

Basuto chief, Moshesh, induced Sir Harry Smith to reverse the sentence of outlawry. In January 1852, that fatal document, the famous Sand River Convention, was signed, and the independence of the Boers beyond the Vaal River was recognised. This arrangement was confirmed by Sir Harry Smith's successor, Sir George Cathcart, and by the home Government of Lord Aberdeen.

The State whose troops have been lately distinguished by signal treachery in regard to flags of truce marked its early history by gross and systematic violation of the clause in the Convention which laid down that "No slavery is or shall be permitted or practised in the country to the north of the Vaal River by the emigrant farmers." The South African Republic, starting on its political career with a population of about fifteen thousand Boers, or farmers, in a land well suited for most kinds of tillage and for pastoral life, showed small capacity for self government. At first there were four executive heads—one for each of the leading factions—and for a time there were four separate republics. This system caused a virtual anarchy, which drew to the territory the rascals of South Africa, and gave the Transvaal a bad name for cruel treatment of the natives. In 1860, the separate republics were united, and, after a civil war between the factions, peace was restored in 1864, under the presidency of Mr. M. W. Pretorius, with Mr. Paul Kruger as commandant or military chief.

There was no properly organised system of rule, and unsuccessful war with natives to the north from 1865 to 1868 left the State Treasury destitute of funds, and compelled the patching up of a somewhat ignominious peace. In social and political affairs, the conspicuous matters were dense ignorance of books and of all affairs outside a narrow local circle, the lack of bridges over rivers, and the want of money in the Treasury for the erection of public offices and for the payment of the paltry salaries of officials. The material

wealth of the country grew in flocks and herds, and in the produce of a fertile soil, and rude abundance existed on the Boer farms. In 1876, under President Burgers, war arose with a powerful native chief named Sekukuni, and an attack made by a Boer commando, led by the President in person, was repulsed with loss. The defeat was attributed by the orthodox to the leadership of the agnostic ruler, a man who had been formerly a minister, and had afterwards shown much ability in the Cape Colony law courts. As chief official of the Transvaal he was a failure, and, in presence of a successful native chieftain, the State found itself penniless and without an army.

It was in this position of affairs that Lord Carnarvon, British Secretary for the Colonies, decided upon annexation in the general interests of South Africa. He acted



*From a Photo. by Heath, Plymouth.*

MAJOR-GENERAL SIR WILLIAM BUTLER,  
Late Commander-in-Chief in South Africa.