

The country here rolls in low downs or ridges across the route. At the entrance to the town from the west the road, mounting one of these ridges, forks; the north fork (to the column's left front) leading between the houses; the south fork (to the right front) leading round among mining properties. All along the ridge was seen from a mile away to be occupied by Boers. After reconnoitring the north fork, the column took the south one. A little to the north (left) of this, on the top of the occupied ridge, conspicuous to the column on the sky line, stood a disused "battery-house" of the Queen Mining Company: that is to say, an iron-roofed shed which had contained ore-stamping machinery. Surrounded by heaps of "tailings"—the mud-heaps left by ore crushing and washing—this formed a natural fort with earthworks ready made; and the trained eye of old Cronje, the Commandant of Potchefstroom, had hit upon this as the place to hold. Moreover, the road to it was flanked at longish range by a farmhouse and plantation to the north, and by some old prospectors' cuttings—ready-made rifle-pits—to the south. These on the rising slope: in the depression midway between this ridge and that on which the column now faced the Boer lines lay a "vlei," or stretch of standing water, crossed by the road at a narrow drift.

Before a shot had been fired, Sir John Willoughby sent a messenger under a flag of truce carrying this quaint message:—

"1st January, 1895.—To Commandant-in-Chief, Krugersdorp, from O.C. of the friendly force *en route* to Johannesburg.

"SIR,—I have the honour to inform you that in the event of my meeting with any hostile opposition in my advance through Krugersdorp, I shall be bound to shell the position and the town, and hereby give you due warning so that peaceable inhabitants and women and children may leave before 4 p. m. to-day.

"I have the honour to be, sir, yours,

"JOHN WILLOUGHBY, Lt. C.C."

The Commandant—Malan of Rustenburg—returned no answer. When the time had elapsed, the guns were brought to bear, and presently a hole was neatly knocked right through

the gable of the battery-house, which the few Boers who were in it hastily vacated. None of them were hurt. The artillery fire was next turned along the ridge where puffs of smoke told of a line of invisible sharpshooters, and a large quantity of shrapnel shells were blazed away, the artillerymen, under Captain Gosling and Captain Kincaid Smith, making good practice in bursting the shells just over where the puffs of smoke were. The Boers, who had no artillery up as yet save an old 7-pounder, replied with rifle fire; and desultory firing went on at long rifle range from both sides, till presently Col. White (in charge of the advance guard of about 100 men) ordered it to advance and charge the Queen battery-house position.

We say "Colonel White ordered." The responsibility is not quite clear. The officer commanding the column was, as we have seen, Sir John Willoughby; but a difference as to seniority in command had arisen between him and Major White, and as the operations proceeded it became more acute (if troopers' gossip is accepted). In fact, according to the descriptions given by some troopers, it was never quite clear throughout the whole march who was in command. Sometimes Dr. Jameson would give an order, sometimes Sir John Willoughby, sometimes one or other of the Whites, and sometimes Major Grey.

Whoever ordered the charge, it is dubious what the troopers were intended to do upon reaching the ridge. They had no swords, and could only have fallen upon the Boers with the butt ends of their rifles. The idea seems to have been that they had only to gallop forward and rush the position and the Boers would jump up and run away, exposing themselves to the fire of the troopers and making way for the column. However, the question what they should do when they reached the Boers was not destined to arise. The Boers, lying prone along the ridge, protected by stones and the lie of the ground, had no intention of getting up and exposing themselves. Most of them were protected by a line of rock "outcrop": a natural

rampart which, in the geological formation of the Transvaal, creates endless positions of defensive strength. Then, at the battery-house, there were the "tailings," and southward there were the prospectors' trenches already mentioned: which, by the way, served in the sequel for burying some of the dead.



MR. JOHN HAYS HAMMOND.

From a Photograph by DUFFUS BROS., Johannesburg.

While the artillery fire was rattling on to the ridge, the Boers lay low, cautiously refraining from any attempt to put up their heads and take aim. They stayed quite still where they were, having found that the shrapnel, though sending up dust and splinters of stones, burst harmlessly over them as they lay. The Boers say, as a matter of fact, not a single Boer was

wounded here except one man who had the skin taken off his thumb and went on firing. This is simply explained. Shrapnel does not burst upwards and downwards, but opens out in a horizontal plane, fan-like. If the Boers had been obliging enough to stand up it would have cut them to pieces, but a very few inches of ground mixed with stones sufficed to break the projectiles when fired low, and when fired higher they simply passed over the Boers' heads. So tightly, however, did the shrewd farmers hug the ground that a galloper, after surveying the prostrate and motionless Boers at one end of their positions, reported to the column "so many killed"; and the apparent silencing of the ridge as a whole led to the illusion that a charge would get through without difficulty. Between two and three o'clock, accordingly, the Boers on the ridge saw a sudden movement of the troops nearest them. A manœuvre was executed which much impressed them for the moment. A narrow clump of men galloping towards them suddenly opened out at the word of command, to right and left, and came on in a single long straight line in open order. The Boer does not drill and has no manœuvres, and he—for a moment—admired accordingly. On the charge came, about a hundred strong, with a ringing cheer; till from 1,000 yards the range diminished to 500, 300, 200. At this point the riders splashed into the "vlei," and as they did so right along the ridge and from the flanking positions the Boers opened fire, emptying saddle after saddle. A score of men tumbled off. The frightened horses plunged and scattered. The men not killed or wounded stopped, jumped down and replied to the hail of bullets, firing over the backs of their horses or from the ground.

The charge was checked.

A moment more and the cross-fire in the "vlei" was too hot to be withstood.

The survivors turned round and galloped back, or crawled away into a clump of reeds at the side of the "vlei" for cover, where they were shortly afterwards taken prisoners as they lay

among the reeds. Some thirty prisoners were so taken, and during the night which followed, the Boers carried away another thirty killed and wounded ; the wounded to Krugersdorp hospital.

As the stragglers from the charge got back to the column the officers took council together. The utter failure of the manœuvre dashed the spirits of the troopers. It seemed that less than half of those that went had returned, and it takes very seasoned troops to treat a sacrifice of sixty per cent. with indifference. At five o'clock the Boers noticed the column in two parts turning off the road and making a move southwards, evidently to turn the position. In this direction lie the farms Randfontein and Vlakfontein ; which were the scene of the rest of the fighting.

As it grew dusk, some undecided movements were made and unmade, which the Boers could not understand, and which shall be given in the words (slightly shortened) of one able to speak with authority for the other side :—

“ Two guides were obtained, the column formed in the prescribed night order of march, and we started off along a road leading direct to Johannesburg, hoping to slip through in the darkness.

“ At this moment heavy rifle and Maxim fire was suddenly heard from the direction of Krugersdorp, which lay one and a half miles to the left rear.

“ We at once concluded that this meant the arrival of reinforcements, for we knew that Johannesburg had Maxims, and that the Staats-Artillerie were not expected to arrive until the following morning.

“ To leave our supposed friends in the lurch was out of the question. It was determined at once to move to their support.

“ Leaving the carts, escorted by one troop, on the road, we advanced rapidly across the plateau towards Krugersdorp in the direction of the firing.

“ After advancing thus for nearly a mile the firing ceased, and we perceived the Boers moving in great force to meet the column. The flankers on the right reported another force threatening that flank.

“ It was feared that an attempt would be made to cut us off from the ammunition carts, and a retreat on them was ordered.

“ It was now clear that the firing, whatever might have been the cause thereof, was not occasioned by the arrival of any force from Johannesburg.

"Precious moments had been lost in the attempt to effect a junction with our supposed friends. It was now very nearly dark. In the dusk the Boers could be seen closing in on three sides, viz. : north, east and south. The road to Johannesburg appeared completely barred, and the last opportunity of slipping through, which had presented itself an hour ago when the renewed firing was heard, was gone, not to return.

"Nothing remained but to bivouac in the best position available.

"But for the unfortunate circumstance of the firing, which we afterwards heard was due to the exultation of the Boers at the arrival of large reinforcements from Potchefstroom, the column would have been by this time (7 p.m.) at least four or five miles further on the road to Johannesburg, with an excellent chance of reaching that town without further opposition."

On the slope slanting down to a "pan" or "vlei," then, to which a few men with pannikins found their way for much-needed water, the column camped at nightfall, some two miles south of their first fighting position. Lying in a depression, they were to some slight extent covered, and all lights were put out except one in the ambulance wagons, where there lay about thirty wounded, or otherwise disabled and knocked up. Using this light for a mark the Boers went on firing into the camp all night, sometimes from only a few hundred yards away, killing some horses, stampeding others, and harassing the tired men. They also killed here two troopers, who were hastily dug into the ground, for a friend of the writer's who went over the scene next day was shocked to see the feet of one of these poor fellows sticking out from the heap of earth which his comrades had shovelled over him.

As the night, thus wearily spent, wore on, things began to look black to the Doctor. He had staked everything on the idea that he could force his way through at the first onset. He had failed, and knew that the Boers must be massing all round him. Indeed, forces had been seen and heard from at very long range behind, before, to right and to left. Only the Maxims had kept them at a respectful distance while the column moved, the artillerymen sitting astride and sweeping the rear ground while the mules dragged the guns along.

The High Commissioner's messages had practically made an outlaw of him, and twenty miles away, at Johannesburg, his confederates, evidently undreaming of his bitter need, were comfortably waiting to see him march in in triumph. Sombre thoughts must have passed through Jameson's mind as he sullenly waited for dawn down there by the "pan" surrounded by the troop of raw young fellows whom on his sole responsibility he had led into this position.

At four o'clock in the grey dawn, Jameson despatched a second message for Johannesburg, a verbal one for one of his men to carry through the Boer lines. But even then he was not going to make it a cry of despair. "I am all right," was the effect of the message, "but I should like a force sent out to us." It was only a little change from the earlier request for a patrol, "just to prevent me from looking like a pirate," but the little change meant much.

