

Very Grateful

Agamemnon found it an invidious affair to give the preference to any one of the Grecian heroes.—Broome.

The return of Colonel Roosevelt from the campaign in Cuba to fight in the possible political battles of his country has recalled public attention to the exchange of epistolary shots between the now idolized New Yorker and Mr. Alger, the chief of the War Department. Although some of the daily papers seem to regard the published correspondence between Mr. Alger and Theodore Roosevelt as a snubbing of the latter by the United States Secretary of War, it is very difficult to discover in the letter of the reckless Rough Rider a reason for the now much quoted rebuke contained in the reply to the request that his men, having shown superiority, should be sent to Puerto Rico. The tart, sarcastic reference made by the Secretary of war to Roosevelt and his troopers, as being "no better than other volunteers," and as having an advantage in arms for which "they ought to be very grateful," is a reminder of the following racy story of barrack life, frequently told in Halifax, N.S. An English army chaplain, in attendance upon a sick soldier named Hopkins, had been waiting some two days for the expected and certain death of the latter. Although a strong sense of duty to the dying kept the chaplain at the bedside of the unduly obstinate private, the desire for sleep became over-powering, and the chaplain, calling an orderly, said: "I must get some rest; but if Hopkins should become worse, I wish to be called, so that he may have religious comfort at the last." "Very well, sir," replied the orderly, and the chaplain, worn out by watching at the soldier's dying bed, slept long and soundly. The next morning, he hurried to the sick-ward, when the following colloquy ensued between the chaplain and the hospital orderly:

Chaplain.—(Anxiously).—How is Hopkins?

Orderly.—(Saluting).—Oh, 'e's dead, sir.

Chaplain.—Dead! I thought I told you to call me at the last.

Orderly.—So you did, Sir; but I didn't see the good of disturbin' the likes of you for the likes of 'im, Sir.

Chaplain.—(Seated at the feet of Hopkins).—Well, I trust, in my absence, you did what you could to comfort him.

Orderly.—Oh yes, Sir, towards mornin' I sat where you are, Sir, I saw 'e was goin', they usually go towards mornin', Sir; so 'Opkins, sez I, you're very ill. I am, sez 'e. 'Opkins, sez I, you're a going to die. I'm feard so, sez 'e. 'Opkins, sez I, you can scarcely expect to go to 'eaven. Scarcely, sez 'e. 'Opkins, sez I, then you'll have to go to 'ell. I think I will, sez 'e. 'Opkins, sez I, you ought to be very grateful that there's a place reserved for the likes of you and me. I think 'e 'eard me, Sir, 'cos 'e turned over and died.

Now, Colonel Roosevelt may not think he "ought to be very grateful" to Mr. Alger that the Rough Riders carried a better weapon than the "black pow-

der Springfields;" but he may be reasonably thankful to the Secretary of War, for increasing instead of diminishing the popular favour with which the pluck and bravery of Colonel Roosevelt and his followers has been received by grateful countrymen, and it is more than likely that the quondam Rough Rider will be seated in the gubernatorial chair of a State proud and happy to have produced such a gallant and outspoken soldier and gentleman.

Boer Diplomacy.

The struggle between Cecil Rhodes, the representative of the Uitlanders, and the cunning Boer diplomatist, who rules at Pretoria, becomes even more interesting when the following comments of the *Transvaal Critic*, of the 8th ult., a period long anterior to the elections, on a reported offer of a loan to the Transvaal Government, of \$30,000,000, subject to the granting by President Kruger of certain reforms, are taken into serious consideration. The *Critic* says that:—

"Everyone ought to know by this time that it is part of the President's "freezing-out" policy not to grant even the shadow of a reform. It is his avowed policy to get rid of as many Uitlanders as possible, and the means adopted towards that end have hitherto not been unsuccessful. It becomes simply a question of who can hold out longer, the Government or the general body of Uitlanders. It may be objected that by driving away the stranger the President is reducing the sources of revenue. This is only partially true, for as soon as the number of foreigners, especially British subjects, in the State has been reduced to the irreducible minimum, a new source of revenue will be opened up by the imposition of a direct tax on gold! Knowing as he does from the monthly returns the exact amount of gold produced by the various mines, the President will be able to regulate the tax to suit his needs, and thus a small group of financial houses will have to make good whatever deficiency may be caused by the general exodus of Uitlander inhabitants."

It has been the policy of the wily and cunning President for the last two years to keep the stranger outside his gates, and this past master in Boer craft and stratagem doubtless thinks he will succeed in reducing the Uitlander population to the "small group of financial houses," referred to in the *Critic*, from whom it will be easy to collect a direct tax at very small expense to the Government. But, will the Uitlanders submit much longer to the "freezing-out" policy of a President who rules the Transvaal in such an autocratic manner?

Since these comments of the *Transvaal Critic* were penned, the elections have been held, and the results point to the possible failure of Cecil Rhodes to obtain a victory at the polls for the Progressive party over the redoubtable Dutchman, whose obstinacy seems to retard progress by peaceful political means just as effectively as the rifles of his countrymen repelled the raiders who sought to obtain certain necessary and desired reforms by resorting to force. But that which, in the opinion of many Uitlanders, should have followed the disaster at Majuba may yet have to be made the means of securing proper treatment for British taxpayers in the Transvaal.