veil of the censorship in order to catch a glimpse of what is actually going on in the Transvaal to-day, and what has been going on with remorseless persistency for more than a year now.

It is true that the evidence adduced at the Spoelstra trial is comparatively slight in bulk, and relates solely to a very short period of time, and to a very small district of territory. But it is not necessary to subject every pustule of a small-pox patient to a microscopical examination in order to know something of the state of the whole body. Neither is it necessary, in order to enable the common man and woman living at home in peace in a land mercifully preserved for 200 years from armed strife, to parade the whole ghastly total of crime perpetrated or attempted over the vast territory of the two republics. The immeasurable sufferings inflicted by war on women in the nature of things can never be fully known. With such wrongs it is as with an iceberg, of which the portion above the surface is but an infinitesimal portion of the great mass which floats unseen below.

The evidence given before the Court-martial at Pretoria, evidence which the censor tried, but tried in vain, to conceal from the eyes of the British public, is nothing but a sample, and a very small sample, of the evidence which will be available when the barbed-wire fences no longer exclude the sufferers from the outside world. But although it is only a tiny shred that is submitted to our view, it is part of the warp and woof of a Nessus' robe of fiery pain which has eaten, and is still

eating, into the very life of the Boer nation. But while it is small in quantity, it nevertheless possesses characteristics which render it invaluable as a living photograph of the realities of things at the seat of war. The evidence, to begin with, is all given on oath, given openly in public court, and subjected to a rigorous cross-examination. That in itself differentiates the statements of the witnesses from all the narratives which have been published in this country since the war began. Never before have we had one witness, let alone eleven, who stood up publicly before a Court to declare on oath as to the ill-treatment which they had suffered at the hands of our troops. It may be said, and said with truth, that such horrible and shameful incidents are inseparable from letting loose 250,000 troops among a population of scattered and helpless women. That is true, and its truth is the condemnation of this war. It is a cant cry with many persons, by no means confined to those who have advocated the war, that the British Army has spent two years in the South African Republics without a single case of impropriety being proved against a single soldier. I should be very glad to believe it; but there is Rudyard Kipling's familiar saying that Tommy Atkins is no plaster saint, but a single man in barracks, or, in this case, a single man in camp, remarkably like other human beings. We all know him at home. There is not one father of a family in the House or on the London Press who would allow his servant girl to remain out all night on a public common in England in time of profound peace in the company of a score of soldiers. If he did, he would feel that he had exposed the girl to the loss of her character. This is not merely admitted, but acted upon by all decent people who live in garrison towns or in the neighbourhood of barracks. Why, then, should they suppose that when the same men are released from all the restraints of civilization, and sent forth to burn, destroy, and loot at their own sweet will and pleasure, they will suddenly undergo so complete a transformation as to scrupulously respect the wives and daughters of the enemy. It is very unpopular to say this, and I already hear in advance the shrieks of execration of those who will declare that I am calumniating the gallant soldiers who are spending their lives in the defence of the interests of the Empire. But I do not say a word against our soldiers. I only say that they are men. What is more, I will say that if the members of the House of Commons or the journalists on the staffs of the London newspapers were to be turned loose on a country side after going through the experiences of the British Army in South Africa, I would no more expect them to emerge scatheless from the ordeal than I expect the same moral heroism on the part of Tommy Atkins.

It is an unpleasant fact, but it has got to be faced like other facts. No war can be conducted—and this war has not been conducted—without exposing multitudes of women, married and single, to the worst extremities of outrage. It is an inevitable incident of war. It is one of the normal phenomena of the military Inferno. It is absolutely impossible to attempt any comparative or quantitative estimate of the number of women who have suffered wrong at the hands of our troops. The majority of them will bury their shame in silence, and of the rest, but a decimal percentage of their complaints will ever be recorded in such a way as to reach the ears of the British public. But from

the simple details of misery and shame which were heard by the Court-martial in Spoelstra's trial we can form some kind of an idea as to what is going on at this moment in the Transvaal, and what has been going on ever since the devastation of the country was begun. Here are but a handful of women, each with her own artless tale of what happened when the British soldiers came to her house. There is hardly a house in either of the two republics that has not been visited by British troops, and very few have escaped destruction. In order, therefore, to form some idea of what we are answerable for, we must remember the number of men we have in the country, and the number of women who have been exposed to their tender mercies. We have 250,000 men at the seat of war. There are not more than 60,000 Boer women, of whom some 30,000 are at present shut up in prison camps. Not a woman is imprisoned in these camps who has not been torn from her hearth and witnessed the destruction of her household gods before she was carted across the veldt in the company of strange and hostile men to an unknown destination. Who can adequately realize what elements of tragic sorrow lie hidden in every such enforced trek across the veldt? The imagination of man is more easily kindled by the simple narrative of the sufferings of a few than by the vast vague outline of the misery of multitudes. We are all more or less like women, of whom Mrs. Browning said, a single red-haired child sick of a fever will rouse them to a passion of pity, while as for a million sick they would as soon weep for the rule of three or vulgar fractions.

What seems to me, I confess, the element of greatest importance in the evidence given at the Spoelstra trial is that it enables us to realize and individualize a few of the innumerable multitude of victims who have been sacrificed, and who are still being sacrificed day after day and night after night, to the fetish of the paramountcy of Britain. The trial began on the 26th April, and did not end till the 30th. Mr. Spoelstra, who was defended by an able local counsel, complained bitterly that he was only allowed two days for the collection of his witnesses, and that he was denied access to the women's camp at Irene, where he could have collected many more witnesses without difficulty. As it was, he appeared in court with thirty witnesses, of whom only eleven had been heard, when the court decided that they had heard enough, and proceeded to pass judgment. Such, at least, is the story as it was current at Pretoria. The notes of the official stenographer, if such a being exists in Pretoria, are not accessible to us here. The precautions taken by the censor against our obtaining direct information may have led to misapprehensions as to some of the facts. But what is certain, is that Spoelstra was not allowed to enter the camp at Irene, where most of his witnesses were imprisoned, and that only one-third of his witnesses were actually heard in court. The handful of witnesses who were examined in court can, therefore, give us no conception of the mass of evidence which could be collected if opportunity and time were afforded. Without any further observations, I simply reprint the report of the trial as it reached me from a sure source.

A GLIMPSE OF THE HELLISH PANORAMA.

COURT-MARTIAL TRIAL.

26th April, 1901, and following days.

---

Accused: J. SPOELSTRA.

Indictor: PROVOST-MARSHAL.

Indictment: (*See* previous Chapter.)

Prosecutor: MAJOR LINGHAM, Australian.

Counsel for the Defence: J. BARRANGE.

Interpreter: LIEUT. MARAISE.

The Court was constituted as follows—

PRESIDENT LIEUT.-COL. SMITH.

MAJOR D. S. STEWARD, N.F., and MAJOR C. G. HENSHAW, R.F.A.,  
members.

The case was watched on behalf of the Netherlands Government by the  
Consul-General of the Netherlands at Pretoria.

ATTEMPTED OUTRAGE BY AN OFFICIAL.

The President opened the Court at 10 a.m. on the 26th April, 1901. The  
prosecutor reads petition from prisoner requesting to stay the proceedings on the  
ground of services rendered to the British prisoners while connected with the  
ambulance. (*See* previous Chapter.)

First witness for the defence called and sworn deposes—

My name is Mrs. Van Rooyen of Roodeplaats, district Pretoria.

