

CRISIS IN THE TRANSVAAL.

FATE OF THE BOER REPUBLIC ABOUT TO BE SETTLED.

This Week's Conference at Bloemfontein— Cecil Rhodes Discredited in England— Andrew Carnegie to His New Tenants— Romance of the Hope Diamond, London, May 29.—The crucial chapter in the strange history of South Africa opens with the meeting of Sir Alfred Milner, the British High Commissioner in Cape Colony, and President Kruger at Bloemfontein on May 13. The President of the Orange Free State is the nominal host, but he is not to be a mere bystander. He will look on jealously for any British attempt to touch the internal independence of his neighbor, the Transvaal Republic, and he will not look without cause, Sir Alfred Milner's mission is to make clear what things are and what are not within the limits of internal independence. The principle forbidding taxation without representation is not applicable at all, for there is no possible answer to Kruger's assertion that the Boers are not subjects of England. He knows well enough that the British representative is not to discuss any such subject. What, then, is to be discussed? Mr. Goosen put it in official phraseology in a sentence which he took the unusual course of putting in manuscript in the margin of his speech at the dinner of the South African Society last night: "I will confine myself to saying that though the situation is still one of some anxiety, we have every hope that the good sense of President Kruger will recognize the necessity of allowing the Boers to continue to contribute largely to its wealth and prosperity, and that he will realize that the content, the prosperity and the loyalty of the entire population of a country are the best security for its independence."

The crisis is all the more serious from the position of the Boers. Mr. Chamberlain is obviously restrained in his official utterances. The fact which has so greatly changed the situation during the past few weeks is that Cecil Rhodes has failed utterly in his attempts to bulldoze the Government. The stage crowds of fashionable supers adorned themselves for the occasion for their hero at the Charter-Street Company's meeting, but not the most persistent circulation of cocked-and-colored telegrams has stirred the British public to bring an ounce of pressure on the Government to give the great "Empire builder" more money for his railways and coal-mines. The Boers, on the other hand, are leading the evening papers at the beginning of the week, has helped to discredit his championship of the Uitlanders. The "officers" turn out to be a few ex-Sergeants, ex-Corporals, and other presumable deserters who have found the profession of British patriots in "volunteering" for the Boer army. The Boers are more profitable than humdrum soldiers' duty in Natal. Their ingenuity is a lodging-house keeper in the lowest quarter of the town. Their projected "blow for freedom" shows, even in the words of their own friends, a more liberal want of ordinary precaution than that which would be shown by the British Government. A wallet containing his secret documents at Bloemfontein.

The present scheme of reform was planned a year ago. The work of enrolling an "army" was undertaken last December. The plan of campaign was as follows: The fort on Hospital Hill in Johannesburg was to be rushed upon at night by the main body of the Boers, and the burglar more profitable than humdrum soldiers' duty in Natal. Their ingenuity is a lodging-house keeper in the lowest quarter of the town. Their projected "blow for freedom" shows, even in the words of their own friends, a more liberal want of ordinary precaution than that which would be shown by the British Government. A wallet containing his secret documents at Bloemfontein.

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From London and Cape Town they are regarded with the species of contempt evoked by persons who are naturally fond, but are ambitious to be rogues. As a ludicrous imitation of the Jameson fiasco, it has been useful here in exciting opinion from the Boers. The Boers are not so healthy. It did not materially alter the situation that Milner and Kruger have to discuss. Joseph Chamberlain hopes that a satisfactory settlement will come from their meeting, but he is not confident. Rhodes is angry and hopes for failure. He calls the Boers "the most unscrupulous and unscrupulous set of men that ever lived." If he can secure fair treatment for the foreign population in the Transvaal without giving the Boerism whom any leverage over the country, his standing as the most effective statesman England has got will be so confirmed that the Boers will be glad of the opportunity now given them of sending them over the border forever. The move is a clever one. With one swoop he gets rid of the dangerous element of the population, and at the same time he will prove to Sir Alfred Milner and all the world that he did not oppress the Boers, but had a population which required watching. What will be his next move? The State agents will go east first, their dupes will follow their way of sense and the rank and file will be sent over the frontier.

