

BOER AND BRITON---DAVID AND GOLIATH.

The Awful Disparity Numerically and In Point of Resources Between the Two Peoples Now Battling In South Africa---Historical Wars In Which Very Strong Nations Were Opposed to Very Weak Ones.

ASIDE from the interest attaching to the present war in South Africa, born of racial or national antipathies, by which noncombatants all over the world are aligning themselves on one side or the other, there is a secondary interest for which universal and natural sympathy for the "under dog" in the fight is responsible.

It may be stated in general terms that when superficially viewed the mere fact of a great, strong nation assaulting or forcing to the wall another territorially

170,000 square miles, and with a total population of perhaps 1,200,000, of which number not more than 600,000 are outside are white, of whatever nationality or shade of political belief.

The disparity in the military force of the contending nations is equally noticeable, whether we consider the actual or reserve strength in the field or available and to be drawn upon in emergency. It has been estimated that in a life and death struggle Great Britain could arm and place in motion near-

ly 60,000,000 men, and the actual number now in Africa, about 200,000, is no criterion of her possibilities.

To offset this the two republics cannot be said to have, accepting the very highest estimate, more than 50,000 men, nor could they raise, at the best, more than 125,000 soldiers by impressing all their "available" between 15 and 65 years of age. To do this they would have to "rob the cradle and the grave" almost literally, and even perhaps impress some of their brave women into the service for the cause of liberty.

Indeed, if reports may be credited, some of the Boer women have already enlisted in the ranks and have stood shoulder to shoulder with their husbands and brothers in opposing the invaders of their country.

These being the facts in the case, what is the natural inference? It is, of course, that the smaller will eventually succumb to the greater, the numerically inferior people to the superior in point of numbers and equipment. It may be, as Napoleon Bonaparte is said to have remarked once upon a time, that "Providence is always on the side of the strongest battalions," or words to that effect; but, without differing from that eminent strategist, it may be pertinent to remark that it was not always the physically stronger force that prevailed

to a host of hirelings and commits more havoc than a score of mercenaries, be they Swiss or Hessian.

And, again, one must reckon with the fact that the Boers are on their own soil, in a country with which they are all familiar, and that alone is considered by military authorities as giving them a fivefold advantage over the invaders. This needs no arguing, for it has already been proved in the operations around Ladysmith, at the assault of Spion Kop and in a score of instances. The attacking party, and especially the invading force, is always at a disadvantage, which mere numerical superiority, no matter how great, cannot always overcome.

So the question recurs, Is the disparity between Boer and British forces and their respective armaments as great as at first glance it appears? Have the Boers still a fighting chance for ultimate victory notwithstanding the apparently overwhelming odds against them?

It is a lesson of history that the greater ultimately absorbs the lesser and that in the end the world applauds the victor. The growth of an empire or of a great republic is by accretions, like a snowball rolling down hill; but sometimes the snowball falls apart by its own weight, and the small boys gather up the fragments. If we turn to our only guide, the history of nations that have existed in ancient times and of those that exist today, the lesson we read is not very encouraging for the Boer. For what we find, in the first place, is that the small fry almost invariably have become the prey of the

with the hosts that compassed it about, were but fanciful creations of old Homer's brain. But, if so, that does not alter the argument, for Homer was only reasoning along the lines taught him by observation and by the history of past events.

The case of Troy was that of a single city holding out for a long period against the resources of a whole nation. Another notable example was that of Carthage, which for centuries defied all the might of imperial Rome.

And Rome herself, having become a conquering nation through her successes in Africa, was not satisfied until she had brought the greater portion of the then known world to acknowledge her sway, first invading Macedonia, then Syria, Gaul, Britain, and stretching her arms out for plunder to every point of the compass.

Then there were the Moslem Arabs who started out from Arabia and overran not only Egypt and North Africa, but eventually crossed the Mediterranean and invaded Spain, finding their Waterloo only in France, under the sturdy blows of Charles Martel.

Coming down to comparatively modern times, one of the most flagrant instances of aggression by overwhelming force is to be found in the partition of Poland between Prussia, Austria and Russia in 1772. Catherine of Russia planned the dismemberment of this unhappy country, but Frederick the Great and Maria Theresa were only too willing to share in the spoils. For nearly 100 years the brave Poles resisted in a desultory manner the continued oppressions of Russia, but the end finds them, notwithstanding the heroism of Kosciuszko and their most strenuous endeavors to throw off the yoke, bowed beneath the burden of their woes.