By the Counsel for the defence—

Yes, I remember a certain Mr. E—n, of the Intelligence Department. He is  
an official. He came to my house with a cart and a pair of horses. He came to  
fetch me to go to Waterfall.

He had three Kaffirs with him.

He came in the evening at 8 o'clock.

He came to take me to the compound.

I did not want to go because it was so late, and I wished to wait till the next  
morning.

He said I had to go that night.

My father-in-law was at the house at the time.

It was a Cape cart E—n came in.

E—n did not take my father too, he remained in the house. It was a very  
dark night. One Kaffir was in front leading the horses and two others walked  
before the cart.

As soon as we left the house E—n said, "Those women who want assistance  
from the English must do as we want them and as we wish.

He then undressed himself partly, and wanted me to do the same. I of  
course refused.

He then struggled with me, trying to undo my clothes, and continued trying  
to do so all the way to Waterfall.

The distance is about one and a half hours on horseback.

When he saw that he could not succeed that way, he stopped the cart, and  
tried to pull me out, and take me into the veldt.

He stopped the cart when we were about half way from the house.

I then ordered the Kaffir to drive on and E—n jumped in when we were  
driving on.

E—n then said that if I did not submit he would shoot me. I did not see a revolver.

The whole way he struggled with me. He tore my clothes and bruised me. My underclothes were badly torn.

He assaulted me down to the place of our destination. On arrival at Waterfall E—n tried to force me into his room.

By the prosecution—

We left Roodeplaats at 8.30 p.m., and arrived at Waterfall at about 12 o'clock that night.

Yes, I said the whole way he struggled with me.

(Detail unfit for publication.) Yes, I called and shouted out loudly. The Kaffir who was leading the horses must have heard it. The road is fairly good all the way. The horses walked all the way. I did not know E—n at all. I know his name because he introduced himself when he came into the room.

He told me he belonged to the Intelligence Department.

Yes, I have seen him since. I think twice in the town here in Pretoria. I have never been at the Intelligence Department to find out whether he really belongs to that Department. Yes, when I arrived at Waterfall I complained about E—n's behaviour to the Commandant there. His name is McCready, and he is an officer.

No, I do not know his rank, but I remember he was a British officer.

No, I did not notice what he had on his shoulder. I know his name because he wrote me a letter about some provisions.

Note.—A letter signed by the Commandant in question was at this stage produced in Court, and the signature compared with the name given by deponent, which proved correct.

The Commandant asked what had happened, and I told him something of it.

The Commandant said nothing. He wanted to call E—n to interpret for me, but I would not see him. I did not see E—n speak to the Commandant nor the Commandant to E—n. I do not know whether he took any steps in the matter. I left Waterfall the next day, the Dec. 22nd, 1900. I did not complain when I arrived at Pretoria because my husband dissuaded me from doing so.

I arrived at Pretoria on Dec. 22nd.

No re-examination by the Council for the defence.

#### VIOLATING A HUSBAND'S GRAVE.

Second Witness for the defence called and sworn, deposes—

My name is Mrs. Widow Barnard. I live at Kromrivier district, Rustenburg.

By the Council for the Defence—

Yes, I remember the English troops coming to my place. The first time they came on Oct. 18th, 1900.

Yes, they did a great deal of harm; they burnt my waggons, carts, a tobacco store with thousands of rolls of tobacco, and did general damage.

It was a body of cavalry, and I don't know the officer.

They left on the night of the 18th, and returned the next morning with their waggons. Then they took all my cattle and cows.

I got no receipt for them, and was told that when my three sons came back from commando I would be given a receipt.

No, they did not count the cattle, I believe, but I don't know.

Note.—Prosecution objects to the last question by the Counsel for the defence.

The same day they drove their mules and horses into my lands, destroying all the crops, and also killed all my pigs, and killed and took all my fowls, and I had nothing left.

They also opened the grave of my late husband, took out the coffin, and pulled off the mountings (meaning the black shroud covering the coffin, as afterwards appeared).

By the Prosecution—

Before I left on the 18th I saw my sons. It was some fifteen days before, and I only saw two of them. They did not stay on the farm, they were with a patrol.

They did not stop long; they just looked in, had a cup of coffee, and moved on. No Boers stayed at my house before the cavalry came.

Two nights before a Field Cornet came with a commando, and only those that were related to us called in.

They passed the house pretty frequently.

SEARCHING FOR ARMS AT NIGHT.

Third witness for the defence called and sworn, deposes :—

My name is Mrs. Johannes Lampé. I am a married woman. I live in the town of Rustenburg.

By the Counsel for the defence—

I do remember the English troops coming into Rustenburg. They came the first time in the month of June.

I know Mrs. de Ridder, she was very ill at the time; this was in the month of November.

On a certain night when Mrs. de Ridder was very ill in bed the house was inspected by a Captain and four men.

I was at Mrs. de Ridder's house at the time.

The Captain and his men searched the house, and moved the bed on which Mrs. de Ridder was lying. They moved her about also, and rolled her from one side of the bed to the other. They said they were following up orders in doing so.

Yes, the doctor had given strict orders that she was on no account to be moved.

I have told the Captain this. There was also a Mrs. de Jager in the house. They took no notice of it.

Mrs. de Ridder died in December. She was fifty years old when she died. She died of cancer in the stomach.

I don't know for certain whether it was early in December or late in December when Mrs. de Ridder died, but I think it was at the beginning.

She died, I think, on the 5th December; it was four or five weeks after the Captain and his men were at the house.

I know a Captain of the name of Lestor. He put the women on empty waggons and took them away. He belongs to the police.

I do not know anything about the burning of goods belonging to Mrs. Pistorius by order of Captain Lestor.

Captain Lestor came to Mrs. de Ridder's house to make a search.

A BABY BORN IN A WAGGON.

I am a refugee from Rustenburg. I know of one instance of a woman being confined while travelling. I was not on the same waggon with this woman, but on another waggon with the same convoy. I saw the child. I left Rustenburg at the beginning of January. I saw the woman with the child of one day old being put out of the waggon and on to the ground, where they left her.

They left her in the open with other women and children. It was after the night when the child was born.

I was without food from Rustenburg to Rietfontein, from Tuesday till Friday. I applied for a permit to buy food, but I was told that I would get rations for eight days. I was not supplied with food by the British, I had to buy my own. Food was taken from me in August and September by officers and men.

I asked the Captain whether he would put us down in the veldt at Irene, but he said he had orders to send me to Pretoria. When we were put down from the waggons at Rietfontein, I went with the other women to see the general, but were prevented from doing so by a couple of soldiers.

By the prosecution—

I have complaints against the British troops when officers were present.

They took all the food I had in the house and left me nothing. I then asked them to leave me some, but they would not. This was in August and September.

I managed to live from the months of August and September up to the time I left Rustenburg by buying food again in Rustenburg.

I had sufficient money to buy food.

My husband is still at the front fighting.

I think he is with General de la Rey.

I have not seen him for eight months.

Nobody brought me messages from him.

I don't know whether he is alive at this moment.

He once surrendered and took up arms again, and is still fighting.

Yes, I said that Captain Lestor was at Mrs. de Ridder's house. I don't know whether he belongs to Baden Powell's police. I know that he belongs to the police, because he said so. I saw his name on permits he signed and passes for Kaffirs. I frequently saw him with the police at Rustenburg during the month of October to the time I left. Captain Lestor came to Mrs. de Ridder's house at 12 o'clock at night. I don't know the exact date, but I think it was early in November. They were not all awake in the house, some were asleep, but they all got up. I was in bed at the time. My house is next to Mrs. de Ridder's.

