

The Planet

S. STEPHENSON, Proprietor.

ONE AMERICAN'S VIEWS OF THE BOER SITUATION.

Thomas C. Shearman, a resident of New York, writes to the editor of the Times of that city, as follows, on the Transvaal question:

In doing so, he says, I shall state only unquestionable facts. Those who desire to find chapter and verse, as authority for these statements, can do so by reading two books, Fitzpatrick's "Transvaal," written by an Irishman, on the anti-Boer side, and "Oom Paul's People," written by Howard C. Hillegas, exclusively in favor of the Boers, and avowedly suppressing all statements of any wrong acts done by the Boers. Nevertheless, the worst points against the Boers will be found in Mr. Hillegas' book.

1. In 1884 Paul Kruger was in London. He was so poor that he could not pay his hotel bill; and it was paid for him by a generous Englishman. He then expressly and publicly invited Englishmen and Americans to settle in the Transvaal and to conduct mining there.

2. Mr. Kruger afterwards sold one of his own farms to Englishmen for \$500,000, paid in gold. His friends and neighbors sold other farms at even greater prices, receiving altogether, from foreign settlers principally English, although including a considerable number of Germans, Frenchmen and Americans, many millions of dollars.

3. These foreign settlers produce every dollar's worth of wealth which can be exported from the Transvaal, and every dollar in excess of what will suffice for a very bare and dirty existence to the old residents. Every dollar of the wealth now possessed by Mr. Kruger, his son-in-law, his officials, and indeed any of the Transvaal population, has been produced by these settlers.

4. The taxes annually levied in the Transvaal, have exceeded \$20,000,000. Nine-tenths of this amount have been collected from the foreign settlers, whom Mr. Kruger invited into the country.

5. No appreciable part of the taxes is expended for the benefit of the foreign settlers. If this sum were equally divided among the Boers, it would furnish an annual income of about \$2,000 for each family, which would pay three times over all the living expenses.

6. No such equal division is made, but half these taxes have been spent in making preparations for war, and the other half devoted to the payment of enormous salaries to and jobs for Mr. Kruger, his son-in-law, friends and political supporters. Mr. Kruger himself has avowedly received \$30,000 a year salary, while, on repeated occasions, sums of \$15,000 and \$25,000 have been paid out for taxes for his direct and exclusive benefit, as appears by public records. How much more has been spent without public record can only be guessed. His son-in-law and private secretary owns (so says Mr. Hillegas) a single house costing \$250,000, and rolls in wealth besides, as he must, to support such a house.

7. The official records in a Transvaal lawsuit, arising upon a quarrel between two sets of Boer plunderers, show that every Boer official worth anything, including Kruger's son-in-law, received bribes from a Boer railroad company. The amount of each bribe was set forth in a bill of particulars filed in open court. Not one of these men ever denied the receipt of these bribes.

8. The foreign settlers, exclusively, built Johannesburg, a fine town, with (formerly) 50,000 inhabitants. They were not merely denied any rights to govern that city, they were denied any municipal government whatever. This is proved, not only by the explicit statements of Mr. Hillegas, the American representative of the Boers, but also by a proclamation of Paul Kruger himself, dated January, 1896, a copy of which I have. Mr. Hillegas states that not \$5 could be expended in repairing a bridge or road without first receiving express authority from Pretoria.

9. As a consequence of this total lack of good government, the death rate in Johannesburg has been constantly three or four times as great as even in our own badly governed city of New York. There is no use in comparing it with ordinary mining camps, because Johannesburg is a fine city, built by intelligent and educated men.

10. The foreign settlers in the Transvaal, were denied the right to bear arms, while every male Boer from 16 years and upwards, is heavily armed and drilled, at the expense of the foreigners.

11. By a press law passed for the avowed purpose of crushing the foreign settlers, all newspapers were placed at the mercy of President Kruger, who can suppress them at his pleasure.

12. By another law, passed for the same purpose, all meetings of more than seven persons in the open air are absolutely prohibited, while other meetings can be dissolved in an in-

stant, at the discretion of any policeman.

13. Another law was passed, absolutely prohibiting the presentation by any foreigner as even so much as a petition for redress.

14. When Mr. Kruger invited foreigners to settle in the Transvaal, full naturalization could be obtained within two years. After foreigners had accepted his invitation, he repealed all naturalization laws, absolutely. Then, under pressure, he restored the laws, but made the term fourteen years; but any foreigner desiring naturalization must renounce all protection, even from his own government or the Boer government for fourteen years, during which time he would be a citizen of no country whatever, and have no rights which any Boer would be bound to respect. During these fourteen years he must be ready to serve in the Boer army on twelve hours' notice, and he would be frequently called upon to serve, without pay, clothing or even food, which he must provide for himself. At the end of these fourteen years of degrading humiliation he would not be allowed to vote for any office worth voting for, unless his humble petition was approved by two-thirds of his Boer neighbors, by the military chief of his district and finally by Mr. Kruger himself. Neither would he be allowed to vote even then unless he were forty years of age.

