

THE COMING OF DOWNY V. GREEN

THE Titan has her moods. From 1887 to 1897 she was jubilant and perhaps a little lazy; toyed with yellow books and dreamed of an invincible army and an unassailable commerce. In 1899, lighthearted still in spite of Dr. Jameson, she fell headlong into Mr. Kruger's tortoise trap; and spent the best part of three years in grim Titanic doggedness, bearing the vast orb of her fate on shoulders lamentably stiff and awkward. Once in training again, she seems to feel her energy and her old good humour return together; she will organise, adapt, expand; she will have a naval intelligence department, and half an army instead of none; play at long Atlantic bowls with Uncle Sam and at long asbestos spoons with more doubtful friends; personally inspect her new undertakings, personally greet her old feudal tenantry; throw open her College gates with Titanic liberality to all Saxondom, and welcome the new scholars with Titanic laughter at her own expense and theirs.

Her sense of humour is among her saving graces: when in her foolish or fanatical moods she loses it for a time, she makes strange and dismal errors; talks like a lunatic of Christmas at Pretoria with infantry preferred, of methods of barbarism and hecatombs of slaughtered babes, of fighting irreligion in Board Schools and refusing to pay County Council rates. There was a solemn moment when she came near to babbling of the Americanisation of Oxford and the sacrifice of that English culture which . . . but somebody laughed in time