

## KRUGER'S DREAM.

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ACCORDING to the *Daily News* war correspondent's report of the battle of Eland's Laagte, there was a very curious item among the "spoil" taken by the 5th Lancers. It was a flag with an Orange emblem of the United States of South Africa. Now, this bit of news—though, of course, we cannot vouch for its truth—suggests to us the following article, which may interest a great many of our readers, if not all of them, in the present critical state of affairs.

We desire to say, at the outset, that it is far from our intention to join in the passionate struggle of party politics, especially in regard to questions of foreign policy. Experience and reading have shown us that the difference between Liberals and Conservatives, with respect to the government and extension of the British Empire, is mostly fantastic and insincere. The point of view of either party depends chiefly on whether it is in office or in opposition. Mr. Gladstone, it is true, conceded independence to the Transvaal after our defeat at Majuba Hill; but the same Mr. Gladstone bombarded Alexandria, occupied Egypt, and watered the Soudan desert with the blood of men "rightly struggling to be free." Had the present struggle in South Africa arisen while the Liberals were in power, it would probably have been dealt with in very much the same fashion. The language of diplomacy might have been somewhat different, there might have been more rather than less verbal hypocrisy, but all this would not have affected the final and substantial result. The fact is, if you will have an empire you must be imperial. We can understand and respect the ideal of those who maintain that England should be self-contained and have no empire at all; we can understand and respect the ideal of those who maintain that the extension of the British Empire is a great factor in the world's civilization; but we cannot understand or respect the ideal—if it may be so called—of those who want the British Empire maintained, but also want it maintained without soldiers and without fighting; and we simply despise those politicians who say, for instance, that it is right for us to maintain our hold on India at any cost, but who are always found on the side of every power, big or little, with which we happen to be disputing. We like logic and consistency, and we dislike men who try to take credit for both of two opposite principles.

We also desire to say that we protested, many weeks ago, in the *Freethinker*, against the frightful crime of an avoidable war. No doubt a very wise and honest diplomacy on both sides would have prevented the present bloody strife. But as the world goes such diplomacy would be phenomenal. What is talked about is too often not the actual object of concern. Negotiation is too apt to be insincere, moving on the surface of things, and concealing or disguising the real causes of difference. Sometimes it is felt