I was at Mrs. Ridder's house to help her—she was an invalid.

The Captain just walked in and commenced to search all the rooms.

He may have looked for arms. I was later informed that he did. I had no conversation with him. He did not exactly explain the reason of his visit. He said he was following orders in searching the house.

He was extremely uncivil. He was asked not to move the sick person, but he took no notice. I do not know of arms having been concealed in Rustenburg in or under beds.

It did not strike me that they might be looking for arms; of course I saw they were looking for something, but I did not know they were looking for arms. They first lifted the mattress on which the sick woman was lying on one side, and then on the other side, and looked underneath it. Mrs. de Ridder was bodily rolled from right to left, and from left to right. This is all the roughness I know of. Mrs. de Ridder died.

She has no sons in Rustenburg. As far as I know, she received no communication from them. I was not likely to have known. There were no men in the house at the time.

Before the British came there were two men, Wood and Heystek. They are on commando. They left the house before the British troops came. I don't know whether either of these men have been at Mrs. de Ridder's house, and I don't want to inquire about it. I saw them frequently before the British came.

I can't see anybody when he is on commando.

I have not seen these two men since the British came to Rustenburg.

Again I swear that I have not seen them since the British came into Rustenburg.

I saw the woman with the one-day-old child taken out of the waggon and placed on the veldt.

I know the child was one day old, because I had seen the mother the night before, and she had no child then.

One of the women was with the mother and child, and looked after them voluntarily. At 2 o'clock in the morning the waggons moved on again after a halt.

The child was born in the night. I do not know when the child was born, but the woman who attended her will know all about it.

The woman was put out at the next outspan.

We inspanned at 8 o'clock in the night, and the next outspan was about 12, 1, or 2 o'clock the following afternoon.

At this juncture the Court adjourned till 2.30 p.m. of the same day.

The Court was opened at 2.30 p.m.

By the prosecution—

They outspanned at Rietfontein and I remained there for about twelve days; others left before that.

I am the party who told the prisoner now before the Court about this confinement case.

I did not tell him everything, but I mentioned other people from whom he could get every information of bad treatment by the troops.

Another case of ill-treatment I experienced myself was when Rustenburg had been cut off from all communication for a long time and foodstuffs had become very scarce. Afterwards some food came in, and Captain Graham ordered that no foodstuffs or anything could be bought by women who had any relatives still on commando. If any of the members of the family were on the commando the women were prohibited from buying anything.

#### DENIED NECESSARIES IN CHILD-BIRTH.

I was about to be confined myself, and could not even get a piece of soap or

some sugar, or, in fact, anything. This happened eleven days before my confinement. I was confined on the 29th November, 1900, so this must have been on the 18th. I am certain it was Captain Graham. I sent a girl in my service to him to get a permit to buy some soap and things, but I was refused because my husband is still fighting. I do not know to what regiment Captain Graham belongs; we called him the Town Captain.

The mother who was confined was put down on the open veldt. Reitfontein is open veldt. There were a few tents, but we were put down some distance from the tents.

The waggons were about 100 or 200 yards away. The woman remained there for four days without a tent. She had some sort of covering. She was attended to by the other woman friend.

The Prosecutor—

You have just become a mother yourself, and yet you, the author of this story about the terrible barbarity of the British, left her there to herself, and never came near her during those twelve days you were in Rietfontein?

Witness under cross-examination—

I could not do anything. I hadn't been allowed to bring anything with me. I was very sick myself, and had five children to look after, with no servants to help me. I just had a piece of tarpaulin, and afterwards a friend took me into a tent.

I don't know how many women were in the waggon with the woman when she was confined, but Mrs. Erasmus knows all about it.

Re-examined by Counsel for the defence, the witness deposes—

It was quite recently that I told the prisoner about this confinement incident. At the most a week ago. I did not volunteer the statement; Mr. Spoelstra asked about it, and then I told him all I knew.

Counsel for the Defendant—

The letter in question was written by Spoelstra, I believe, in February.

#### THE MOTHER AND THE NEW-BORN CHILD.

The fourth witness for the defence called and sworn, deposes—

My name is Johanna Erasmus. I live at Sterkstroom, Roodekopjes, district Rustenburg.

By the Counsel for the defence—

I remember when I was brought in from Rustenburg. On the 9th January I left my farm.

They took me to Pretoria. I came in a trolley waggon to the camp at Rietfontein, and from there with another waggon. There were six children and five women on the waggon.

I remember a woman being confined during the journey. It was Franz Engelbrecht's wife. The child was born on the night of the 9th January, at 11 o'clock.

The waggon had stopped when the child was born. At 2 o'clock in the night we went on again, and the woman and child went along. We left in the night at 2 o'clock, and we did not stop again until about 5 o'clock the next afternoon.

The woman's mother told the conductor of the waggon that they could not go on account of this woman having been confined. The conductor said that he could not wait; he had his orders, which he must follow up.

When we arrived at Rietfontein we were told that everything had been taken off the waggons, as they were required.

The woman and child were put on a second waggon, but were taken off that waggon next morning.

I had a small piece of cloth to cover her.

She had no tent given her then, but I and somebody else put her under some covering we had made ourselves. On the second day the mother of the woman went up to the camp and asked for a tent, but she got none.

It was raining and the woman got wet. The woman is now at Irene in the camp.

## LEFT TWO DAYS IN SCORCHING SUN.

By the prosecution—

When the woman was confined she was fairly comfortable, she had some sort of bed, and I provided her with what I could. But she had to stand it. We had no tent waggon. I tied some pieces of wood on the sides of the waggon and put some covering over that.

It was a very dark night when the woman was confined. There were only the Kaffirs about the waggon. There were no soldiers near the waggon at the time of the confinement. The name of the place where the confinement took place was Wolhuterskop. This is a farm. There lived people on the farm. We could not go to the farmhouse to ask if the woman and child could stay there, we had to stay in camp. We did not ask to go there. It was very dark and there was no time. I wanted to remain there. I am of opinion that it would have been much better for the woman to have stayed there for some time until she got a little stronger than to go on to Rietfontein. I mean that they all should have remained there for some time until the woman was better and stronger.

Yes, of course, the woman suffered very much in the rain. The covering we had provided was very bad. It rained very much, everything was wet.

When they put us off the waggon at Rietfontein, all we had in the shape of tarpaulin was taken away by the troops. This happened at the first camp rather.

When we arrived at Rietfontein all our clothes were wet; in fact, everything was wet.

We had no fresh clothes to put on.

The woman who was confined was not very wet, we had covered her with everything we could lay our hands on.

It was late in the evening when we were transferred from the one waggon to the other waggon.

We remained in the second waggon until the next day at sunrise. It was not raining when we were transferred to the other waggon. The second waggon was a little better than the first one.

I made the covering for the woman out of piece of tent from another waggon. I got this piece of tent from Hermanus Engelbrecht's cousin. He was with us.

The covering was not at all sufficient. It was very bad and the sun scorched the woman. She was ill for ten days. I should not have left the poor woman for two days in the scorching sun without a tent, but when we first applied for a tent for the woman our application was not granted.

The woman's mother went to ask for a tent.

They told her they had no tent.

I know that, because I was there. There was an empty tent the day after that, and we got that.

We came on Friday, and got the tent on the third day in the evening, late.

By the President of the Court—

Yes, the woman was in the scorching sun for two full days, and on the third day she obtained a tent.

