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THE SITUATION.

One of the things that are new in the South African war is the precaution taken by the British to prevent the movement of troops becoming known to the enemy. This puts great restrictions on the war correspondents and necessitates a close watch on cable messages. The plans of campaign are no longer heralded in advance; when this was done the enemy knew nearly as much as the British general of what was intended or being undertaken. The distribution of troops who have arrived at the Cape in the last two weeks is authentically known only to the military authorities. It is, of course, known that Ladysmith, Kimberley and Mafeking will be relieved as soon as possible, and that a considerable force is moving up the country from Durban. About the rest there is a good deal of shrewd guessing. It is known that General Methuen's division has crossed the Orange River, on his way to the relief of Kimberley. It is probable that General Buller has never been long without communication with Ladysmith by means of search-light when carrier pigeons failed. The search-light can speak more than one language, including the use of the alphabet. From Kimberley the search-light can be seen and understood more than a hundred miles distant. The present is a time of preparation among the British military forces; and when they are ready to strike a series of blows the war will begin in earnest. Meanwhile the Boers continue the advance southward, in Natal, the object being to hinder the advance of General Cleary's column, as it moves to the relief of Ladysmith.

The Boers in their movements in Natal and on the border of the Cape Colony, are doing a good deal of plundering in the way of carrying off cattle, an art in which practice among the native blacks has given them no small degree of perfection. In the end they will find that they will have to pay for all this plunder; the British general has already notified them to this effect. The Transvaal Government refuses to recognize the American consul at Pretoria, as the agent of Great Britain there, on the plea that the Americans are friendly to England. Whatever value such an objection may have is destroyed by the admission of a member of the Pretoria Government that the same objection would probably be made to the

consul or ambassador of any other country designated by England to act as its agent. If the British prisoners at Pretoria have any complaints to make there will be no impartial person to forward them. Young Churchill, a correspondent of one of the London papers, is among the prisoners. His father, Randolph Churchill, when he visited South Africa, some years ago, came to the conclusion that the days of the Dutch in that country, as an independent nation, were numbered; and he gave mortal offence by predicting that they would pass away unhonored, unlamented and scarcely so much as remembered. It looks as if the fulfillment of the first part of this prediction was near at hand; there is no reason to desire that the other three parts will prove true. We have a good deal of confidence that in the future they will make good British subjects, under kind and liberal treatment, such as they have persistently refused to the Outlanders. When peace comes the British may well take a pride in outdoing them in generosity.

In failing to capture Ladysmith, Mafeking or Kimberley, the Boers' preliminary plans have failed at every point. The ignorant masses of the Boers were promised a holiday march over Natal and the easy capture of Pietermaritzburg, the capital of the colony, where they were to dictate terms of peace. They never got to the capital and never will get there; they have suffered heavily in the attempt. The latest reports state that the attacks upon Ladysmith by their artillery did but little harm; at Mafeking their great guns did less; at Kimberley they have been vigorously kept at bay. It is stated that the big guns used at some or all of these places were taken from the forts at Pretoria, to which before long they will return them, if they can. In the end the great stand will be made here, where there are six forts which the Boers have been in the habit of regarding as impregnable. Bloemfontein may surrender without a battle; that is said to be the policy of the Boers, but whether it is or not, it would not be safe to conclude. The expectation of Transvaal authorities that the Boers of Cape Colony would rise *en masse*, or sneak away in undistinguishable squads to their assistance, has not proved true; some from the different British colonies in the neighborhood have joined them, but the expectation of great assistance from these places is already disappointed. The time when such a movement was possible has passed.

Ex-Ambassador to Germany, Hon. Thos. B. Reid, at the 131st banquet of the New York Chamber of Commerce, speaking to the toast, "The friendly relations between the United States and Great Britain," cited Jefferson to the effect that of all nations Great Britain could do the United States most harm; if he gave the counterpart of the quotation, as he probably did, that Great Britain could also do the United States most good, the transmitted report was too short to give it. This remark, in its two branches, has, since the days of Washington, become reciprocally true; the friendship of the two nations has now acquired ten-fold importance just at the time when it attained its fullest development. Amidst this friendship, there is rivalry of trade between the friends; but this, he pointed out, is equally true of the friendly merchants of New York; they also are rivals. The United States, Mr. Reid pointed out, is pledged to the open door in the Philippines. The two nations, he said, "have common interest in the East, the interest of the open door." He expressed a high opinion of the Dutch; and he felt assured that "Dutch sympathy with the illusory Afrikaner aspirations will breed no bad blood." England, Germany