

The Orange Free State Folly.

One of the most hopeful signs in connection with the campaign in South Africa is the constant re-iteration of the statement that the burghers of the Transvaal and the Orange Free State, partners in the plot for the expulsion of the British from the country, are constantly quarreling. The announced disinclination of some of Mr. Steyn's people for further fighting probably proceeds from constantly increasing knowledge of the stupendous folly of their course. A few crushing defeats of the Boers may materially change the position of affairs, by causing many of them to realize the power of the British Empire. The sooner such a process of enlightenment begins the better. The war will soon close, if there is any truth in these stories of disaffection in the Boer camps, especially when a glimmering of the real situation enters the minds of Mr. Steyn's constituents. When they begin to blame him for meddling in matters which did not concern the Orange Free State, they are likely to endorse the statement of the Boer, who, in talking to a Bechuanaland settler, said there were three classes in the Transvaal Republic—the Uitlanders, who find all the money; Mr. Kruger and his officials, who draw it all; and himself and his fellow burghers, who get no money, but have to do all the dirty work, and the fighting.

When this impression becomes widespread and general, we may safely leave Messrs. Kruger, Steyn, Dr. Leyds, and their relatives, in the hands of their deluded countrymen. There is no doubt that if these obstinate and greedy rulers of the South African Republics had introduced good governmental administration, the Boers might have maintained their peace and independence for a good while.

Reply to Republican Neighbour.

The true prop of good government has been said to be opinion; the perception, on the part of the people of benefits resulting from it; a settled conviction, in other words, of its being a public good. A government guided by public opinion, yet acknowledging the authority of a hereditary sovereign, is good government, and the lovers of a republican form of government who cannot understand why the sovereign power in Great Britain is not exercised by representatives elected by the people will find the reasons for our adherence to the principles of limited monarchy in the following extract from the London "Spectator":—

The monarchy was rocking when William IV. expired. Years later the coolest observers imagined that a great republican party would be formed, and speculated whether the great change could be achieved in the constitutional way. The monarchy, transmuted by the steady attitude of the Queen, is probably stronger than it has ever been, certainly better rooted in the temperate, yet devoted, liking of its subjects. The feeling for republicanism, unexasperated by foyal blunders, has quietly died away into a philosophic doubt entertained by a few thinking men whether

on the whole a people can be fitted for self-government without visibly and openly governing itself. The idea of a rival dynasty is as dead as if it had never been the predominant thought of English politicians, dead so long that our mention of it will seem to most of our readers an absurd anachronism. Two great colonies—Canada and Australia—have grown into subordinate states capable of sending out armies; and mainly because there is a standard which is revered, a Queen who affronts no one, and neglects no one, and preaches to no one obedience as a gospel, they are actually fighting that the empire which protects and controls them may endure."

War Risks and Extra Premiums

In previous comments upon the action of English life insurance companies in charging an extra five per cent. for war risks in South Africa, we have illustrated the business wisdom of the charge made by the companies concerned by publishing the percentage of casualties among the British officers. But a cablegram from London says that the extra premium has created "unfavorable comment and very uncomplimentary comparison" of the action of the companies with that of American concerns. "To-day" is credited with saying:

"In answer to the protests the companies say sentiment cannot enter into business transactions. The best answer to the English companies is that the American offices are making no such demand, and, if the Americans see their way to dispense with an extra premium, it might be thought that the enormously wealthy English offices could safely do the same. Their refusal is as short-sighted from a business point of view as it is unpatriotic. Unfortunately, it is in keeping with the general trend of English insurance managements."

Why the British underwriters should dispense with the reasonable extra premium simply because their American rivals do so is not easy of comprehension. We venture to think that all sensible policyholders on both sides of the Atlantic ocean will commend the British companies for deciding not to mix business with patriotism.

The sneering allusion to the "general trend of English insurance managements", will fail to create prejudice. It only serves to stamp the writer as one undeserving of serious attention. His supposed reasoning is mere "argumental delirium." Moreover, we do not believe that the American offices are accepting similar risks to those referred to without making the premiums in proportion to the danger incurred by the assured.

Prudence or Poison.

Among the surprising reasons for seeking a dissolution of the marriage tie, that of an Indianapolis applicant may well be regarded as one calculated to open a disturbing train of thought. The complaint of this timid and unhappy Benedick against his wife contained no charge of inconstancy, incompatibility of temper or cruelty.