The trooper to whom it was entrusted duly got through the Boer lines in the darkness. What came of the message at the other end we shall see later. To get through was not difficult for individuals. It was a straggling camp, to which the Boers gave a fairly wide berth, and, as a matter of fact, with whatever object or pretext, some thirty or forty young fellows out of that column, few of them over nineteen years of age, did get separated from the camp and straggled through into Johannesburg during that night, almost all eventually reporting themselves to Colonel Rhodes at his private house, some turning up disguised in the clothes of miners.

As the light came, the column moved on across the railway embankment of the Potchefstroom railway. A number of Boers had taken up their position behind this, and as the mules struggled up the embankment, tugging the Maxims behind them, severe execution might have been done (so a Boer critic remarks) by turning these guns on to the surprised Boers, who skeltered across the embankment and took up their position on the other side as the column passed it.

At about seven o'clock, as the column was moving along

under fire, among mine properties, a new despatch arrived by messenger from the British Agent, completing the former discouragements by supplying a copy of the proclamation in which, among other things, all British subjects in the Transvaal were called on to "abstain from giving the said Dr. Jameson any countenance or assistance." To drive one last nail in the coffin of any hopes which the Doctor had entertained that at the last moment Johannesburg might find out the truth and rally to his assistance, the bearer of the proclamation was accompanied by a member of the Reform Committee, Mr. Lace, who explained that he had come by arrangement between the Committee and the Government to assure Jameson of the fact that the Committee had made an armistice, and could therefore do nothing.

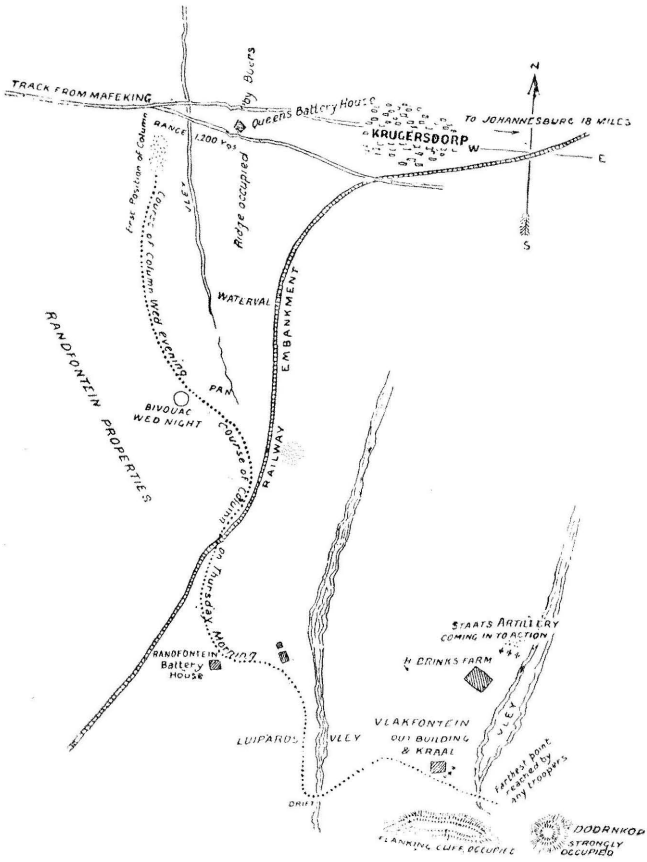
On all sides, therefore, Jameson was now cast off, a fair quarry for his enemies. It was an hour or more before he told Sir John Willoughby the heavy news. Better sullenly play out the losing game.

The long running fight now enters on a phase when the column, having crossed the railway embankment, zigzagged through depressed ground rather broken by "vleis," seeking for an unexposed passage across the next rise eastward; while the Boers, similarly impeded by broken ground, but able to wait their time, made large circuits at longish range from the column, till it finally walked into a sort of trap, when they closed in upon it.

The Boers say that the body which finally headed the column off would hardly have kept up but for a drift across one of the "vleis," pointed out to them, as it happened, by a Cape Colonist. Had they failed to get in front of the column among this broken ground, it would probably have got through to Johannesburg; for in a straight line as the crow flies there was hardly anybody there at that time to oppose it, though thousands were massing in the neighbourhood.

Generalizing from the accounts of both sides it would seem that as long as the column continued its detour southwards.

THE STORY OF



PLAN OF BATTLEGROUND.

(Scale about 1/4 m to a mile)

keeping up a fire before and behind (for bodies of Boers were now visible in both directions), there was no great opposition ; but the moment it attempted to force any likely position for continuing its march eastwards, that position was held. Very determined attempts were made twice at least before the end. A Boer narrator speaks of a charge attempted by an officer and half a dozen men, in which the officer and three of the men were killed. Chief Inspector Bodle cleared a little ridge with two troops of M.M.P. Colonel Grey, with the hardy B.B.P., was shot in the foot, but went on as if nothing had happened. Sub-Inspector Cazalet went on with a wound, to be shot again in the chest in the last scene.

On the Randfontein farm some Scotch carts were abandoned, and the column continued the detour by a drift through Luipaard's Vlei to Vlakfontein farm, where, at Farmer Brink's outhouse (five or six miles south and slightly south-east of Krugersdorp), they were to make their final stand.

Here there was an outbuilding, and a disused cattle kraal with stone walls the height of a man, which offered cover till flanked, and was at once occupied by one troop. As the morning grew into day this outbuilding became the Hougoumont round which the fusillade of battle roared heaviest. The Boers on their side took advantage of a wall, and venturing to nearer quarters made their rifle fire less inefficient than it had been for the most part as regards the actual number of killed and wounded. Men and horses dropped on all sides. In the column the feeling grew that unless it could burst through the Boer lines at this point it was done for. The Maxims were fired till they grew too hot, and, water failing for the cool jacket, five of them jammed and went out of action. The 7-pounder was fired till only half an hour's ammunition was left to fire with. One last rush was made and failed ; and then the Staats Artillery came up on the left flank, and the game was up.

The fact is that by mischance, or misled by the volunteer guides who were now found to have slipped away, the column

was at the mouth of a *cul de sac*. It must either stop or throw itself at a rising ground with cover flanked by other rising ground with cover. Doornkop, which has christened the battle, is an isolated kopje, or stony hill, conspicuous for a mile or two round ; but it was not actually reached. It is a thousand yards further on in the direction the column was going. It was strongly held, and warm indeed would have been the reception of the luckless little force if it had come to rounding that hill. But what did the actual mischief was a flanking ridge on the right (southern) flank, an abrupt low cliff as seen by the column, placed roughly as shown in the accompanying plan ; which also exhibits the direction in which the Staats Artillery on the left (northern) flank came into play as the decisive factor.

Of actual combatants at this time the Boers say they had only 700 or 800. Indeed, the Boer legend swears that those closely engaged, apart from supports, were but fifty well-placed men ; while those who stopped the last charge were exactly seven ! The Boer legend adds that General Joubert found on inquiry at the hospital that all Jameson's wounded save one bore the spoor of a new pattern of rifle of which there were but fifty all told in the hands of burghers. Here, however, the records of the St. John Ambulance Brigade, which went up from Cape Town and evolved order from chaos at Krugersdorp, are available to explode the myth. They show that practically all the raiders' wounds were Martini-Henry. It was these seven champions, the Boers add, rather than the other fifty or the 700 or 800 engaged all along the line, who commanded the little gap attempted by the last charge, and saving their fire till the troopers were close, killed six of them and the last hope of the rest together. The other troopers sought shelter again on the farm, and shortly afterwards, while the Staats Artillery from the other side was finding range, between eight and nine o'clock on Thursday the 2nd of January, 1896, a white flag was seen waving over Farmer Brink's outhouse. The so-called battle of Doornkop was at an end.

And here must be recorded one more grotesque fact. Not even in its surrender was this raid fated to be romantic. The white flag used on this occasion was not, as a matter of fact, a torn shirt plucked from a weary trooper, but was the white apron of an old Hottentot "tanta" who was standing somewhere at hand on the farm when it was borrowed from her to be waved as an emblem of peace.

Those who first noticed the white flag were the seven Boers at the drift already mentioned, and very glad they were, for they had just come to the end of their ammunition. They walked forward as the firing ceased, and went in the direction of the Maxims, their idea being, as one of them afterwards explained, that they didn't know exactly what was up, but thought that if the parley proved unsatisfactory in other respects, they might at least run away with a Maxim or two. It was to one of these that Willoughby entrusted the following note :

"To the Commandant of Transvaal Forces.—We surrender, provided that you guarantee a safe conduct out of the country for every member of the force.

"(Signed) JOHN WILLOUGHBY."

The answer came back in a quarter of an hour, of which the following is a translation :

"Officer.—Please take notice that I shall immediately let our officers come together to decide upon your communication.

"COMMANDANT."