By the Prosecutor—

There was a large women's camp at Rietfontein; some had tents and some had not. For six days, to my knowledge, thirty-three families were without covering.

Some had small pieces of tarpaulin, and some only had blankets. Our camp was about 100 yards from the other camp. There were no soldiers about our camp.

The soldiers all had tents. The tent we ultimately got came from the women's camp, and they had it from the soldiers.

We were just off-loaded without any covering.

We did not apply the first time at the women's camp; we asked the guard at the women's camp.

We had nobody to tell us where to go.

The second day, the mother of the woman, Mrs. Engelbrecht, went to the guard to ask for a tent, but could not get it. They said they had no tent. On the third day we got a tent. The tent was ready pitched. We did not apply there the first day because we were simply dumped down and nobody assisted us.

They had taken us from our houses, and should therefore look after us.

The soldiers treated me badly at my house, but otherwise I have no complaint, as far as I am concerned, against the soldiers.

They did not bother the woman during or after the confinement.

They did not peep into the waggon when the woman was confined, nor laughed at us.

By the Counsel for the defendant—

There was a conductor with the waggons. He rode alongside.

The conductor was not alongside our waggon at the time the woman was confined, we were by ourselves.

The piece of covering we provided covered about three ribs of the waggon.

It was a flat waggon, with no tent at all. We put some pieces of wood on the sides for the covering.

(Court adjourns.)

**SOLDIERS AT NIGHT AMONG SLEEPING WOMEN.**

Saturday, April 27th, 1901. Sworn.

Fifth witness for the defence called, and deposes—

My name is Mrs. Jacobs. I live at Sterkstroom, district of Rustenburg.

By the Counsel for the defence—

I remember the British troops coming to my house.

It was in the beginning of September, 1900.

They broke into my house during the night.

It was about ten o'clock.

My four daughters and others were in the house, all women-folks.

We had placed a table behind the door, but they kicked open the top part of the door, and two men jumped in. The one had a gun and the other a sword in his hand.

The first one pointed his gun at me.

I said to him, "Please don't shoot me," but he said nothing. My daughter took hold of the gun and pushed it aside. We then went into the front room. The same two soldiers followed us there. One of them took hold of my daughter's arm. He said to my daughter, "You must come this way with me." She took hold of my clothes. The women were all asleep on the floor. The soldiers jumped on the bed. They came back a second time. After the first occasion I asked for a guard.

The second time also two men came late at night.

They asked for a candle, and on my asking them what they wanted to do with a candle, they said the officer wanted one.

I gave the candle, and one took off his coat, and jumped on the bed with the women.

They jumped and yelled, and the guard came and asked us whether he did not look well after us.

We then told the guard that the men had lain on the bed with the women. When the men got into the bed they put out the light and it was quite dark. When the guard came the soldiers ran away.

The President of the Court here remarked that the soldiers probably wanted nothing but to sleep and have a rest.

No cross-examination by the prosecutor.

**ATTEMPTED RAPE.**

The sixth witness for the defence called and sworn, deposes—

My name is Mrs. Gouws, of Uitzich, district Pretoria.

By the Council for the defence—

I remember the troops coming to my place. It was on Aug. 12th or 13th.

They came continually. My house is near the road. The first time they came they took everything I had. There were about twenty or thirty of them. They asked for bread. I had got none and could not give it.

One morning four came, and asked my little boy of fourteen years for bread. He said mother had no bread.

One of them took me by the throat and tried to throttle me. After that three came the same day at about three o'clock in the afternoon, and they searched the house; and when they could not find anything, they asked for bread. I had none, and one of them took a piece of bread out of his pocket and gave it to my little

boy. Another of the three men gave some biscuits, and told the boy to go to the Red Cross. Two of the men also left, and one stayed behind. I wanted to go into my bedroom, and just as I would close the door he came behind me and took hold of me by the throat, and said indecent words to me. He said, "Give me your —," and tried to have carnal conversation with me.

(The witness here got very excited, took the Counsel for the defence and the interpreter by the throat, to show how the soldier treated her, and exclaimed, "If ever I get hold of him he will know it.")

I freed myself and ran into the kitchen. He followed me and again got hold of me by the throat and forced me into a chair, and repeated the indecent words. I again managed to release myself, and ran into the house, and he then rode away.

I thereupon fainted.

By the prosecution—

My husband's name is Dirk Gouws.

I did not tell the Rev. Broekhuizen that I had been raped.

I did not tell anybody else that that took place.

I told Mrs. van Broekhuizen, Mr. van Broekhuizen's mother, something about what happened. I do not know that my husband wrote a letter to the Provost Marshal.

The soldier who got hold of me spoke English.

I do not speak English.

I know that the soldiers wanted bread because they said "Bread, bread," and I understand that.

The exact words the soldier said to me were "P—p—."

I knew very well what he meant when he took hold of me.

He said those words to me.

My Kaffir understands a little English, but he was not there. I know the soldier told my little boy to go to the Red Cross, because I know the word "Red Cross." I hear it so often.

The ambulance waggons were standing near my house.

They wanted the boy out of the road so as to have me all alone.

I can understand English a little, as words such as "good," "there," "ambulance," "bread," because I hear them so often.

Re-examined by the Counsel for the defence, the witness deposes—

This matter was reported to the Governor.

I do not know when it was reported. The matter was also reported to and investigated by the general in the artillery barracks. That was about the end of August or the beginning of September.

I do not know the result of the investigation.

I do not know the name of the general.

#### THE HUSBAND'S STORY.

The seventh witness for the defence called and sworn, deposes—

My name is Dirk Gouws.

By the Counsel for the defence—

I am the husband of Mrs. Gouws, the last witness. I remember my wife being assaulted by soldiers. My wife complained to the captain.

I made an affidavit before the Provost Marshal. Captain Hughes wrote a letter for me, and I signed it. I did not write the letter myself.

Note.—Affidavit (letter) here read and confirmed by Gouws.

I told my wife that I made this affidavit.

By the prosecution—

I told her I was before the Provost Marshal and I told her that I made this affidavit. I was first of all before the Governor. I told my wife that I was before the Governor, and that I signed a letter before Captain Hughes.

If my wife said that I did not tell her that I had signed a letter, it is an untruth.

I naturally do not tell my wife everything that I do or every step that I take.

I told my wife that I had been before the Military Governor, and that the Governor asked me to tell him everything that happened.

The Provost Marshal wrote the affidavit from my statements and I signed it. It was written on his questions.

I was not intimidated or coerced in any way.

When I was before the Provost Marshal he asked me to tell him what I had said before the Military Governor. I thereupon told him to ask me questions in the same way that the Military Governor had done.

I know the Rev. Mr. Broekhuizen. I am a member of his Church. I did not know Mr. Van Broekhuizen wrote a letter to the papers about this matter.

Neither the Provost Marshal nor the Governor read anything to me from a paper.

I don't remember ever having read an extract from a paper *re* my wife.

I never spoke to the Rev. Mr. Broekhuizen about this matter. Yes, I say in my statement that I was very indignant because it was said that my wife *had* been raped, which is not so, and I refute that.

The Military Governor was very glad to have my statement, and I said that when I saw anything in the papers about this matter I would contradict it. I don't want that published.

The Military Governor did not tell me who wrote about it. Yes, I have said that I have seen a great deal of soldiers, and that they behaved well, and I could speak well of them. They generally behaved very well, except, of course, in regard to my wife.

To me personally they always did.

Re-examined by the Counsel for the defence—

Outside the case of my wife, I do not, to my personal knowledge, know of cases of disbehaviour of soldiers.