Meanwhile the London weeklies are deluged with the Colonies. The Boers have had a better success than what he should do after the Kruger-Milner conference. But Mr. Chamberlain, as his custom has been when he has had to face each of the crises in his career, has gone down to his house near Birmingham, locked the front door, seen nobody, and proceeded with all his powers to do his own thinking.

Mr. Andrew Carnegie has taken the theater as a Highland lair. He has bought a beautiful place in Skibo Castle, grand in its simple gray and purple and centuries-old trees. He went up to it in the far north of Scotland the week before last, and he has been there since. He has been there since he was one of the £100,000 to the thief who made free with the property of Parr's Bank the other day. Dispose of it he could not without instant detection, so easy was it of identification. The only thing he could do was to cut it into pieces, so that no one could recognize it, and to re-cut these pieces as separate and, of course, smaller gems.

ostle with a hundred or two jubilant school children and periferid elanman. Then came Mr. Streeter's inevitable and brilliant remarks. "It is a rare experience, the first I have ever had of entering into a large residential property as proprietor. We came and saw Skibo, and Skibo entered into our hearts. We loved it from the first; we had heard about the estate that had arisen in Skibo estate, but Mr. Streeter said that it was not a new estate, but lived in a community which we did not like and which did not like us. We remembered the fable of the boy who ran home to his mother telling her that a bad man in the wood had abused him by calling him bad names, but when his mother went to the wood she found it was a beautiful place. We took it without any difficulty with our people. If to-day we had our choice to live on an estate without tenants, fencers, crofters and farmers, we should elect to be surrounded by our fellows. I have been thinking as I drove along the magnificent estate of nine miles which I had bought, Happy is the man who has a croft of a little bit which he can truly realize is his own, for it is impossible for me, and I think for any man, to realize any sense of proprietorship over miles and miles of land. But when I saw the estate, which was the 'Womans' croft' over Highland home, and this gathering of the tenants of all these estates greeting us at the gate, I began to realize how a man could indeed feel that he possessed an estate—it is when he possesses the hearts of his people upon it. This is what it is to be a landlord and the test key to the castle."

"I think we have given you, men and women of Skibo, some evidence that we mean to stay here from the amount of new work we are doing. So you must make up your minds that you are not going to get rid of us, I trust, for we are your neighbors, and we hope that it will not be long before we can truly say of you, 'Our people,' you of us, 'Our proprietors,' and neither of us ever wish a change. For our part neither Mrs. Carnegie nor I are inclined to divorce. You have spoken to-day of my gifts to various places and villages. Well, I need not say that we believe that there is no better use of wealth than improving the small part of God's earth which falls under your trusteeship; and I hope to show that we realize this, and that I may never lose what reputation I may have earned of being a man of good sense by doing foolish things, but I will retain it as long as I can, and I will, among you, by helping those who helped themselves—think only that that work for good."

"Taking up his little daughter in his arms, Mr. Carnegie proceeded, on her behalf, to thank the school-children for turning out with their flags in such large numbers to welcome her. "We hope," he said, "that she will grow up with their children, and that some day she will occupy the same relation to them as her mother occupies to you. We are to know each other better, and I wish to say, for Mrs. Carnegie and myself, that here we intend to remain, and our last Highland home. May we still in our old age have the privilege of being the people of Skibo?"

Touching on the presentation of the flag, Mr. Carnegie said: "Now, gentlemen, this is a united flag, and embraces our entire English-speaking race; and this is what we are coming to do in the future. The flag is united with being the first human being who ever raised this kind of flag—the Union Jack on the one side and the Stars and Stripes on the other. It always floated over Cluny Castle when we were there, and now this shall be seen everywhere from the new tower you see above Skibo Castle. You could not have given us a present more to our liking or more appropriate. He among you who suggested it knew how to reach our hearts. This flag, which unites the American and the British, shall also be the symbol of the happy union between the tenants and proprietor of Skibo."