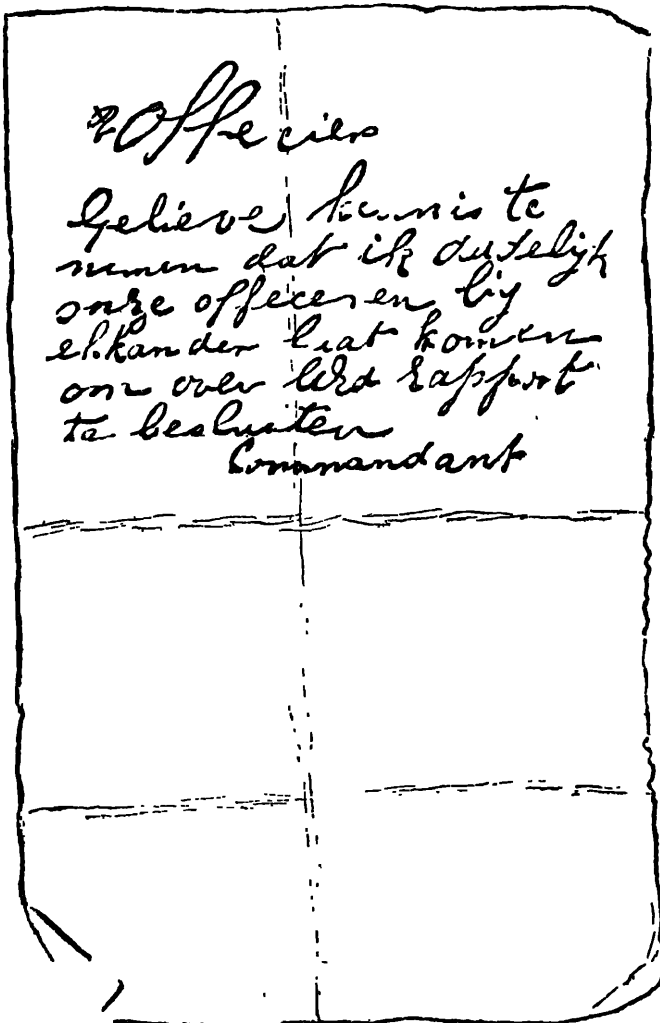
The "Commandant" who signed this note was Potgieter, of Krugersdorp.

In about half an hour came this further answer (translation) :

"John C. Willoughby.—I acknowledge your letter. The answer is that if you will undertake to pay the expenses which you have caused the South African Republic, and that you will lay down your arms, then I shall spare the lives of you and yours. Please send me the reply to this within thirty minutes.

"P. A. KRONJE,

"Commandant, Potchefstroom."



FACSIMILE OF POTCIETER'S REPLY TO WILLOUGHBY.

<p>John Cronje Jk en Hen in Schrywing van hiervoor is diene en afgeve en sta (betreft-voor en trosten die en en J. A. B. aan gedaan beef te betalen en en vlymch wven wopen apleggen: dan zal ik alle lere van er in de wven spaal</p>	<p>geline ing: antwoord die Zende binnen de tijd van 30 minuten P. S. Gans Cronje Potchefstroom</p>
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FACSIMILE OF CRONJE'S LETTER OF CONDITIONS.

The inference was that the terms thus proposed came from the senior Commandant, which, indeed, Cronje might fairly be called, and that they were the result of the consultation announced by the anonymous Commandant in the previous message. The Force had been guaranteed expenses in the letter of invitation, and Sir John may well have been glad to get off so easily. Cronje, on the other hand, had no reason to refuse conditions so far as his previous instructions from Pretoria had gone; for the word passed round to the Commandants at an earlier stage of Jameson's progress through the country, and before any fighting had taken place, that is to say when the Pretoria Government was not quite sure how things would go at Johannesburg, was to allow Jameson's Force to return scot-free across the border provided they disarmed. So, at least, Sir Jacobus de Wet had telegraphed to the High Commissioner on December 31st. Be this as it may, Sir John Willoughby jumped at the terms offered, and within a quarter of an hour sent back a note of which neither side, as it happens, kept a copy, but of which Sir John's memory, which has not been disputed, is as follows :

"SIR,—I (or we) accept your terms, on the guarantee that the lives of the whole force are to be spared. I now await your instructions as to how and where we are to lay down our arms. At the same time I would ask you to remember that my men have been without food for the last twenty-four hours.—I have, etc., your obedient servant,

"JOHN WILLOUGHBY."

The column was quickly surrounded by about five hundred Boers, who galloped up from various directions, and the troopers began to stack their arms and soon all were given up. At this point, and not sooner, according to Cronje's own affidavit, arrived Commandant Trichardt of the Staats Artillery with orders from Commandant-General Joubert, which were explicit enough, viz. : That the troops should be given five minutes to lay down their arms unconditionally, and if they did not comply within that time firing should be resumed. Meanwhile, Commandants Malan and Potgieter, having joined Cronje in

conversation with Jameson and Willoughby, had put in their word, Malan having had to ride all the way from the Queen's Battery, where he was still stationed, and Malan scolded Cronje for going beyond his powers. Turning to Jameson, he said :

"*Your* life and your officers' lives we do not promise to spare. We shall hand you over to the Government at Pretoria, and they will decide what is to be done with you."

Jameson merely bowed. He was in no mood for bargaining, and seemed to have relapsed into a kind of sullen stoicism, though one Boer narrator avers that the hand holding the switch—his only weapon throughout the fighting—trembled at this ominous speech of Malan's. The same Boer narrator even goes so far as to add that Jameson said, as if to himself, but aloud, "My last hour is come," and that a Boer standing by told him with rough kindness to keep quiet and cheer up, as nothing very bad would be done to him. But these embroideries are such as always grow up round an incident of this kind. The officers were taken off to the Court House at Krugersdorp, fed, and driven to Pretoria, a distance of fifty miles, in carts. The men were conducted thither under a strong escort on horseback, and a sorry spectacle they made, weary and dispirited as they were. A few tried to raise their spirits by singing snatches of "After the ball was over." Officers and men alike were well treated by their captors who, mindful of Sir John Willoughby's remark about the fasting condition of his men, provided them with a good meal before starting them for Pretoria, besides sharing their own biltong and biscuits with some of the more exhausted ones before moving off the field of battle.

And so the raiders were marched off to prison, where their communication with the outer world was stringently conditioned, and from that time till their arrival in England weeks afterwards not a single official, friend, or newspaper in South Africa dreamed that their surrender had been anything but unconditional. Had it been known that their lives, though not

their liberties, were secure under the promise upon which they disarmed, several events might have fallen out, for good or ill, otherwise than they did, as we shall presently see. Here all that need be added is to record the final decision on a technical military point which eventually afforded weeks of heated controversy. When all the facts had been thrashed out, Mr. Chamberlain received from the War Office, a quarter, by the way, by no means inclined to be lenient to the raiders, the following report :

“ In reply, the Marquis of Lansdowne, having consulted with his military adviser, desires me to observe that, whatever position Mr. Cronje may hold in the Transvaal Army, he decidedly, on the occasion in question, acted as an officer in authority, and guaranteed the lives of Dr. Jameson and all his men if they at once laid down their arms.

“ The terms prescribed were accepted by Dr. Jameson's force, and they surrendered and laid down their arms, and no subsequent discussion amongst the Transvaal officers could retract the terms of this surrender.

“ I am, therefore, to acquaint you, for the information of the Secretary of State for the Colonies, that the Secretary of State for War concurs with Mr. Chamberlain in considering that the surrender was completed on Sir John Willoughby's acceptance of Commandant Cronje's terms, and was subject to these terms and conditions.”

The Government of any large European Power, of the United States, or of a British Colony, would have been extremely sensitive if it found itself in the position into which the Transvaal Government was unwittingly betrayed by the Commandant's insufficient reports. The Transvaal Government has never shown a moment's qualm. Military operations are conducted in a rough and ready manner by Boers. They treated their prisoners decently, and handed them over to the Queen to punish. What did it matter that being misinformed by their own agents they, in turn, misinformed the High Commissioner, and traded on their apparent generosity in sparing lives which they were really under an obligation to spare? That is their way of looking at it. This same Cronje was found guilty of obtaining the surrender of the British garrison in Potchefstroom at the close of the war in 1881 by what was

either a barbaric ruse or an unaccountable failure to remember the terms of an armistice. The wrong in that case was proved, admitted, and redress made. In this case Cronje did not really "practice to deceive." A mixture of kindheartedness and eagerness to settle the matter off his own bat probably led him to make more favourable terms than he had any right to, and afterwards a certain characteristic looseness over small obligations and willingness to let awkward things slide, led him to let his arrangements be brushed aside by the other Commandants and say nothing about it in his report. He is a very religious man. When the shelling was going on he was squatting on the ground in a position which struck one of his companions as being exposed. "Come over here; this is better," said the companion, but old Cronje remained squatting and replied: "God has called me here to do a certain work. If God means me to be taken I shall be shot wherever I sit, and if He does not I am as safe here as anywhere else." It was he, too, who at one point gave an order to fire at the horses, as it would stop the column just as well. His own son was wounded during the battle. A tough, shrewd old Boer, whose kindness, fatalistic religion, and crookedness about nice points of honour are all thoroughly typical.

Excluding the two legends already spoken of, there are a few personal incidents of the fighting picturesque enough to be added here. A young Boer named Jacobsz was moving forward to give a drink to one of the wounded troopers after the first charge, when another wounded man, mistaking his intention, shot him with a revolver, and was at once riddled with bullets himself. It was in the vengeful volley fired among the disabled in connection with this incident that Major Coventry received his very severe wound near the spine. It has been mentioned that during the running fight on Wednesday evening the column picked up a couple of volunteer guides, presumably Transvaalers, and some of the raiders attribute to these guides the final misdirection into a *cul de sac*. The Boer story is different. They say that at a point of the fighting

where the range was short some of the Boers recognised one whom they knew acting as guide to the column. They fired at him till at last he fell, when one of them seized the occasion to run forward, turn him over, and make sure of the traitor's identity. He came back and said with a groan: "Yes. It *is* —."

On the story that has now been told certain questions arise.

Was the surrender inevitable? Did the column show heroism or the reverse? What is the truth about food, water, and ammunition? What were the odds in numbers and position? Why were so few Boers killed? Was the march itself an achievement? Were the causes of failure accidental or inherent?

Partly these questions have been answered by the narrative.

