

WHAT CAN BE SAID FOR THE BOERS?

I have tried to find the very best things said about them by their own friends. I take first their New York champion, Mr. Geo. W. Van Sieten, who has been very much in evidence in the Press.

He says that the Boers did not agree by the Conventions of 1881 and 1884 to admit foreigners to *any political rights*. I wonder whether he expects the free American people to consider that a good reason why a Government calling itself a Republic should deny to worthy foreigners reasonable opportunities for obtaining citizenship. He says that foreigners have no voice in the affairs of the United States; but he omits to say that those who so desire may cease to be foreigners upon very easy terms, and that they have long been encouraged so to do.

Astonishing as it may seem, the above epitomizes all that Mr. Van Sieten is able to advance in justification of the Boers. He indulges in a great deal of abuse of England, but he advances nothing to show that the Transvaal gave the Uitlanders equitable laws, impartially administered, and those rights which free men will always demand, wherever they may be.

Mr. James Bryce, who from his present attitude might be assumed to find much good in the Boers and their Government, wrote of them thus more than two years since:

"Severed from Europe and its influence two hundred
 "years ago, they have in some of the elements of modern
 "civilization gone back rather than forward. * * *
 "They are strangely ignorant and backward in all their
 "ideas. They have no literature and very few newspapers.
 "* * * They dislike and despise the Kaffirs,
 "whom they have regarded as Israel may have regarded the
 "Amalekites, and whom they have treated with equal sever-
 "ity. * * * They know little or nothing of
 "the modern world or of international politics. * * *
 "They have a double measure of wariness and wiliness in
 "their intercourse with strangers because their habitual sus-
 "picion makes them seek in craft the defense for their igno-
 "rance of affairs.

"Both legislation and administration have been car-
 "ried on in a rough-and-ready fashion, sometimes in viola-
 "tion of the strict letter of the law, and the provision of
 "the Grondwet (Constitution), that no law should be
 "enacted without being submitted for a period of three
 "months to the people, has been practically ignored. * *
 "As late as 1881, an immigrant could acquire the right of
 "electoral franchise after two years. In 1882 this period