15. While nearly two-thirds of all persons residing in the Transvaal spoke only the English language, and less than one-third either spoke or could understand the barbarous Boer Dutch, the Boers insisted that all English-speaking children must take their education exclusively in Dutch.

16. President Kruger resisted the introduction of railroads for years in order to compel the miners to hire his private ox teams at enormous prices. When finally he did permit the railroads to be built, he granted the privilege exclusively to persons who would agree to give to his relatives a big share of the profits. He granted monopolies of several indispensable articles of supply to the miners, with the result of doubling the price at which they could otherwise have been obtained.

17. The whole Transvaal government was corrupt and rotten from top to bottom. No business could be done with them without bribing the president's son-in-law and hangers-on.

18. Having remonstrated against these things for years in vain, and having received frequent promises of reform, which were never kept and were never meant to be, a number of foreign residents, including more Americans, in proportion to their total number than of any other nationality, conspired together to compel these reforms to be granted, by force of arms. They collected rifles, gunpowder, etc., but never made any overt act, and never committed any overt act, their offenses were such as could not have been punished in the United States by more than a short term of imprisonment or fines not exceeding \$1,000. They neither planned nor desired to become a British colony.

19. The conspiracy being discovered before the conspirators carried it out, sixty of them, including six Americans, were arrested, cast into an indescribably filthy goal, and informed that unless they pleaded guilty they would be hanged, but that if they did plead guilty they would be let off with fines.

20. Being brought into court, they were charged with an offense, which, by the express statute of Boerland, was punishable by nothing more than a short term of imprisonment. Being assured by the Boer prosecuting officers that they would receive no greater sentence than this, and would be allowed to escape with fines, if they pleaded guilty, they did so plead; although, as to many of them, the offense could never have been legally proved.

21. No judge then on the bench being quite unscrupulous enough to serve Mr. Kruger's turn, he imported an utterly unscrupulous judge named Gregorowski. This judge publicly stated that he came for the express purpose of making it hot for the Outlanders. After the prisoners had all pleaded guilty, this judge announced that as to the four leaders, he should not sentence them under the statute-law, but would revert to the unwritten law of the Transvaal, which prescribed death for such an offense. Accordingly he sentenced these four (one of whom was a distinguished American, and probably the ablest mining engineer in the world) to death, and all the others to various terms of imprisonment and heavy fines.

22. Even the Dutch settlers of South Africa, being horrified at this sentence, and pouring by hundreds into Pretoria to remonstrate against it, Mr. Kruger graciously took the matter into consideration, but announced that his religious scruples forbade that he should commute the death sentence into fines, because such fines would be "the price of blood," and his reverence for the dear Lord forbade that he should be less scrupulous than the priests of Jerusalem.

23. The pious Boers therefore informed the prisoners that they could not be released on the payment of any fines, but if the prisoners would, of their own accord, "subscribe for charities" sums varying from \$25,000 to \$100,000 each, for the leading men, and

not less than \$10,000 for anybody, the merciful president might be induced to pardon them, without any fines or imprisonment.

24. Both the British and American Governments being at that time too chicken-hearted to intervene in these proceedings, this offer had to be accepted. The American citizens all made heavy contributions to "charity." Mr. John Hays Hammond paying \$100,000. No such penalties were ever exacted in the whole history of the United States, not during the last century in any civilized country.

25. These "charitable" contributions, amounting to about \$1,000,000 in all, were duly paid over to His Highness Paul Kruger or his son-in-law. It is needless to say that the "charities" have never turned up, although four years have now elapsed since the \$1,000,000 was safely deposited under the control of the pious Paul Kruger.

26. Both the British and the American governments meekly submitted to these outrages upon their citizens; more shame for both of them! No wonder that Kruger described both Englishmen and Americans as "dogs," who, if they were good, would lick his boots.

The advocates of the Boers in this country assert that these acts have occurred only since the Jameson raid of December, 1895. In this there is not one word of truth, except, of course, as to the trial and sentence of the Outlanders. All the other acts of oppression above narrated, and many, many more, were permitted and persisted in before the Jameson raid occurred. Mr. Kruger was not quite so confident thereafter that the Outlanders would never fight as he had been before. After that raid, and not before, he permitted Johannesburg to have some kind of government, insisting, of course, that this government be absolutely under the control of his own creatures. Still, it was much better to have a local government under his nomination than to have none at all.

The Planet will commence the publication of a new story entitled Edith Norton next Tuesday. Don't miss it.