There seems to be no doubt that if the troops had not surrendered when they did they could not possibly have escaped from their position, and they would have been shot down like sheep. 2,000 Boers were close to the field of battle at the time of the surrender, and by that evening there were nearer 8,000 men, on the average neither better nor worse than the average of Jameson's few hundred troopers. The odds, counting only those who were actually firing at the moment of surrender, were odds of position rather than of numbers, but consider the supports in the background! It might have been gratifying to their countrymen if the little force which everybody disavowed and cold-shouldered, when things became hopeless, had chosen to die singing as Wilson's patrol did, as Englishmen have died again and again and again in Africa as elsewhere. But men who die like that generally know what they are fighting for. Even Leonidas might have surrendered when the Persians found the path round the mountain, if he had just heard that official Sparta regarded him as a foolish filibuster. When they gave in they were minus some twenty per cent. of combatants. There were seventy-six casualties. There were thirty men hurt or sick in the wagons. There were twenty-

seven killed on the spot or mortally wounded. They had been engaged continuously for twenty-one hours. Some of the officers had literally had no lie-down sleep since they started, for they were busy overseeing arrangements during the brief rests at the stores, while the men, as we have seen, had not done very much better. Longer rests while they were about it, with time to eat comfortably, and a more even pace in between, without breaks of walking, would have cost both men and horses far less fatigue. Forty miles riding a day is no hardship to a South African who is "hard" when he starts. Unfortunately, some of the troop were by no means "hard"; in fact, were not riders at all, for the Boers, when they got to Krugersdorp, were astonished to find the breeches of some of them sticking to the saddle with blood. That the commissariat had gone all wrong, in spite of the stores and a small amount of provisions carried on the Scotch carts, is beyond doubt. The Boers testify that many of the men fell ravenously on the rude fare which their captors made haste to share with them at the surrender. It is not true that they had fired away all their ammunition. There were plenty of cartridges left for rifles and Maxims, though the 12½-pounder had only ammunition left for half an hour more. The lack of water in the final position is shown by the jamming and disablement of more than half the Maxims. As to the so-called record march, the rush for the Rand, etc., here again one extreme has been followed by another. It was undoubtedly a good piece of work for a troop of the size and equipment of the column. Many of the Boers, singly or in small parties, had made infinitely better riding, as might be expected, between the distant districts where the alarm ran from farm to farm, and the rendezvous at Krugersdorp. Some, indeed, arrived with dead-beat ponies, carrying their biltong and their biscuits, but no rifle, and had to be supplied from a small arsenal run out to Krugersdorp by train from Pretoria under the nose of Johannesburg. For the military conduct of the raid nobody has ever said a good word; but as to the general conduct of

the men, the odd thing about the too heroic legend which first went forth to the world is that the first to spread it were the Boers themselves. An early interview with a Boer official eye-witness, published in Johannesburg, speaks of "the brave fellows seeming not to value their lives at all," etc., etc. After discussing the point with critics, eye-witnesses, and partisans of each side endlessly, the writer's conclusion is that there were some in the column who behaved extremely well, some who behaved badly, and a large mass of "food for powder," which went through the business without calling for special comment either way. Perhaps, in the last analysis of most fighting, brilliant episodes excepted, the truth is something similar. Some of the officers showed a good deal of *sang froid* of the kind which Boers would regard as foolish, and some of the attempts to rush a position here and there by small bodies, if not quite in the reckless style of Fuzzy Wuzzy, were very determined, and roused the admiration of the Boers as they quietly lay there and potted off the rash youths; but the fighting as a whole was not impressive on either side. The mystery of the Boer killed and wounded is one of the strangest. No one doubts that their loss was insignificant; but apart altogether from the raider legend, which dreamed of wagon-loads of weltering Boers and awful carnage wrought by shrapnel and Maxim, there is a curious persistence and sincerity about the doubts with which men qualified to judge still receive the official Boer total of two killed by the enemy (one being poor Jacobsz shot by mischance), and two shot by accident by their own side. That reduces the butcher's bill for twenty-one hours' almost continuous fighting, by men, some of them good shots, armed with the very latest make of rifle, and assisted by field guns, to one man really shot by design. To give one single instance of the contrary evidence, one of Jameson's officers, cool, observing, and of the rigidly matter-of-fact English type, saw a cart containing at least three or four dead bodies in unmistakable Boer clothing.

"But are you sure they were all dead? We know there were

five wounded in Krugersdorp Hospital, one of whom died afterwards."

"You cannot mistake the way a dead man lies. I saw their hands wagging, so——, as the cart moved," with a gruesome realistic gesture.

"But why should they conceal? How do you explain the discrepancy?"

"I don't explain. I am simply telling you what I saw. I don't trouble my head about it."

The only motive suggested to counterbalance the natural wish of the aggrieved Republic to pile up its case for blood-money is the policy of cultivating the idea that God fights for the Boers. The extraordinary disproportion in killed which has marked all fights between Boers and English in the Transvaal, has made some of the more ignorant and superstitious farmers firmly believe that the Lord of Hosts would be constant to the side of the small battalions were their country invaded by the French and German armies together. Two, say the sceptics, is a favourite official number of Boers killed. It was two at Majuba. The ineradicable doubt had to be recorded here; but the writer, on a balance of probabilities, fully accepts the official version, and thanks Heaven the kill was not larger. The cover, and the defensive tactics, explain a great deal. The only use of Jameson's Maxims, but a very substantial use, was in keeping up such a clatter and sputter at the edge of the Boer positions as to spoil their shooting, hence the comparatively small death-roll of the column. The Maxim, in fact, was a weapon rather of defence than of offence.

The net result on the mind of a plain man from discussing with experts why Jameson's invasion of the Transvaal was a dead failure, is that it failed simply because it was an invasion. Completer surprise might have saved it, but when once a few Boers had time to choose a position and mass, the odds were tremendous, even had the column been twice as big. In a battle of sharpshooters, with the geological formation of the Transvaal, the man who can sit still is equal to ten men who

have to move. Had it been the Boers who must expose themselves and get past at all costs, and Willoughby who had only to play the waiting game, the result would have been exactly the opposite, whatever the numbers. Perhaps, with modern arms of precision, the battle tends to be more and more with the defence force in any country, unless that force is reduced through its belly. Which is, perhaps, just as well for the cause of peace.

Chapter IX

JOHANNESBURG TAKES ITS COAT OFF

[THE thread will now be taken up by turns by the Special Correspondent of the *Cape Times* despatched to Johannesburg in December when everything seemed to be threatening an outbreak. On the 20th Mr. Lionel Phillips made his speech at the opening of the new Chamber of Mines, fearing that unless the Government came to terms with the industry, "it would end in that most horrible of all possible endings—bloodshed." A more rattling speech made by Mr. Fitzpatrick at the Old Barbertonians' dinner about the same time helped to show that there was something more than the usual grumble in the air. Looking back now, we connect Mr. Phillips's speech with Jameson's visit at the same date to Johannesburg. But at that time nobody dreamed of any link between Jameson and Johannesburg further than that both began with a J. What all South Africa did conclude at once was that the capitalists had at last thrown in their lot with the National Union, and that some unusual demonstration was being prepared for. The *Cape Times*, taken somewhat by surprise, hailed the conversion of Capital to Reform, and described the Kruger-Hollander *régime* as the "Sick Man of South Africa," declaring that, as with the Sick Man of Europe, the one anxiety of neighbours now was to get the break-up decently and peacefully over. Both Sick Men have somewhat taken up their beds and walked since then—thanks to the disunion of their heirs presumptive. But at the close of December, 1895, it seemed the enterprising journalistic thing to send a Special Correspondent to the Rand, in time for the obsequies; and

the Assistant-Editor of the *Cape Times* went up accordingly. He came in for a stirring experience. The "I" of any personal reminiscences is, therefore, in the Johannesburg chapters, not the Editor's, but his.]

I REACHED Johannesburg at sunrise on Christmas Day. A great meeting of the National Union had been advertised for two days later.

Trouble looming, the people of the great mining town seemed to draw nearer to Church. Many a non-attendant became a church-goer at Johannesburg on Christmas morning. A "cab round" convinced one that all the churches were crowded. At the English churches there was an inspiring heartiness about the services; one could not but be struck by the emphasis with which the prayer for the Queen's Majesty was intoned, and at the vigour of the congregational response. Devotions over, the people of Johannesburg spent the Christian festival in quite the orthodox way—in home gatherings and veld outings, winding up with a sacred concert at the Wanderers' Club, and the usual singing of "God Save the Queen" at the close.

Next day a special National Union Manifesto, signed by the President, Mr. Chas. Leonard, was put into people's hands just as they were streaming out to the racecourse at high noon. The manifesto set forth the Uitlander grievances in plain terms, and pointed out the duty of the Government in equally emphatic language; but postponed the mass meeting to January 6th. Generally, the tenour of the manifesto may be summed up in the following concluding paragraph:—

"We have now only two questions to consider: (a) What do we want? (b) How shall we get it? I have stated plainly what our grievances are, and I shall answer with equal directness the question, 'What do we want?' We want: (1) the establishment of this Republic as a true Republic; (2) a Grondwet or Constitution which shall be framed by competent persons selected by representatives of the whole people and framed on lines laid down by them—a constitution which shall be safeguarded against hasty alteration; (3) an equitable franchise law, and fair repre-

sentation ; (4) equality of the Dutch and English languages ; (5) responsibility to the Legislature of the heads of the great departments ; (6) removal of religious disabilities ; (7) independence of the Courts of Justice, with adequate and secured remuneration of the judges ; (8) liberal and comprehensive education ; (9) efficient Civil Service, with adequate provision for pay and pension ; (10) free trade in South African products. This is what we want. There now remains the question which is to be put before you at the meeting of the 6th January, viz. : How shall we get it ? To this question I shall expect from you an answer in plain terms according to your deliberate judgment."

