

BRITON AND BOER.

Last century South Africa belonged to Holland. In 1814 it was ceded to Britain. For a score of years the Dutch settlers continued their accustomed enslavement of the native races. This unpaid or ill paid toil was a large item in their prosperity. When Britain gave freedom to the slave throughout her Empire, thousands of these Boers, dissatisfied at the rights and liberty given to the blacks by the British Government in Cape Colony, "treked" northward, 1836-1837, settled in new country, declared themselves independent, and continued their policy towards the native tribes whose land they took.

Their attitude is seen in a "Fundamental Law" passed by them, which decreed that "The people will admit no equality of persons of color with the white inhabitants either in state or Church." The Mormons emigrated to Salt Lake, beyond the law, to practice what they wished. So the Boers more than once treked north that they might get beyond the wholesome restraints of British law. They were reminded, however, at the times of these different emigrations that they were still British subjects, that the British Government would claim the right, if necessary, to regulate their conduct towards the native races.

In their aggressions they were in 1875 reduced to great straits and threatened with attack from the Zulus and other powerful tribes. Britain could not allow native uprisings, with consequent dangers, near her own territories, so intervened, protected the Boers, and established order.

In 1881 the Boers revolted and the British agreed to give them self-government in internal affairs under British suzerainty. The conditions were that British subjects were to have equal civil rights in the country, just as Britain gives the Boers in her colonies, and that the Boers were to make no alliances with other nations without her consent, as this might endanger Britain's South African possessions.

This agreement the Boers have not kept. British settlers have increased. The Boers are now but one-third of the population. The settlers pay nine-tenths of the taxes, but have no rights, no votes, and are not even allowed to establish English schools at their own cost to educate their own children. They have undue burdens and no rights as citizens. They are in a sense hewers of wood and drawers of water. They have serfdom for freedom. The Transvaal is called a Republic. It is really one of the most arbitrary despotisms in the world. Britain asks treaty rights for British subjects, such as were promised when self-government was given, and such as she

freely gives Boers in her colonies. Boers refuse, and have now appealed to arms.

The Boers are religious, but have not been favorable to British missionaries, because the latter aimed to elevate the native black races to manhood, while the former sought to keep them in ignorance.

A missionary in his travels came to the place of a prosperous Boer farmer and was hospitably entertained for the night. Before retiring he proposed family worship, which was cordially agreed to. But when he asked that the servants and dependants be called in, the farmer burst into a loud laugh at such an idea, and told him he might as well call in a pack of baboons.

So strong was the feeling that on one occasion Livingstone's house was burned by one of their hands that was sent forth against a native tribe. Livingstone always regarded them as a hindrance to the uplifting of South Africa. Little or no progress could be made in mission work where they controlled.

In their way they are religious. They live in the atmosphere of Joshua and the Judges. They, as God's chosen people, with both native and foreign among them as the tribes of Canaan, to be subject and pay tribute, is probably not far from an average Boer ideal. Of course the above statements do not apply universally. There are many excellent people among them, but they are not the ones who have shaped the Boer policy.

The Boer quotes the Psalms, but he has not got beyond the imprecatory, blurred at that. He will go on in some way at some time to the Messianic. Whatever the issue of the present unrest, God reigns, and nought will come but what is best for South Africa and the world. God maketh the wrath of man to praise Him and the remainder of wrath He will restrain.

Dark and awful is the scourge of war, but most of the world's liberties have been purchased by it. In a very real sense has the world thus risen on stepping stones of its dead self to higher things.

Britain is long suffering, but strong in her sense of right. The champion of the weak, she will not too far permit wrong. Her's the freest flag that floats. And in this very fact it is becoming in growing measure not only the banner of an earthly Empire, but the symbol of a mightier, which, whatever becomes of Britain, shall never pass away. Under that flag, realizing all that it means of freedom to the down-trodden and oppressed it should be no mere selfish boasting of clan or nation that echoes: "Rule Britannia," but a spirit that finds its ideal in the universal kingdom that is coming hour by hour.