#### PERSONAL VIOLENCE AND DESTRUCTION OF PROPERTY.

Eighth witness for the defence called and sworn, deposes:—

My name is Susanna Moerdijk. I am a married woman. I live at Roodekopjes, district Rustenburg.

By the Counsel for the defendant—

I remember the British troops coming to my place. They came on the 1st October, and left again on the third of that month.

The first time in October an officer came to my house and said to me that I must allow him to sleep with me in my room.

He spoke English and a little Dutch mixed, so that I could understand him.

I am quite certain that he asked me to sleep with me (?).

I refused.

When I refused he told me "I was a woman of the bed" (meaning a prostitute). I said I am a woman of my husband's bed, and not of other men's beds.

I said I would not do it at all, and that I never did that sort of thing.

I then went outside to the oven. He followed me and asked me again, and I said "on no account." When he asked me again, he said, "Come into the house and make 'Chic, chic' with me." I said, "No, I will not do it," and just as I turned round the officer, who had a knobkerrie with a heavy knob in his hand, struck me with it in the small of my back.

He hit me so hard that I would fall. (Afrikaner: Hij het zoo vinnig geslaan, dat ik wou geval het.) My mother came and brought me into the house.

He did not then leave.

He told other men to destroy everything in the house.

The men then destroyed everything; the officer remained and gave his orders to the men to smash everything, to take the poultry, &c., which was done. When they had done all this they left.

#### A MOTHER FORBIDDEN TO BURY HER ONLY CHILD.

I am also the woman they refused to bury her child.

It was on the 15th January, 1901, that we were told that we had to leave on the 16th. The troops had come again then. My child had died on the 15th. The troops came and took us all away. I told them about the death of my child, and asked permission to bury it. I asked the officer. He said he could not allow it.

I said, "But, officer, it is a human being; you must allow me to go with my mother to bury my own child in the graveyard." He would not let me go. The graveyard is about a mile away. My mother looked after the Kaffirs, who buried

the child, but I, the mother, was not allowed to go, but was placed on a waggon. The waggons waited till my mother came back.

By the Prosecution. Cross-examined, witness deposes—

My husband is on commando. He never surrendered, nor did he ever lay down arms.

Nine months ago I saw him last. The only Boers that once came to my house in August were De la Rey and De Wet. No Boers were in the house in September and October that I know of. The officer who came to my house and wanted to sleep with me had three red stripes, and I thought he was an officer. The officer spoke English and Dutch mixed (*deur mekaar*). I left my farm on the 16th January, 1901.

Yes, they smashed everything in the house, took all my food, burned it, or threw it into the water.

From November, 1900, till the 16th January, 1901, we lived on ears of corn we found in the fields.

Yes; we lived on these alone. We ground them in a coffee mill. This mill was in another woman's house. My bed was in my mother's house, where I slept at night. Two wooden bedsteads, four tables, eight chairs in the sitting-room, everything in the drawing-room, all the crockery and things in the dining-room, were all smashed. Just what happened to be at my mother's house, my own bed and a coffee mill, was not smashed. They took all my clothes. I did not get food from my mother, they had taken it all away from her; together we picked up the ears of corn we could find and lived on these. They did not smash my mother's furniture. They took food and soap away. My child died at 12 o'clock midday on the 15th January, 1901, and we were told to leave on the 16th. The waggon came to take me away at 1 o'clock in the morning. About 11 o'clock the waggons left the house. I did not bury the child at once after 12 o'clock on the 15th, although we had to leave on the next day, because a child is a human being, and I could not just put my child under the ground as it was.

On the afternoon of the 15th I asked a Kaffir on the other side of the river to make a coffin for my child.

The next day at 9 o'clock I received the coffin. I did not then bury the child at once, because I was very sad and upset, and of course there is always something to do.

I do not know why I was not allowed to do the last honour to my dead child. I suppose the officer had some spite against me. This is the only explanation I can give. I said it was the last service I could render my child and wanted to go, but they held me fast and prevented me from going.

Of course I was very much upset, and was crying. I naturally felt very bad, it was my only child.

I was not hysterical. I was very solemn and sad, but not off my head. The officer was very angry with me because I wanted to go, he just wanted to dig a hole in front of the door and put the child in there.

The convoy was not kept waiting because of the burial of my child, they had to go from house to house; the waggons were not delayed on account of my child. I do not know how long it took to bury the child.

My mother came back in time. The things were loaded on the waggons. The officer said that we had all to be ready in five minutes and on the waggons, otherwise everything and everybody would be chucked on the waggons by the soldiers.

#### THE VALUE OF A PROTECTION PASS.

At this juncture the Court adjourned until Monday, the 29th April, 1901, at 10 o'clock a.m.

Monday, 29th April, 1901, 10 a.m.

Ninth witness for the defence called and sworn, deposes—

My name is Mrs. v. d. Merwe, of Klip drift district, Pretoria.

By the Counsel for the defence—

I remember the British troops coming to my place. The first time they came on the 1st October, 1900. They said the pass I had was no good, and they gave me a protection pass (produced in Court).

At first they protected me well, but on the 15th December a commando came to my farm, and they asked me for my protection pass. I showed it them,

and they said it was no good. They killed all my poultry, opened all the boxes in my house, and burnt my wheat. What they wanted they took out of the house. By the prosecution—

My husband is not on commando, but in town. He has not been on commando from the 22nd March last year, and remained at the house until the 3rd October, 1900.

A CRIMINAL ASSAULT.

Tenth witness for the defence called and sworn, deposes—

My name is Mrs. Botha, of Middelkraal district, Rustenburg.

By the Counsel for the defence—

I remember the British troops coming to my house.

I don't know the exact date, but it was in September, 1900, on a Saturday morning.

A soldier broke into my house. Other troops were some distance from the house.

He asked me where my husband was, and I said my husband is not here.

He asked me whether there was any ammunition in the house, and I showed him a note to the effect that my husband had surrendered arms.

He told me three times that I must go with him into my bedroom, but I refused.

The third time I refused he struck me in the face and I fell down. While I was on the ground he caught hold of my throat and nearly throttled me. I felt so bad that I had a swollen throat for three days. He then took me by the legs and dragged me into my bedroom. There he threw me half on and half off the bed. but every time he tried to have connection with me I managed to release myself. He did not give it up, however, but pulled me forcibly about. I continued struggling against him, but at last I was so powerless that I could resist no longer, and he finally succeeded in raping me.

In reply—

Yes, he partly undressed and did commit the act.

The President of the Court here exhorts the witness to speak the truth as she is under oath, and the offence of rape is a very serious one.

The witness stated that she is well aware of the solemnness of an oath, and that it is the pure and solemn truth that the soldier *did* rape her, and she again swears that the man *did* effect his purpose.

He was a very big man, almost six feet, a man somewhat like the orderly of the Court, and for three days I could only walk with difficulty.

There is a bruise on my arm still, caused by the struggle. After he had gone I took flight.

“MY MOTHER IS KILLED! MY MOTHER IS KILLED!”

By the prosecution—

I cannot say the exact date on which this happened. It certainly was an important event, but I was so frightened and upset that I never thought of writing down the date. I asked who the general was commanding the troops, and they told me it was the general who released Baden Powell at Mafeking.

It must have been at the beginning of September.

My husband was not on commando. He was not at that moment in the house.

He was somewhere on the farm.

I don't know where exactly. My farm is a big farm. I don't know how many morgen; we women folk don't know about these things.