The effect was electrical. In a twinkling the scales fell from the eyes of the townspeople as they found themselves face to face with the possible consequences of the manifesto. Feeling, which had been growing in intensity day by day with the publication of reports of meetings held at the mines along the Reef, now reached a most acute stage, and the manner of the receipt of the manifesto by the Pretoria authorities was awaited with much concern.

Miners and artisans employed at the scores of mines east and west of the town, addressed nightly by one or other of the prominent leaders in the Reform movement, had been hurriedly indoctrinated into the principles of National Union faith, and, as events showed, the majority displayed a ready willingness to subscribe to the creed, and to stand up for it. There were notable exceptions. Jameson had spoken of his reliance on "miners with Lee-Metfords" : but a Lee-Metford is a fearsome tool in the hands of a miner who has never handled even an ordinary gun. Some of the men, late comers who cared nothing for the quarrel as compared with daily wages equal to a week's pay in England, were slow to move. And, oddly enough, those odd Celts the Cornishmen, whom some thought likeliest to prove ugly customers when cornered, were the first to escape cornering by taking to their heels from the scene of danger. Such men, if taxed with desertion, repeated the stock phrases of the Krugerite and renegade Press about "capitalists' trick," "it 'll all come off our wages," etc., etc. But this later.

Everywhere excitement reigned. People had no thought

for aught but the manifesto. The distractions of the race-course and the totalisator were powerless against the all-absorbing theme of conversation. Faith that can remove a Grand Stand has indeed done wonders at Johannesburg.

But the people were not unanimous. So much was clear from the very commencement. There were at first two camps. There was the Anglo-Saxon camp, comprising Englishmen, Welshmen, Irishmen, Scotchmen, Canadians, Australians, Americans, and Colonists from the Cape and Natal. These elements were solidly ranged on the side of the Union and the manifesto. Then there was the Continental camp, comprising Germans, Frenchmen, and the Scandinavians (including Swedes, Norwegians, Danes, and Finlanders). These had no liking for the manifesto. They admitted the gospel truth of every line of it, but they would not listen to a word about guns, and turned their faces in eager expectation towards Pretoria.

Chief amongst these was Mr. Langerman, Mr. J. B. Robinson's representative at Johannesburg (not the Max Langermann who joined the Reform Committee). Mr. Langerman's protest was taken to indicate that Mr. Robinson remained a staunch Krugerite.

Of all the Rand millionaires, Mr. J. B. Robinson is reputed the richest, and he is the one who has most obstinately clung to the policy of looking to Pretoria for favours rather than to the united effort of the Uitlanders for freedom. It is, or rather it was before the present crisis forced every man to choose between two sides, difficult to say why Mr. Robinson should be so much disliked throughout South Africa. It was then, of course it is still more now, impossible to discover any one who would say a good word for him. The ill-natured stories told about the foundations of his fortune in the early days of the Rand, and about his present entertainments lavished upon Society in Park Lane, are in both cases much the same sort of stories as are told about many other rich men; and if it was contemptible to find a mining magnate standing aloof from

the cause of the mining city, it was, after all, not so very long since other capitalists, now staunch reformers, gave up the habit of making their account with the back stairs of Pretoria. Perhaps what made people dislike this attitude particularly in Mr. J. B. Robinson was the obvious connection of it with the strange vendetta against Mr. Rhodes which has possessed Mr. Robinson's soul for many years past. Nobody quite understands this vendetta, which appears to be carried on solely from one side. It is said to date from some obscure squabble in early Kimberley days. Purely to gratify this Mr. Robinson had lately started a most expensive anti-Rhodes daily paper in Cape Town, since defunct, power of attorney over which he vested in Mr. Rhodes' most malignant local political opponent, and to which he himself cabled from Park Lane during the most disastrous period of the crisis hundreds and thousands of pounds' worth of messages demonstrating, day after day, that Mr. Rhodes was fallen, must be fallen, ought to be fallen, irretrievably and for ever.

But this is anticipating. Mr. Robinson's paper at Cape Town was the first to inflame the Dutch vote against him by raising the cry of "treason" when the crisis came. His papers at Pretoria and Johannesburg, one of them openly subsidized as a Government organ, were simply busy in their habitual work of fostering disunion and discouragement in the Uitlander ranks. It is a singular illustration of the remissness of the Johannesburg capitalists in the educative part of the Reform movement that the entire morning daily Press of the town was so far left in the hands of papers owned and conducted in the Government interest, the dynamite monopoly interest, the canteen interest, the Robinson interest, anything but the Reform interest, which was confided solely to the afternoon *Star*. The other morning paper was more mischievous even, because more read, than Mr. Robinson's. This, the *Standard and Diggers' News*, openly boasts itself the Government Gazette, and had been preaching for years the doctrine that the Pretoria Codlin, not the Johannesburg Short, was the true friend

to the working-man ; that the miners on the Rand should distrust their natural leaders and look to the Government. The steady drip of this teaching may probably be credited with much of the disunion between men and masters, which was to sap and destroy the supreme effort of the community to throw off its bondage.

All day and all night the situation remained uppermost in men's minds. The insinuation that the leaders of the movement were flagomaniacs (local phrase for Jingo) was denounced indignantly.

Meantime, what of the Government at Pretoria? Before the manifesto was twenty-four hours old it became patent that the Government had awakened to the seriousness of the aspect of affairs. Compromise was in the air early on the following day, Friday, December 27th. Means had been taken to let Mr. Kruger know that Johannesburg was well armed, and that a crisis of a grave character was nigh at hand. Two leading citizens from the Rand interviewed the President and wired satisfactory news. There was division in the councils of Pretoria. The Executive trenched upon what General Joubert considered his province, as Commandant-General, in despatching quick-firing guns to the Rand, an order which the General, who was not yet forced by events to recant his confessed leaning towards the Reform movement, countermanded. But among the Uitlanders, too, the "split" became wider with every hour, though the defection from the manifesto was not yet bold enough to detract much from its force and pressure on the Government. The bellicose bearing of Reform adherents began to create much concern amongst the trading section of the community ; especially was this manifest in the ranks of what was known as the Mercantile Association, a body somewhat similar in character to the Chamber of Commerce, though not possessed of the Chamber's power and commercial influence. The members of the Association were mostly of foreign extraction, a good sprinkling being of Semitic origin and of that Continental type of Semitism in which the

fiercely patriotic blood of the Maccabees does not run strong. The Association watchword was that to talk of war or revolt was criminal, while to murmur "Lee-Metford" was blasphemy to the God of the Till. How unattractive at some times and places becomes the attitude which at other times and places we applaud as "a sober sense of law and order"!

All this time no very clear notion was held concerning the controlling power of the agitation. As seen in a previous chapter, Mr. Chas. Leonard, who signed the manifesto on Christmas Day, left for Cape Town the same night, twelve hours before the document became public property. He was wrongly supposed to have fled from instant arrest.

In their dilemma men instinctively turned towards the magnificent red brick building at the corner of Simmonds Street and Fox Street, within a stone's throw of the Exchange. This building was the headquarters of the Consolidated Goldfields of South Africa Company, popularly known as the "Goldfields." People turned towards this building because Colonel Rhodes, as the chief representative of the Company on the Rand, had his headquarters there, and because the leaders of the Reform movement frequented the building. It was, moreover, observed to be the rendezvous of various military-looking men—some of them retired or half-pay British officers, and some old Mashonaland officers. Gradually the "Goldfields" became the focus of interest in the town, and for once in a way the holy ground "between the chains" at Eckstein's Corner, the Throgmorton Street of Johannesburg, became of secondary importance.

Friday was a day of painful uncertainty, and people discussed with much speculation what President Kruger really meant when he said that a tortoise has to put its head out of its shell before one could chop it off—a saturnine response offered to certain burghers who pestered "Oom Paul" about the rising turmoil at Johannesburg. (He was on tour at the time, and the scene of the speech was Bronkhorst Spruit, an '81 battle site.)

The answer came with the rising sun. Saturday, December 28th, deserves to rank amongst the days most big with fate in the annals of the Rand. President Kruger sent his message swift and severe. "Obey the law," he said to Mr. J. B. Robinson's representative who had journeyed to Pretoria to ascertain how the land lay around the Presidential stoep. "Trust in autocratic clemency!" Thus Johannesburg read the message, and, thereupon, Johannesburg took the step that launched the town into the throes of revolution. It openly raised a citizen army. The indecision and irresoluteness that had characterized the day before—this had vanished, and in its place there showed a determination to await with confidence the next development of events. Even Mr. J. B. Robinson's representative declared for the manifesto. Carried with the flowing tide, confident in the strength, if not the policy, of the Reform leaders, Mr. Langerman came back to the Rand and reported that he told the President to his beard that "there can be no retreat from the manifesto. Johannesburg is one and indivisible." "Then I shall know how to deal with Johannesburg," rejoined Mr. Kruger. The shot was a random one, no doubt, but it was strangely prophetic. Twelve days later—but this is anticipating. . . . And Oom Paul, too, was to have his hour of panic before then.

An advertisement appeared in the papers, headed, "Enrol! Enrol!" the object being the protection of life and property from the rabble—or from——? Well, from anybody who might attack.

The credit for the formation of the first force available for this or any other service belongs to the Australians. Led by Mr. Walter D. Davies (called Karri Davies from importing karri-wood), who at the time of writing still languishes in Pretoria gaol for the crime of refusing to sign a petition, the Australians assembled ostensibly for the purpose of forming a Red Cross Australian Brigade. It was, however, impossible to completely banish the political element, and thus we find these Red Cross advocates declaring that, "if we do fight, let

it be on the side of right and justice." That spoke plainly. The Americans met, too, for the purpose of forming a deputation to engage in a straight talk with Mr. Kruger. The Americans professed themselves desirous of maintaining the integrity of the Republic; but the deputation was to explain that, if the Pretoria Government utterly ignored just demands, and by its action precipitated war, the Americans would array themselves on the side of the Uitlanders.

