

Look at the ultimatum. Consider its suddenness, its studied insolence of tone and terms, its urgency. A demand such as no great power ever made upon another, couched in language the contemptuous character of which it would be impossible to exaggerate, was presented without the slightest premonition, and while Mr. Chamberlain's new proposals were being formulated. What is the use of talking about who provoked the war! The Boers knew well enough that their ultimatum left England no possible alternative. Nothing had happened, nothing was going to happen, to make such a precipitate movement necessary. The British troops were very few and well within their own boundaries; they had even refrained from occupying the strong mountain position of Laing's Nek, near by and on British soil. No considerable reinforcements were immediately due in South Africa. If the object of the Boers was defence they would still for weeks to come have been vastly stronger than the British; if they wanted to attack, the sooner they did it the better.

At Middelburg President Kruger said:

We have never been the attacking party, but
 "always defending. We follow out what God says,
 "'Accursed be he who removeth his neighbor's landmark,'
 "and as long as Your Excellency lives you shall see we will
 "never be the attacking party on another man's land."

Pious and delightful old man! Only five months and a few days later his people, by his orders, became the attacking party on the Queen's dominions, and issued proclamations annexing the portions overrun!

Consider the claim made in respect of the Jameson raid. Mr. Chamberlain promised that the Transvaal should be suitably indemnified by the Chartered Company, whose servants the raiders were. The raid occurred at New Year, 1896, the party surrendering four days after entering the country. In February, 1897, after an interval quite sufficient to allay the first irritation, the Transvaal presented a claim for material damages amounting to £677,000 and for moral damages £1,000,000—in all, close on \$8,200,000.

These figures show the unreasonable temper of the Transvaal. Granting that the fullest compensation should be made, it is an astounding estimate of the damages caused by an expedition of only 500 men who surrendered within four days of crossing the border, with a loss to the Boer forces of 5 killed and 3 wounded. Leaving out of account altogether the fact that the raid was brought about by the intolerable treatment of the countrymen of the raiders, one has only to compare this claim with the indemnity exacted by Prussia from France to perceive its utter absurdity. What, we may well ask, would the civilized nations say if when the Boers are conquered England should demand from them compensation upon their own scale? If the claim was formulated as part of a deliberate purpose to aggravate the situation it would be intelligible; it seems to me incomprehensible upon any other hypothesis.