There are a lot of other people on the farm. When the soldier came into the house my two little daughters, one of seven years and one of five years, were in the house with me. I have five children in all. When the man caught hold of me I screamed out, and for that reason he tried to throttle me. I struggled with him for nearly an hour until I could struggle no more.

My two little daughters were in the house until the soldier struck me down, and then they got frightened and ran out of the house.

When they saw me fall down they ran out of the house and yelled, “My mother is killed! my mother is killed!”

Before I was struck down they said nothing, but stood beside me.

The nearest house from ours is about 500 yards distant. Nobody came to my assistance, although the children stood screaming. This happened at about 10 a.m.

Where my house stands it is bare. It is built against a ridge (Afrik., randje). There are trees a little distance from the house. The man came to the house on horseback, and when he came in he put his gun against the wall and left his horse in front of the house. Some of the neighbours could have seen the horse.

Hendrik Swartz's wife did. I did not look at the clock, whether the man was there for a full hour, but I believe it must have been an hour.

Nobody came near the house during that hour. When the soldier let go of me I went out of the house (Afrik., het gevlug), and near the front door I met Mrs. Swartz and we took flight together. I did not see Mrs. Swartz come, I met her as she was coming along.

She, Mrs. Swartz, saw the soldier. We went to a Mrs. Duplessis'. I did tell my husband about this.

He came at dark. I believe Mrs. Swartz is still on the farm. I don't know exactly how many times the man had connection with me. I was so frightened and upset.

I struggled until I could not struggle any more.

He did not knock me down at once when he came into the house, he stood there for a while, asked where my husband was, and, finally, after he had asked me three times to go into my bedroom with him and I refused, he struck me down. (Repeats what occurred). He was a stout, big fellow.

The Prosecution draws the attention of the Court to the fact that the witness is but a frail, delicate-looking woman, and that she says she struggled for something like an hour with a stout, big man.

The Counsel for the defence remarks that delicate-looking and thin women may be very wiry

I told people about what had happened, but did not know where to complain. I was afraid to stay in the house.

I did not run, I could not, in fact; I am sure I could only walk.

About sundown I walked back to the house. I do not know of my husband making a complaint.

Of course I considered this a dreadful thing. We were all frightened. My husband was also frightened.

The other soldiers were on the other side of the spruit, not so far away. When I asked who the General was, I was told it was the General who relieved Baden Powell, but no name was given me. My husband did not know what to do.

“ WE ENGLISH ARE NOT A BARBAROUS NATION.”

The President remarked with some excitement: If such a most awful thing happened to a woman as being raped, would it not be the first thing for a man to do to rush out and bring the guilty man to justice? He ought to risk his life for that. There was no reason for him to be frightened. We English are not a barbarous nation.

Witness continued—

I do not know where my husband is at present. He is in the employ of the British now as a cattle guard. He has been away for thirteen days. I live in the town, but I have been warned to go to Irene.

If a soldier broke into my house now and did or tried to rape me, I would go immediately to an officer. I know better now.

The soldier had a belt round the waist, straps over the shoulders, and had putties on.

By the President—

I received no money to give this testimony. I give it quite voluntarily. The first day I came up here I told Berrange and Spoelstra about it.

By the Prosecution—

I did not notice whether the soldier shut the door when he came into the house. (Points out position where he stood.) The children stood with me near the table. I already said that the children were only with me until the man struck me down. The children then ran out. I heard them scream outside the house. I could not see where they stood. The children were too frightened to come in again.

HOW PRIVATE PROPERTY IS RESPECTED.

The last witness for the defence called and sworn, deposes—

My name is Mrs. Barnard, of Kromriver district, Rustenburg. I am the wife of Jan Barnard.

By the Counsel for the defence—

I remember the British troops coming to my place, the first time on Oct. 18th last. They burnt our waggons and wheat, and took some of the fowls and pigs. The second time they came was on Nov. 14th, with an ambulance and some cannon. On Dec. 7th they treated my husband (ou' man) badly. Some of the men came in by the door and destroyed everything. They broke and smashed what they could get hold of. I went to the English laager and lodged a complaint. When I came back my husband was lying on the bed like a corpse, partly undressed.

The soldiers were standing on the bed, one at the head and one at the foot-end.

I was told to keep quiet or I would be tied and sent to Pretoria.

They then took all the papers from under the bed, my transfers, the children's clothes, &c. I then went into the kitchen; there were three soldiers busy digging holes. They took the money that was buried there, my own money, £103, and and my married daughter's money, £130. The money was all in one hole. I never got the money back, not a penny of it. I complained to the officer on Saturday morning.

The officer said it is the same with all the Boers. The officer was named Brugby. They took everything from us. They did not ill-treat me personally. When they came to fetch us away I told a man, Ferriera, who said he was the conductor, that I was seventy-two years old and my husband eighty-two, and that we could not go.

He said people might come and murder us, and would not let us stay.

Myself, my husband, Mrs. van Rooyen, and five children were loaded on an open buck-waggon.

By the President—

I sincerely hope that I will get the money back some day. It is all I have got. I did not tell the prisoner exactly what had happened. I just told him that I had damage. I believe I saw him on Friday or Thursday.

By the Counsel for the defence—

I told many people about this affair. I made it fairly public.

I arrived here on the 31st January, and told different kind of people about it.

By the President—

Mrs. van Haagen has kindly taken us in and supports us.

We got a little meal and a little coffee from the British Government every Thursday.

By the Prosecution—

After the troops destroyed everything I complained to the officer on the Saturday.

The officer was always called Brugby.

I do not know whether he was there long or not, but I saw him frequently. He talked a little Dutch, but he had his interpreter. When I talked to him he said "Yes." He called v. d. Merwe and told him to tell me that I was to keep quiet or I should be sent away. But I did not. I was not personally ill-treated.

One of my sons was killed on commando, and two are still fighting.

Court adjourned till 2.30 p.m.

Mr. Barrange, having addressed the Court in defence of Spoelstra, Major Lingham replied for the prosecution, and after a few final words from Mr. Barrange, the Court found Spoelstra guilty, and he was sentenced, as has already been stated, to a fine of £100 with one year's imprisonment, which was almost immediately afterwards remitted by Lord Kitchener.

## CHAPTER VIII.

## THE SECRET OF THE RESISTANCE OF THE BOERS.

THERE has been much discussion in the House of Commons and elsewhere as to the secret of the indomitable persistence of the Boers in their opposition to the overwhelming forces of the British Empire. At the most there are not more than 17,000 burghers in the field, confronting a British army of 250,000 men, but their strength is still as undaunted as at the beginning of the war. Their hope, their confidence is higher than it was six months ago; and at a time when all their friends in this country are imploring them to consent to renew the negotiations begun by Lord Kitchener with General Botha, they have seized the opportunity of declaring in most uncompromising terms that they will not listen to any proposal for peace which does not start from the basis of the recognition of their independence. This may be the madness of despair, but it is sheer idioy to impute it to any hopes which may be aroused in the hearts of the burghers by speeches delivered in England or meetings in the Queen's Hall. All policies and calculations based upon so palpable an untruth are doomed to failure. The fact of the matter is, that at the beginning of the Twentieth Century we have run up against the granite rock of religious conviction which nerved the Puritans in their struggle for liberty in the Seventeenth Century, and which in Holland proved more than a match for the overwhelming strength of Spain. The utmost savagery which may be employed by us against them or their women and children will be but a feeble imitation of the fiendish atrocities employed against the people of the Netherlands without stint by the Spaniards. In dealing with such an unconquerable race we can do nothing but kill them off, if we are determined to carry out the policy of subjugation. The process of killing will take some time. Ministers will not shrink from the deliberate extermination of an entire people rather than abate their arrogant demands for unconditional surrender on the basis of the destruction of every shred of independence. It remains to be seen whether this murder of an entire people, in order to secure the success of military conquest, will be carried through to its bitter end. For my own part, I have too much confidence in the divine government of the world to believe that any such diabolical crime will be permitted. As I said at the very beginning of the war, before the first shot was fired, "I am afraid of God." The fear of the Lord used to be thought the beginning of wisdom; but at the present day our Pharaoh hardens his heart and stiffens his neck, feeling confident that he can treat God Almighty as a voteless outlander in his own universe. As Bigelow says, "Yu have got to git up airly ef yu want to take in God," and the fundamental fallacy upon which the whole of this war is based has been the assumption cynically asserted in some quarters, tacitly accepted in others, that God Almighty does not count. The only God in whom this materialistic generation believes is