The effect of this tumult and excitement was shown in the growing activity of the Cape Government Railway Offices on Market Square. From early morning the offices were besieged by panic-stricken people, anxious to escape from what they regarded as a doomed city. They cared not whither they went, provided only they crossed the Vaal in safety. Those who had friends in the Cape Colony booked through; others betook themselves to Kroonstad, Bloemfontein, and other places in the Free State. By three o'clock in the afternoon, eight hours before the time of departure, people boarded the train as it stood in the station yard at Braamfontein, preferring the discomforts of a stuffy compartment on a sweltering summer's day, to the risk of losing their seats when the rush set in at night. Anticipation was realized. When the train drew up at ten p.m. at the Braamfontein Station, where the trains are "made up," a mile or so from town, a crowd of more than a thousand persons seized it, and scrambled into such compartments as had not been already taken. But the most maddening scene of all was that which took place at the town (or park) station. Four or five thousand people greeted its approach, and then there was such a fight for seats as never before was witnessed. People who had booked first-class, and had anticipated a clean and comfortable bed for the night, found themselves glad enough to sit in second-class compartments four and five in a row. Wealthy gold-bugs disguised themselves and hid under the seats and behind the petticoats of their womenkind from the jeers of the men who stood on the platform. The women and children were cheered

and wished God-speed on their journey. At midnight the train of carriages, twenty-two in number, steamed away towards border—and safety. And thus the Great Exodus commenced.

Sunday brought little relief from the excitement of the times. Those concerned in matters of defence, or defiance, as the case may be, proceeded with their precautions and preparations. The clergy had their say to-day. Nearly every church was crowded, and at nearly every church the theme was the same. To do the English ministers credit, they put a bold face on matters, advising the sterner members of their congregations to quit themselves like men. To show the unanimity of the pulpit, let us take extracts from sermons delivered on this day by the Rev. J. S. Darragh, Rector of St. Mary's (English) Church, and the Rev. P. G. J. Meiring, pastor of the Dutch Reformed Church :—

ENGLISH CHURCH.

“A man can only preserve his own self-respect by showing respect to the feelings and sentiments of others. Abstain, therefore, from bluster and equally from ‘funk’—a vulgar word for a very vulgar thing—which some, of whom one expected better, have been displaying to a painful extent. Only by calmness, union and moderation will the conviction be brought home to those in authority that the constitutional agitation for our just rights is in earnest and means to be heard. It is preposterous to imagine that the majority can be ruled for an indefinite period by a minority, which is not their superiors in intelligence, honesty or capacity for government ; yet the peaceful vindication of rights cannot fail to be

DUTCH CHURCH.

“The end of the year has come, and should be a most serious time for our Government that is reaping, in the unrest which pervades the community, the fruit of the indifference and contempt with which the new population has been treated by the Volksraad. As a congregation belonging to the Church of the people of the country, we feel at one with the people, and are resolved to share their weal and woe ; accordingly we cannot but pray in this serious time, when the most threatening rumours are whispered abroad, that the people, through their Government and Volksraad, may recognise the mistakes of the past, and with the opening of the new year engage in such measures by which every reasonable cause of

hampered by declamation on the one hand, or cowardly truckling on the other. May he (the President) learn to rule an unfortunate tongue and temper, and talk no more of chopping off tortoises' heads. Even tortoises have the indefeasible natural right to protrude the head on occasion. It is an insult to the President's intelligence to imagine him capable of turning a deaf ear to the reasonable rights of the people reasonably urged, as they have been recently in a lucid and temperate document."

discontent may be removed. If any of us possess any influence with the Government, let us consider it our solemn duty to use that influence in moving the Government at the proper time to give solemn assurances that just concessions will be made in relation to the new population, and right and justice done. Remember that we shall never be able to justify before God and the bar of posterity the shedding of blood and the rending asunder of the two great elements of the white population in South Africa because of comparatively insignificant grievances, if such shedding of blood is not prevented by any activity on our side."

It was sentiments such as these that parsons sent the people away to ponder over. The Reform leaders redoubled their exertions to-day, being in session at Saratoga House, Doornfontein, the residence of Colonel Rhodes.

Monday, December 30th.

Monday might be called the day of the great Reform rally. The cruel suspense that had dominated the early days of the crisis had entirely disappeared; so far as could be gathered from spoken utterance the several factions had settled their differences; all now stepped into line with the object of presenting a united front towards Pretoria—all save the Germans and Frenchmen, who at a conference between Sunday night and Morning morning, decided to await the pleasure of their consuls at Pretoria. Even the mercenary Mercantile Association had been won over. The leaders of the movement assured the leading spirits of the Association that nothing had been forgotten; that organization had done all that human experience and prevision could effect, and that they could only injure and hamper the supreme effort by allowing their own

immediate and personal interests to remain uppermost in their minds. Realizing that they were not alone in the dangers that might overtake the community in the throes of the national change sought for, the members of the Association confessed their confidence in the leaders, albeit they took the precaution to form themselves into a separate Committee of Defence.

Public confidence in the movement was further enhanced by an authoritative announcement that Mr. J. B. Robinson's representative and the Barnato Bros. saw no escape from choice between the two alternatives. "He who is not for the National Union is against it." The view taken was that Johannesburg had gone too far to recede. "Let the Charter of our liberties be effectually conceded—or Heaven protect the right." Thus, the mouthpiece of the National Union, which vigorously preached revolution hour by hour.

Early this morning the rumours of the past few days concerning the possession of firearms became a demonstrated fact. Rifles had been served out at certain mines the day before. Men began to appear in kharki suits, with bandoliers and smasher hats. Still, nobody seemed to know how matters were to be brought to a head. The impression was that the leading mining companies would precipitate events by closing down the mines on the morrow, the last day of the Old Year, and thus throw thousands of white men, and tens of thousands of blacks on to the Pretoria Road—an expedient which made sober heads frown. It was given out that there was no lack of firearms and ammunition, and that at the Simmer and Jack there was a stand of one thousand arms and a Maxim. On the whole, the impression prevailed that the subscribers to the manifesto were fully prepared for emergencies.

The effect of all this war talk and war preparation upon the trade of the town may well be imagined. There was an immediate and general advance of 100 per cent. in the price of the most essential articles of food; bakers doubled the price of bread—from 6*d.* to 1*s.* per 1 lb. loaf; all credit was suspended, and orders for supplies coming forward from the ports were

countermanded. Hour by hour the commercial panic raged, and in the afternoon flour reached 100s. per bag ; forage, 100s. per 100 lb. ; and so on.

The news from Pretoria was more hopeful. Government was disposed to be conciliatory. President Kruger even went so far as to inquire of a Rand American deputation what he should do to avert a revolution. "Make the best possible terms with the National Union," sententiously replied the deputation, and forthwith returned to the scene of tumult. The homogeneity of opinion on the Rand, and the well-circulated report that the leaders could back their words by blows had great moral force at Pretoria. President Kruger received Rand deputations freely, and was by no means niggardly in his promises. The news came that the Executive Council at the morning meeting had decided to remove the special duties on foodstuffs forthwith. Johannesburg accepted the removal of the duty as one instalment of reform demanded by the manifesto. Pretoria vacillated—Johannesburg "bluffed."

The panic amongst the less confident spirits grew proportionately in intensity, and the exodus assumed the look of flight from a plague or a siege. Women and children left by the thousand ; Cornish miners from the East Rand took to their heels, not stopping for their pay, to be presented with derisive white feathers ; thousands of natives, mine and house boys cleared, and racehorses were sent far from the reach of the field-cornet on commandeering purposes bent. The determination with which the movement was being pursued at the mines along the Reef was shown in the arrival in town about noon of wagon-loads of women and children and household goods. Shelter for the fugitives was quickly provided. The Wanderers' Club gave up their magnificent hall, the East Rand Proprietary Mines gave up their building and offices for conversion into bedrooms, and the Turf Club vacated Tattersall's with the same humane object. All was enthusiasm ; the unanimity was wonderful. Recruiting for town protection and for district duty went on all day, and good care was taken that

Pretoria was kept well informed of it. Miners and artisans thronged the town, and everywhere there was excitement and ferment. There was, of course, much opposition to extreme measures, especially on the part of property-owners and tradesmen; but the events of the day had greatly popularized the National Union Manifesto; people regarded the Union as the winning side, and flocked to it accordingly.

All was going merrily, when at five o'clock in the afternoon, the leaders of the movement received the news of Dr. Jameson's entry into the Republic.

The Reform Committee, as a body, did not yet exist.

Although there had been much anxiety in the inner circle about Jameson's impatience, they had been so reassured by their Cape Town confederates so fully and so lately that the news that Jameson had broken his tether came with a shock.

On the previous morning—the very morning of the day when Jameson started—the reassuring messages reported in an earlier chapter had culminated in the receipt of a cipher message, never hitherto published, addressed to Mr. Percy Fitzpatrick by one of the two emissaries in Cape Town sent down to get the flag difficulty settled and Jameson checked. This important unpublished cipher was to the following effect:—

We have received the necessary assurances from Rhodes. Evidently the misunderstanding is in another quarter. [The reference here was to one of those loose impressions current at the time, as fully explained in a former chapter, about the supposed attitude of the British Government towards the conspirators or towards any outbreak in the Transvaal.] *Go on quietly with preparations without any haste. New programme agreed on.*

It is a curious and significant fact that the first actual news of Jameson's movement reached the Reform leaders neither from him nor from their own Intelligence Department, but from a Government official at Pretoria, who conveyed the news wishing to sound the leaders as to their attitude.