The Canadians who didn't go to the front are so pleased at the way the boys behaved that they feel like getting half shot themselves.

DWINDED DOWN TO A FARCE.

The Mail.

Mr. Ross promised to investigate the wide range of election frauds. He limits his enquiry to West Elgin. Mr. Ross intimated that the West Elgin investigation should be full and thorough.

He excludes the "machine" from it, and restricts it to an examination of the acts of "returning officer, deputy returning officer, and poll clerks." Mr. Ross declared that justice would be done.

He knew at the time that the ballot, the strongest evidence in the case, had been made away with.

THE CHARGE OF THE LIGHT-CLAD BRIGADE.

Upon the first Canadian contingent arriving at Cape Town it was discovered that while the complement of tunics was complete, there were lacking four hundred breeches. Mr. Henry Duff, late of the Montreal Star, who has wooed the muse, at the dinner given by Sir Charles last week, voiced the plaint of the light-clad brigade as follows:

The bravest palled when he was told That somebody had blundered; And the corps' supply of pantaloons, Was minus just four hundred.

Our hearts are brave, and yet we grieve At prudence so neglected; They send us to the front and leave Our rear quite unprotected.

We marched for many a weary mile, In a costume, light and airy; A little in the classic style Of Grecian statuary.

Of course we met some very hard, Some trying situations; It took us all the time to guard Our base of operations.

Our sufferings would be less keen; Were there any chance of getting A box or two of vaseline; And a little mosquito netting.

We've scissors and needles and cotton and pins; But nowhere to put patches; We've pipes and tobacco and that sort of things, But nowhere to strike matches.

This thing is getting monotonous; And we long for the sake of variety, To tuck our shirts into divided skirts As they do in polite society.

Our statesmen talk of glory? Why! We've no heart for glory now, sirs, We'll talk of medals bye and bye, Just now we want our trousers.

We long to meet the foe's steel, To hear the welcome rally; "Come on, ye royal sons of bitches," "Charge! Borden's corps de ballet!"

And when the batteries unmask, O'er head the iron hail screeches; Then "fill me up," "Give us the task To storm Pretoria's breeches."

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PATRIOTIC CONCERT

At the Grand Opera House Friday Evening, Feb. 23rd

The following is the official program in its entirety, arranged by the general committee, for presentation at the Grand Patriotic Concert to be held at the Opera House next Friday evening:

PART I.

Opening Address—Mayor T. A. Smith.

Selection—City Band.

Chorus—The Maple Leaf, with solo by Mr. Harry Horstead.

The Bugle Call—Brassley Quintette Club, consisting of Geo. Grant, Benj. Talbert, Dollie Scott, Mary Bryant and Minnie Russell. Pianiste, Mamie Howe.

Violin Solo—Mr. Henry McCaw.

Vocal Solo, Who Carries the Gun?—Miss Lizzie Smith.

Recitation, Pro Patria et Gloria—Miss Gertrude Mae Swan.

Quartette, Little Cotton Dolly—Messrs. Horstead, O'Hara, Sheldon and Wilson.

Vocal Solo, Will ye no' Come Back Again?—Miss Eida Idle.

Vocal Solo, The Man Behind the Gun—Mr. Wm. Wilson, with male octette chorus—First tenors, H. W. Anderson and James Rhody; second tenors, J. W. Mann and Geoffrey O'Hara; baritone, Milton Fox and Ross Ball; basses, Morton Sheldon and Arthur Gammage.

Selection (a medley)—Mandolin Club.

Vocal Solo, Her Majesty, Stephen Adams—Mrs. James.

Recessional, Kipling-DeKoven, with harp solo by Mr. William H. Brackin.

PART II.

Opening Address—Warden John Davidson.

Selection—Excelsior Band.

Chorus—Soldiers of the Queen, with solo by Mr. J. G. Mullen.

Solo—Mr. Alex. McPherson.

Recitation, The Absent Minded Beggar—Miss Maud McCosh.

Vocal Solo, The Union Jack of Old England—Mr. S. H. Marshall.

Quartette, Just as the Sun Went Down—Mrs. Cooper, Misses Blight, Simpson and Ross.

Vocal Solo, The Widow of Old Windsor Hall—Dr. C. B. Oliver.

"To Mr. Kipling" (a reply to the Absent Minded Beggar)—Miss Lydia Kathleen Duffus.

Quartette, The Old Brigade—Barrie.

Mrs. W. R. McGregor, Miss M. Carmichael, Messrs. J. D. McPherson and Peter Haggart.

Presentation of Veterans' Medals—Lieut.-Col. Holmes, D.O.C. M.D. No. 1.

Chorus—Rule Britannia.

God Save the Queen.

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Those desiring to assist in the sale of tickets can secure them by application at the offices of Major J. B. Rankin.

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