Mr. Arthur Chamberlain stays out of Parliament for the frank reason that he does not interest himself in party politics. But he shares his brother's gift of a present, and just short speech the other day at a company of which he is Chairman, he criticized the proposed new legislation on limited liability companies which is now before Parliament, and which aims at discouraging speculation and increasing the responsibility of promoters. He said he was prepared to give some advice gratis on the subject of investments, but he was certain in giving it that it would be valued at exactly what was paid for it. His first rule was: Never invest in a new company; for you never prospectus as soon as you are in a new company unless he was thoroughly well acquainted with it. The second rule was: Never invest in mines; and the third rule was: Never invest in any patent that has not been working for about ten years out of its fourteen. If there was one way more certain than any other to lose money, it was to invest in anything which offers you 10 per cent. If you wish to be prudent; and yet every clerk, every widow, every orphan, and every elementary thought it reasonable to expect that without taking any trouble or doing any work he would get 10 per cent. There is no such thing as a Government official to tell them that that was impossible.

The speech is reported all over the country and attacked furiously by the Radical papers. But there is no doubt that it has destroyed any chance the new Companies bill had of becoming law.

The Court of Chancery has refused Lord Francis Hope permission to sell the famous Hope diamond in order to settle some of his financial obligations. The court has decided that the diamond is the property of the family, and that it is not to be parted with without the consent of all the family members. The big blue diamond boasts of a romantic history. The stone has not a mere bluish tint, but is of a sapphire hue, while at the same time it possesses all the fire of a true diamond. It is said to be the largest of the rarest gem known in the world. Its weight is 44 1/2 carats. It is rather larger in diameter than a shilling. The late Mr. Hope gave \$80,000 for it, and it would probably cost half as much again now.

There are very few such diamonds known, and it is said to have been discovered by an Indian mines. Although the output at Kimberley now figures up to many tons of brilliant stones, no such thing as a blue diamond has yet been yielded by the famous African mine. The first blue diamond of which any record can be found was brought from the mines of the Cape Colony in 1795. It was sold to a dealer in previous years, who sold it with many other gems to Louis XIV. in 1668. This stone bears a curious and very close resemblance to the Hope diamond. It would appear that the gem when sold to the French King was in the rough, and that it weighed 112 carats. It was cut into a brilliant-cut stone, and it weighed 45 carats, at which weight it figures later in the inventory of the French regalia, the reduction being what we might reasonably expect after the stone had passed through the lapidary's manipulations.

sponded with that gem. This stone was purchased in Geneva at the sale of the Duke of Brunswick's jewels, and it weighed 112 carats. A third blue diamond, weighing only one carat (that is, four grains), was bought by Mr. Streeter himself in Paris for \$1,500, and this little stone also matched the Hope diamond in tint and quality. Hence it is believed by those rare dealers who are originally one, and that that one was the famous Tavernier blue diamond which disappeared from the French regalia so mysteriously at the time of the revolution.

Mr. Streeter has just got a concession from the Egyptian Government to mine for emeralds and other precious stones on the coast of the Red Sea. He has just returned from an interview with a high official of the Egyptian Government, from which the emeralds are derived. Many of the stones had led color, for, as he said, they had been lying in the region of the Nile for 2,000 years, and the sun had taken the color out of them, as it would out of everything. He expects to get some of the finest emeralds in the world. The mines are worked by the natives, and the emeralds are derived from the stones which had led color, for, as he said, they had been lying in the region of the Nile for 2,000 years, and the sun had taken the color out of them, as it would out of everything. He expects to get some of the finest emeralds in the world. 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