Later, Mr. A. Bailey received a wire from Cape Town—yet another of the few cipher telegrams that have never yet seen the light either in newspaper, Blue-book, or Green-book. I obtained a copy of the message the day after. It ran thus:—

The Veterinary Surgeon has left for Johannesburg with some good horseflesh, and backs himself for seven hundred. [= with 700 men.]

In these bizarre terms was conveyed news of a proceeding that was to set armies and fleets in operation, and to disturb the relationship of two of the great world-powers, to say nothing of the peace of South Africa.

The only other intimation of the move sent to Johannesburg from Pitsani or Mafeking was the telegram recorded in a previous chapter, which said that "Dr. Wolff will understand that distant cutting." (This active go-between was now in Johannesburg.) Dr. Wolff, unfortunately, denied that he understood anything of the kind.

Feeling that Jameson had "put them in the cart," the ring-leaders hastened to in-span other people. Let the representative breadth of their own Johannesburg movement be put on record at once! The "Reform Committee" was formed. And here let one telling fact be mentioned to show that Jameson's audacity did inspire, if it also amazed and alienated. Threats and persuasions were needed to get some Committee men's names down, till the Jameson news leaked out; and then they "came tumbling over one another to join," says an eye-witness. By Tuesday the Committee numbered sixty-four of the leading men of Johannesburg.

The position of the leaders was one of painful perplexity. Some explanation they must give about the Jameson news to the crowd of leading residents who kept pressing for priority of position on the "Reform Committee" roll. Men of various races and creeds were banded together, and while some were swept off their feet by the proof that *somebody* at least was in deadly earnest, others were certain not to welcome the new development. The American section of the Committee, for

instance, hot from the Venezuela excitement, would scarcely relish any seeming association with the Imperial factor. The Committee, in short, were at sixes and sevens on this point.

For some hours after its receipt the news was kept within the Reform Committee circle, and preparations calculated to strike the eye and to reassure were feverishly pressed forward.

When, late at night, the news was published throughout Johannesburg, the dominant note was rather anti-Jameson than pro-Jameson. There was a revulsion against outside interference, which by many was construed as from an Imperial quarter. Johannesburg, as the news spread, was dumb-founded by the audacity of the thing. There was a babel of dubious comment. "Who told Jameson to come in?" "Whose quarrel is this: ours or the Charter's?" These questions were bound to be asked.

Feelings were further damped by the news of a terrible tragedy which had marked the panic-stricken exodus by rail. A packed train which left Johannesburg for Natal the previous evening had run off the rails near Glencoe, injuring thirty-one and killing twenty-one of the fugitives, men, women, and children. Distraught relatives were naturally inclined to hold the Reform leaders vaguely responsible, though the accident was more directly traceable to the deficiencies of the Netherlands' cars on the train—and therefore to a characteristic feature of the Unreformed Transvaal.

The worst thing was the leaders' utter military unreadiness. When the news came the conspirators had but 1,500 rifles in their possession, of which only 500 were unpacked. The balance of the guns, and the majority of the Maxims did not reach the Simmer and Jack Mine until the following day—at the moment when Jameson dashed across the border the Maxims were *en route* to the Rand concealed in consignments destined for the Simmer Mine.

There was wild unpacking that Monday night, leading Reformers pulling grease-covered rifles out of secret places till their arms ached.

The Hon. "Charlie" White, and Captain Heyman, two of Jameson's officers whom the surprise move found still at Johannesburg, swore that nothing would stop Jameson in his march to the Rand—not even 10,000 men. This assurance was contagious; the Committee took heart, and awaited developments.

In the meantime wagon-loads of rifles and tons of ammunition were brought into town from the Simmer and Jack Mine, and stored in the "Goldfields" building. Three Maxims were brought in and located at the Rand Club for general exhibition. No attempt was now made to conceal the real state of affairs, so far as the intentions of the Committee were concerned. The rumour that the town had plenty of guns acted as a great public stimulus. More mass meetings were held, and more corps formed—of course, all for "the protection of life and property," and the defence of the town. Defence, not defiance, was still the watchword. The Scottish Brigade was formed on this eventful day, a brigade which before many days were over numbered 1,100 men, none of whom ever shouldered a gun. The cyclists of the town, a large athletic body, likewise formed a Women and Children Protection Brigade, and further decided to stand up for their rights.

The Anglo-Saxon section of the Uitlanders remained loyal towards the Cause, and towards one another. The "Moderates" hedged once again. This section, largely composed of German members of the Stock Exchange and merchants, held another meeting, and decided to approach the Government and beg it to appoint a Commission, to be presided over by Chief Justice Kotzé, to report to the Volksraad at the special session opening on the 9th January, then ensuing, upon the following matters: (a) the amendment of the Grondwet; (b) the alteration of the law with regard to the franchise; and (c) the granting of further privileges in connection with education. The most prominent people concerned in this movement were Mr. Langerman (Mr. J. B.

Robinson's representative), Mr. S. B. Joel, and Mr. Harold Strange.

What attitude the Government assumed was indicated in the following proclamation issued in a "Gazette Extraordinary," and published by the Government War Commission at Johannesburg late on Monday evening :—

"Whereas it has appeared to the Government of the South African Republic that there are reports in circulation to the effect that earnest endeavours are being set on foot to bring into danger the good order at Johannesburg ; and

"Whereas the Government is convinced that should such reports be of a truthful nature, endeavours of such a kind can only emanate from a small portion of the population, and that the greater portion of the Johannesburg population is desirous of maintaining order, and is prepared to support the Government in its endeavours to exercise law and order :

"So it is that I, Stephanus Johannes Paulus Kruger, State President of the South African Republic, with the advice and consent of the Executive Council, according to Art. 913 of the Minutes thereof, 30th December, 1859, hereby earnestly warn those evilly disposed and command them to remain within the bounds of the law, the alternative being that those who do not hearken to this caution must answer to it on their own risk ; and

"I further make known that life and property shall be protected, where attacks thereupon may be attempted, and that every inhabitant of Johannesburg who is desirous of maintaining order, to whatever nationality he may belong, is hereby called upon to support and assist me, and the officials are ordered to do the same.

"And, further, I make known that the Government is at all times prepared to duly consider all grievances which are laid before it in a proper manner, and to lay the same for treatment before the Legislature of the country without delay.

"GOD SAVE COUNTRY AND PEOPLE."

The leaders of the movement met late in the evening at the "Goldfields" to discuss the situation as it appeared in the light of the Jameson development ; but nothing definite was decided. The only game that the hesitating Committee could play was the waiting one. As to their own status and

position, however, the Committee spoke with no uncertain voice. They formally declared themselves the Reform (sometimes called the "Defence") Committee of Johannesburg, and thus constituted, they awaited the arrival of the morning's news from Pretoria.

The gradual formation of the Committee and its programme as first adopted, are shown by the following message and the names appended to it ; it was despatched to the High Commissioner on Monday night :—

" JOHANNESBURG, SOUTH AFRICAN REPUBLIC,

" *December 30, 1895.*

" Whereas certain deputations which proceeded to-day to Pretoria have returned with unsatisfactory answers and promises of inconsiderable concessions, this meeting resolves to abide by the manifesto issued by the Chairman of the National Union and to send a deputation of representatives to-morrow to request from the Government to give a definite answer within twenty-four hours, failing which this meeting decides to approach the Government of Her Majesty to secure its intervention for the purpose of establishing rights and averting internal strife.

" (Signed)	Francis Rhodes,	Lionel Phillips,
	A. P. Hillier,	W. F. Gilfillan,
	V. M. Cement,	Gordon Sandilands,
	Abe Bailey,	H. A. Wolff,
	S. W. Jameson,	II. A. Leith,
	F. R. Lingham,	Max Langermann,
	A. L. Lawley,	J. J. Lace,
	W. St. John Carr,	George Farrar,
	J. Percy Fitzpatrick,	Walter E. Hudson,
	John Hays Hammond,	John G. Auret,
	E. P. Solomon,	J. W. Leonard."

Thus, on Monday, 30th December, did Johannesburg take off its coat to begin.

Chapter X

THE IRENE MYSTERY AND THE NACHTMAAL
SURPRISE

BUT what, the mindful reader will ask, what has become all this time of the surprise attack on the Pretoria arsenal, which, according to Chapter II., was to have been almost the first move in the revolution ?

It will be remembered that it was Johannesburg which was to have the controlling hand in its own challenge to the Government. Jameson's part, so far as it was ever clearly arranged at all, was to be merely a diversion, and a diversion which could be carried off under the pretext of an emergency police incident for the protection of life and property.

When the existing Government was paralysed, and its police withdrawn (as did actually occur) ; when a Provisional Government was declared at Johannesburg ; when the improvised forces of this Provisional Government were occupied at Pretoria or on the Pretoria Road ; a case would be created, plausible enough, for the Johannesburg leaders accepting the services of certain police, lately the Chartered Company's, who would then come in to police Johannesburg.

It is one thing to start a revolution in a community like Johannesburg. It is another thing to direct it. When the Government withdrew its police, if anything like an Alexandria riot had supervened the case for throwing troops in from outside would have been so cogent that, failing Jameson's police, Imperial forces would probably have had to

be moved up. The emergency once provided for by Sir Henry Loch, in fact, would have arisen.

It is only by remembering this point about the original plot that many things in what actually happened become intelligible : such as the uncertainty of Jameson's destination, when he moved of his own accord, whether Johannesburg or Pretoria, the entire absence of any arrangement for effecting a junction with Jameson, or for Johannesburg forces going out on that side at all, the construction of defensive works and posting of forces upon a design evidently framed with an eye towards Pretoria, not towards Krugersdorp ; and last, the Mystery of the Irene Estate, which greatly puzzled and alarmed the Pretoria Government at the time, and the story of which is here told for the first time.