the God of the big battalions, who can command illimitable wealth for enforcing whatever policy he chooses to decree. But that is not the faith of the Boers.

The belief of the Boers in a ruling Providence may be a belated superstition. The faith which sustained the Maccabees may have lost its sustaining force, but it has at least succeeded in enabling this little handful of untrained farmers to put to flight again and again the armies of aliens, and, as at this moment, to hold at bay the greatest army Great Britain has ever put into a foreign field. Even if it be all a delusion, and there be no God in this world, no justice immanent in the affairs of men, if morality be not in the nature of things, and if there be no right as opposed to might, even the most bitter opponent of the Boers, if there be in him even a glimmer of the spark of God, which never dies out of any man, must feel constrained to pay homage of sincere admiration to those heroes of the veldt who draw from their faith in the invisible God, as from a perennial fountain, the energy and courage which enable them to maintain this unequal struggle.

Those who are the descendants of the Puritans, and whose inner life has been nourished from childhood upon the Hebrew Scriptures, watch the spectacle presented by the Boers with a much deeper sentiment than that of mere admiration. We contemplate these indomitable men with the same sentiment of hero-worship and gratitude which thrilled us in our youth on reading the classic stories of the struggle which the men of faith have waged in every age against those whose horizon is limited by material things, for however prejudiced, however short-sighted in their political outlook, no one can now doubt the passionate sincerity with which the Burghers cleave to the faith which was delivered to them by their forefathers, and which was held by the saints of old time.

Just as I was finishing this chapter I came upon a pamphlet published at Vryheid,\* in the South African Republic, a British translation of the Dutch official telegrams received in that town during the Boer war up to the time when it was occupied by the British troops. From its pages I venture to quote the translation of some of the addresses which were presented and circulated during the war by President Kruger and General Joubert. Considering the circumstances in which they appeared, when the heart of the nation was wrung with the loss of its bravest and its best upon the stricken field, it is impossible to doubt the intense sincerity with which they were penned. It is easy to cant in the piping times of peace, but when grim-visaged war stalks through the land and every hamlet is bemoaning its dead, when the whole nation is threatened with imminent peril of extinction, then it is that the accent of sincerity vibrates in every word that is wrung from the leaders of the people in the hour of their extremity and distress. From these documents I will quote three. The first was written by General Joubert shortly before his death. It was dated Volksrust, Dec. 16th, 1899, and ran as follows:—

Dear and much esteemed friends (females), widows, mothers, and sisters of burghers wounded and killed in the various engagements and fights at Dundee,

\* To be obtained of Cassell & Co.

Elandslaagte, Ladysmith, Belmont, Stormberg, Rooilaagte, Modder River, Colenso, and other places where there has been fighting—May I ask you to accept from me the assurance of my fervent commiseration and sympathy, in the painful lot that has befallen you, in the loss that you have to bear, and the mourning for your own ones? My friends, let it be your consolation that they have fought for their good right, bestowed on them by God. Their aspiration was noble; sacred their purpose for the public weal, for our independence, and the welfare of the whole Afrikander nation, their posterity and their future. They have done their duty, and hope was accomplished. May their dust rest in peace! Their works do follow them. How precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints! And now, may the God of our Fathers, who is the God of all consolation, Himself pour out on you abundantly the oil of consolation into all your hearts; and grant that by His grace and power you may bear the cross imposed by His wise and merciful Fatherly hand. May He lift up His countenance upon you, and give you His peace!

Such is the prayer, such is the heartfelt wish of

Your sincere and true friend,

P. J. JOUBERT,

Comdt.-General.

About a month later an announcement was published at Vryheid from President Kruger, addressed to the Landdrost of Vryheid, and dated Pretoria, Jan. 8th, 1900:—

For the information of you and the War officers at present in your district, I desire to inform you that, by the blessing of the Lord, our great cause is now in such a position that we may hope by a great exertion of strength to bring the matter to a successful issue. To do this it is, however, imperative that every one should exert himself, and that all burghers who are at all capable of service should proceed to the scene of war, and that those who have returned on furlough should not stay too long, but go back as soon as possible, each to the place where his officers are.

Brothers, I implore you to act with all quickness and zeal in this matter, and to keep your eyes fixed on that Providence which has led our people with miracles through the whole of South Africa. Read Psalm lxxxiii., where He says that this people shall not exist, and their name must be exterminated; but the Lord says *you* shall exist. And read further, Psalm lxxxix., verses 13 and 14; there the Lord says that Christ's children shall be chastised with bitter adversities if they depart from His word; but His favour and goodness shall never end nor err. What He has once spoken continues steadfast and unbroken. Behold the Lord purifies His children as gold is purified by the fire; but remember that the enemy devastates the places that he comes to. In the Colony they carry off all the property of the Afrikander people and sell and destroy the same. According to intelligence, they are destroying the farms even in the Orange Free State.

I need not point out to you all the destruction committed by the enemy, for you yourself know it, and I again point out to you the plot of the enemy (Psalm lxxxiii.). This is the plot of the devil against Christ and His Church. This is the attack of old, and God will not allow His Church to be exterminated.

You know our cause is righteous and admits of no doubt, for they have begun to do to us according to the wickedness referred to in that Psalm. I am searching the whole of the Bible, and find no other way of acting than we have done, and further to strive in the name of the Lord.

Please bring the contents of this telegram to the knowledge of all the military officers and the public in your district, and impress on their minds the seriousness of the cause.

The most touching, however, of all the Boer documents (which unfortunately is not complete) is that which President Kruger addressed to all officers and burghers at Vryheid on receipt of the sad news of the surrender of General Cronje at Paardeberg. From its form and the substance of its contents it might have been penned by our own Oliver Cromwell. The following is its text:—

## A WORD OF CONSOLATION.

From the State President, Pretoria, to all Officers and Burghers at Vryheid.

A grievous and sorrowful time has dawned for country and people, and we may truly say with Hezekiah, "This day is a day of trouble, and of rebuke, and of blasphemy; for the children are come to the birth, and there is not strength to bring forth."

But what reply does the Lord make, by the mouth of Isaiah, to King Hezekiah?

"Be not afraid of the words which thou hast heard, with which the servants of the king of Assyria have blasphemed Me."