"Why was no step in the Pretoria part of the plot ever taken?" One step was taken. Johannesburg, in fact, threw out its outposts as far as the Irene Estate, almost within gunshot of the church steeples of Pretoria. Almost immediately after the issue of the manifesto, steps were taken to store rifles and ammunition at this convenient spot. The Irene Estate, formerly the property of the late Mr Nellmapius, was now in hands sympathetic to the Reform movement (though it does not follow that the owner was necessarily more cognisant of the way in which his property was to serve the revolution than worthy Volksraad member Malan in the matter of Jameson's remount horses). The estate was a very handy depôt. The expedition to it was placed in charge of the son of a well-known ex-commandant of Colonial forces, who, however, like nearly everybody else in the affair, was not taken fully into the confidence of the conspirators. At the time of starting, he was told that he was to go in charge of a trading expedition, and to take with him a couple of men of the farming class who could speak the taal and give the time of day to any Boer they might encounter in their travels.

The expedition consisted of a couple of well-laden "buck-wagons" drawn by oxen. These left Johannesburg on the day

following the issue of the manifesto. The first halting-place was to be the Irene Estate, and the expedition was to await at that spot further instructions.

Arriving at the farm, the expedition received orders to off-load, and store their goods in buildings on the estate. They did so, and during the work the men first learned the nature of the expedition in which they were engaged. They rose to the situation, did their work with speed and with a will, and soon had everything in apple-pie order. Then they awaited developments.

Strange to say, on the Tuesday following, orders came that the goods were to be loaded up again and returned to Johannesburg with all possible despatch.

Again the men worked like Trojans, and had their wagons full and their teams inspanned in double-quick time. But how to reach Johannesburg unseen by the Boers! For the country was now all astir from the news of Jameson, and the splendid rally of the Boers to cut him off. The Pretoria road was likely to be much frequented, and by just the sort of parties that the pretended traders did not want to meet.

The happy thought struck the young Englishman, or rather Welshman, in charge of the expedition, to avoid the President's highway, and striking across the veld hit an ordinary farmer's road leading to the Rand.

Thanks to this idea, and good luck, and hard work, he managed to reach Johannesburg without encountering any too inquisitive party.

The wagons passed the toll gate on Hospital Hill late at night, and proceeded to the "Goldsfields" building, where the "goods" were again off-loaded—and were supposed by the crowd to be part of the warlike stores brought nocturnally from the Simmer and Jack Mine.

The men in charge had a narrow escape of capture. Whatever the source from which Pretoria drew its cognisance of the revolutionary plans, that cognisance was specially and anxiously alive to the menace to the seat of Government. The informa-

tion even covered the fact that there was cause for search at "Irene." And on the Tuesday morning a small force under Mr. Malan, son-in-law of General Joubert, was sent out to investigate. When the party reached Irene, the birds had flown. The high road was scoured—but, as we have seen, the birds had flown otherwise.

And that is the Irene Mystery, which there is now no harm in telling.

But the nerves of Pretoria were still fluttered, and it was not till Thursday morning that President Kruger would let the artillery go out of the capital, even to meet Jameson. General Joubert, who has been accused of treason for not responding to the urgent messages from the front, had actually given orders to the artillery to start, when the President interposed to stop it. He could not have the capital exposed to assaults from Johannesburg

* * * * *

Now, why was the assault from Johannesburg never attempted? Why were arms ordered out to Irene, only to be ordered back again, like the men of the "gallant Duke of York"?

The reason is simple; even to absurdity. The Johannesburg leaders had just discovered that the Boers keep *Nachtmaal*!

Christmas and New Year are great times to take communion. At the end of December and beginning of January, Church Square at Pretoria is white with the tents of outspanned wagons. Bearded farmers, and fat frows, and families, by scores of wagons, drawn from the Pretoria district up to several days' journey distant, have come to town to partake of *Nachtmaal*; and in each wagon, along with the Bible, comes the rifle—in case of game on the way, or thieves, or other need. At any rate, those who had no rifle with them could soon be supplied. It was a ready-made garrison!

So when Jameson suddenly precipitated matters, and Johan-

nesburg sent to spy out the land at Pretoria, lo! the Church Square was thick with Boers.

The Pretoria surprise was a wild and hazardous idea in any case. But with Pretoria full of Boers, it dissolved into thin air. To this day there are many, eager revolutionaries at the time, who do not know that it was ever dreamed of.

As it was, the preparedness of the Government shows that the scheme was confided to one too many. But had it been confided to two or three more, surely some one or other would have known his South Africa well enough to remember the institution of *Nachtmaal*!

As it was, the geese of the Capitol were not more useful to Rome than the Boers in the Church Square were to Pretoria. "Once again," the Boer historian of the future will remark, "we were saved by our religion!"

Chapter XI

A PREMIER'S "APPLE-CART"

THE news of the raid ushered in a drama at Cape Town scarcely less moving than that enacted at Johannesburg, save that at Cape Town the action was mostly behind the scenes. At nine o'clock on Sunday morning, the 29th of December, the telegraph office opened, and, to quote the words of the Cape Committee of Inquiry, "it is in evidence that the telegram from Dr. Jameson of the evening of the 29th, as well as that of the morning of the 29th, were both handed to an official of the Chartered Company some time between ten and eleven a.m. on that morning."

Imagine the feelings of Mr. Stevens when he decoded, one on the top of the other, the message, "I shall go unless I hear," and the message, "I shall go in any case this evening!" He took a cab and dashed off to Three Anchor Bay, where Dr. Harris lived. He found Dr. Harris breakfasting. The Secretary of the British South Africa Company took Mr. Stevens' cab and posted out to Groote Schuur, while Mr. Stevens was despatched to the telegraph office to "keep Mafeking open."

But the operators could not ring Mafeking.

At Groote Schuur Mr. Rhodes, closeted with the two Johannesburg emissaries, to whom was shown Jameson's startling messages as soon as he could escape from a maddening tablefull of guests at luncheon, walked up and down with his hair roughed up, repeating mechanically from time to time: "Now just be cool. Let's think this thing out. Now just be cool," and so on.

It seems clear that Jameson's two messages threw Mr.

Rhodes into a kind of fatalistic vacillation. An impulse of irritation with his old friend for breaking away was followed by a rush of confidence that the man who was neither to hold nor to bind had flung himself into a great enterprise, and would somehow carry it through.

Between three and four o'clock Dr. Harris returned from Groote Schuur to Cape Town with a message signed "Unbengangen," a private code name for Mr. Rhodes, as follows:—

"Heartily reciprocate your wishes with regard to Protectorate, but the Colonial Office machinery moves slowly, as you know. We are, however, doing our utmost to get immediate transference of what we are justly entitled to. Things in Johannesburg I yet hope to see amicably settled, and a little patience and common sense is only necessary. On no account whatever must you move. I most strongly object to such a course."

The reader's first thought will be, how oddly worded the beginning of the message is as a reply to Jameson's breathless telegrams, with no part of which it seems to connect. The Cape Committee of Inquiry were fairly puzzled by this Protectorate reference. It might even be suspected that the intention of the first part was to detract from the emphatic veto of the second part and turn the whole telegram, on some pre-arranged plan of interpretation, into a blind. But apart from any other reason against this, the telegram was never made use of as a blind, nor shown to any one in justification during the difficult days which followed. Long afterwards, it came to light without Mr. Rhodes' approval by a sort of accident.¹ More plausible, perhaps, is the theory that the veto was genuine, and that the calm and philosophic beginning of it was deliberately calculated as a cold douche for the ardent recipient. If Jameson was "bluffing," the best way was to dismiss his threat of going in as nonsense. If he was not bluffing, but really meant what he said, then any veto at this point was a mere matter of form.

¹ Mr. Stevens gratified the curiosity of the Select Committee by producing the draft, and his superiors seem to have disapproved the disclosure as prejudicing Jameson, whose trial was then imminent.

Whatever the intention of the telegram, it was never sent. When Mr. Stevens took it to the office on Sunday, the line to Mafeking was still closed. He tried and tried again, until late that evening. Early next morning he again took the telegram to the office, and ascertained that the wire had been cut. In the end he did not leave the telegram at all at the office—another evidence, by the way, that it was not a sham veto intended merely to be put on record. By the time that communication with Mafeking was restored matters had passed into a new phase, Mr. Rhodes having folded his hands and left everything to Fate and the High Commissioner; and Mr. Stevens seems not to have sought or received any further instructions.

At eleven o'clock that Sunday night the Imperial Secretary, who had gone to bed, for South African hours are early, was roused by an urgent message from Mr. Rhodes. He hurried to Groote Schuur. Mr. Rhodes at once told him of Jameson's telegrams received that morning. He mentioned in a general way that he had tried to stop Jameson, but could not communicate, said that there was a chance that the messengers from Johannesburg, who would have reached the Doctor after the despatch of his morning telegram, might have changed his mind, but did not conceal the fact that he fancied Jameson would now stop for nobody.

At that season of the year the Governor abandons Government House for a country villa at the suburb of Newlands. From his midnight interview at Groote Schuur the Imperial Secretary went home to spend a few sleepless hours before going to Newlands House to rouse Sir Hercules Robinson untimely from his slumbers. A phrase in the following note has become historical :—

“NEWLANDS HOUSE,

“*Monday, December 30th, 1895, 5 a.m.*

“MY DEAR SIR HERCULES,—

“I hope you will come to town early. There is, I fear, bad news from Jameson. He seems to have disobeyed Rhodes, and to have taken the bit between his teeth.

“Yours, etc., GRAHAM BOWER.”