I wish as I cry out this "be not afraid" to all the officers and burghers that they may comprehend it. Many deem the cause of the two Republics hopeless, because of the enormously superior numbers of the enemy. Certainly, the cause appears almost hopeless, when it is beheld solely with the natural and carnal eye; for there are now enemies round about, and not only outside the country, but within it. No, no, brothers, not so. Be steadfast in the faith, ye devout band! In your weakness will the Lord perfect His strength; for if we stake not our lives, we shall never gain Life. This "staking" our lives means, of course, sacrifice, like that of the Good Shepherd for His sheep.

Oh that the Lord may fill afresh the hearts of all burghers with the sacred courage that springs from a living faith, that they may arise as one man, and stand as a living wall against the mighty tyrant! Then the Lord will not withhold His strength, though there be many faithless. Peter wavered more than once and waxed weak in faith, but the Lord did not cast him off. We see the same thing with Moses, David, Jacob, and Abraham.

Neither will our Merciful High Priest cast us off; for He knows our human weakness, and has measured and allowed for it in His Divine plans. There are thousands who are praying for us, whose prayers are powerful and of effect before the Throne of God, although we may not perceive their result now.

I believe that many fervent supplications, offered up for General Cronje and his heroic band, especially on the night of Feb. 26th to 27th, and on Majubaday—I yet firmly believe that those very prayers have wrought great things with God. We may not now comprehend how and what God's ways are, which are above our thoughts and ways. I am convinced that never have so many prayers ascended for any nation on earth as there have ascended for the Boer nation in this our time of struggle. Unto the ends of the earth, among almost all the nations of the world, prayers are being offered up for us. Never before has such a thing occurred. Can it be that all these prayers are in vain? No, emphatically NO! But they will yet work miracles to the honour of God's Holy Name.

Yes, brothers, the last tidings in our land are sorrowful ones, but it is well that we are not subjected to a blind fate or chance. We are under the guidance of a Father, without whose will no hair at our heads shall fall. This oppression exists, that it may bring each one of us to the very dust; that it may abase us before the Lord on account of our own sins. It seems as if much blood will still have to be shed: and that is the worst.

It is written, that God is faithful, who will not suffer us to be tried beyond what we are able to bear. With the trial He will also assure the future, that we may be able to bear it. The way leads through darkness to light; from Cross to Crown.

Our Lord Jesus had first to go to Gethsemane and Golgotha, before the day of His transfiguration dawned. I believe that we also must undergo our Gethsemane and Golgotha before the day of our deliverance breaks. I am assured, in my inmost heart, that that day will break; as surely as the resurrection day of our Lord Jesus broke through the darkness, although it may be yet a little while. There was never a case, at sight so hopeless, as that of the Lord Jesus, when He was dead and lay in His grave. His enemies were triumphant; his friends and disciples were lamenting. So it is now; but, brothers, the Lord will work His mighty wonders when His hour shall have come. We have begun the war in His Holy name and in His fear, with full—

At this point the translation breaks off. I do not know how the Word of Consolation ends. But there is enough in what is printed above to enable us to realize the true nature of the men against whom we are fighting. I do not envy the man or woman who can read the President's Word of Consolation without being touched by the sense of the pathos and tragedy of it. Our representatives wish to know the secret strength of the Boers. They will learn much more from the perusal of these documents than they will from the study of all the speeches made in Parliament, and all the elaborate theories which are to be found in the newspapers as to why this outnumbered handful dares to confront the British empire in arms. They will see therein the truth of the saying in the old book, "The fear of God casteth out all other fear." This nation, which went forth to war with insolent boastings to avenge Majuba, and which had no fear of God before its eyes, has already experienced humiliation upon humiliation and suffered defeat upon defeat. Even the most cynical financier in the City cannot deny the fact that we have already been fined well nigh 200 millions sterling as the penalty for making this war; but no one can yet foresee how much it will cost us before we have done. It is in vain for us to kick against the pricks. We may exterminate, if we please, every one of the 17,000 burghers who are still resisting us in arms; we can do to death by slow torture all the women and children whom we have penned behind the barbed wire of our prison camps; but even when all that is done, the final account will still remain to be rendered. Everything that we have grasped will turn to ashes in our hands. We shall have spent our treasure and our blood, we shall have tarnished our fair name and made ourselves loathsome and detested among the nations, and still there will remain nothing before us but a terrible looking forward to of judgment to come.

---

### **TO THE READER.**

If you abhor the "Methods of Barbarism" employed in South Africa, and are willing to help in organizing the protest of the human conscience in your locality, please communicate at once with

THE SECRETARY, INTERNATIONAL UNION,  
Mowbray House, Norfolk St., Strand, W.C.,  
saying what service you are able and willing to render  
in the cause of Humanity and Peace.

# A PROPHECY AND ITS FULFILMENT.

The following is a Copy of the Manifesto issued by the "Stop the War" Committee in January, 1900. Its terms were ridiculed at the time as fantastic and its fears as groundless. It is reprinted here to show how completely the statements then made have been justified by events:—

## STOP THE WAR!

### An Appeal to the People.

*To Our Fellow Countrymen:—*

**WE APPEAL TO YOU TO STOP THE WAR.**

It is an unjust War, which ought never to have been provoked.

It is a War in which we have nothing to gain, everything to lose.

To "put it through" merely because we are in it, is to add crime to crime.

**AND ALL FOR WHAT?**

Why are our sons and brothers killing and being killed in South Africa?

Why are happy homes made desolate, wives widowed, and children left fatherless?

**LET US FACE THE FACTS!**

There would have been no War if we had consented to Arbitration, which President Kruger begged for, but which we haughtily refused.

There would have been no War if the Government had counted the cost.

There would have been no war if the capitalists at the Goldfields had not hoped it would reduce wages and increase dividends.

There would have been no War but for the campaign of lies undertaken to make men mad against the Boers.

**AND WHO ARE THE BOERS?**

The Boers are the Dutch of South Africa, white men, and Protestant Christians like ourselves.

They read the same Bible, keep the same Sabbath, and pray to the same God as ourselves.

They believe that they are fighting for Freedom and Fatherland, with the unanimous support of Europe, excepting Turkey.

**WHAT ARE WE FIGHTING FOR?**

We have been at War for three months, thousands have been killed and wounded, but to this day neither side knows what the other is fighting for.

Each side asserts that the other is fighting for something which the other denies that it wants.

**WHY NOT CALL A TRUCE?**

We might then get to know for the first time what is the real difference between us.

And when we had in black and white what each side wants we should then be able to see what could be done to arrange matters.

If we could not agree on a Settlement, then we ought to refer the difference to Arbitration.

**IF WE "PUT IT THROUGH" WHAT DOES IT MEAN?**

The sacrifice of the lives of 20,000 of our brave sons.

The slaughter of at least as many brave Boers.

Hard times for the poor at home.

Dislocation of Trade.

The Increase of Taxation.

The waste of £100,000,000 of our hard-earned money.

And in the end,

**CONSCRIPTION.**

**IS THE GAME WORTH THE CANDLE?**

If we wade through blood to hoist the Union Jack at Pretoria our difficulties will then only have begun.

We shall have conquered a people we cannot govern.

We can never govern them with their consent.

If we try to govern them against their will we shall have to keep 50,000 soldiers in their country.

**WE DO NOT WANT ANOTHER IRELAND IN SOUTH AFRICA.**

Therefore we appeal to you to

**STOP THE WAR, AND STOP IT NOW?**

Signed on behalf of the "Stop the War" Committee:

JOHN CLIFFORD, D.D. (*Chairman of General Committee*).

SILAS K. HOCKING (*Chairman of Executive*).

W. M. CROOK (*Hon. Secretary*).