The History of Holland or the Netherlands shows us how a virile nation may be harassed and even crushed to earth, but in the end rise triumphantly and turn the tables upon its oppressors. Bestowed as a royal gift upon the infamous Philip II of Spain and for many years enduring "a tyranny which for extent and ferocity is almost unparalleled in history," yet the indomitable Hollanders resisted successfully the efforts of the Spanish sovereign to subdue them, and after 60 years of fighting came off victorious. They came out of the long conflict even stronger than

great nations. The siege of Troy, whether mythical or otherwise, gave the world a host of heroes and a series of adventures it could not well do without; Carthage has left behind a few imperishable names; Rome has left many a warning for centuries; Spain has shown us what a great nation should not be and, particularly in her treatment of the Netherlands, aroused a people who afterward caused her great distress, while the partition of Poland has directed the eyes of the world to a possible menace in the aggressions of a great country like Russia. From these citations out of the old world's experience it may be seen that the Boers have little to hope for or to encourage them in the way of precedent. If we turn to the new world, however, we find more hopeful conditions from which to draw auguries for their future, particularly in the dissolution of Spain's great colonies in Mexico, Central and South America.

At the time Spain was engaged in carrying the inquisition into Holland and striving to crush her brave people she was the conceded proprietor of the greater portion of America south of Florida. The great navigators like Columbus, Vesputi and the Pinzones, and cruel conquistadores like Cortes, Pizarro and De Soto had added to her original territory vastly more in America than was then held by all the recognized powers combined.

The settlements formed there grew and flourished owing to the discoveries of gold in the West Indies, Peru and Mexico, and for 300 years Spain held these countries in a grip of death. Semianually galleons made the voyages between the colonies and the mother country laden to the gunwales with gold, silver, spices and precious woods. These were the frequent objects of attack by English, Dutch and French privateers, and many millions were diverted from their destination in Spain to the coffers of her enemies. But still she held the colonies true to their allegiance until the period when Napoleon Bonaparte invaded upon the throne of his brother Joseph upon the throne. This was in 1808, and, though the former king, the dissolute Ferdinand, was a second Nero by nature and had no regard for the liberties of his subjects either at home or abroad, still the colonists found in the imposition of a new regime and a foreign sovereign excuse for revolts against the mother country. The flame of revolution raged throughout all the southern colonies. In Mexico the patriot priest Hidalgo led the first outbreak, beginning a civil war which lasted many years. The same year Chile declared her independence. Venezuela followed in 1811, again in revolt in 1813 under Bolivar, and, after a protracted conflict with varying success, the republic of Colombia, embracing New Granada, Venezuela and Ecuador, was established in 1819. Meanwhile the revolution was fiercely raging in Mexico, and in 1821 the shackles of slavery were broken, never to be replaced.

After the long conflict was over it was found that the only remaining dependencies of Spain in America were the comparatively insignificant islands of Cuba and Porto Rico. And these two, as we all know, after enduring Spanish tyranny for nearly two-thirds of another century, were finally released through the intervention of the United States.

It is perhaps quite natural that, while the little folks of Europe have rarely received assistance from their big

OFFICIALLY DEAD.

"That horse whose head you see sticking out that shanty window is dead."

This remark was addressed to me by a naval officer as we walked toward the United States receiving ship, Vermont at the Brooklyn navy yard.

Upon hearing this statement, I instantly protested that it was impossible for the animal to be dead, as I could see his head distinctly move from side to side.

"Well," my companion urged, "he is a living 'in' the flesh, he is officially dead, and thereby hangs a tale."

That old shanty which you see, looking more like a stranded hulk than a habitation, with its tarpaulin doing duty for roof and the pitch-pine-like windows barred with anything the owner seemed to find convenient, is the home of the dead horse and a live old sailor. He has been retired—the sailor, I mean—from active service, but works around the yard as a street cleaner, with a horse and cart for 'dump.' For years the old sailor and the horse had worked happily together, until one day the board of survey condemned the animal to be shot as being too old for use. The lamentations of Jeremiah were as nothing compared to the old salt's wall of despair when he heard the fate in store for his friend. The sympathies of the board were accordingly enlisted, and he was told that the horse would be turned loose, and if he could catch him, why—possession was nine points of the law. This the old fellow did. Now he and his true love inhabit yonder manion, which he was allowed to erect for their abode. Then, you see, while officially dead, the sailor's old companion still lives." K. H.

ANY MORE QUESTIONS?

Max O'Rell tells a good story of Mr. William Redmond, an Irish member of parliament. Mr. Redmond was once addressing a meeting of Irishmen in the Centenary hall at Sydney, Australia, and at the conclusion of his speech the audience rose en masse and cheered themselves hoarse. The chairman, who was a very meek and mild man, at length succeeded in restoring a quiet, and said, "Gentlemen, I am requested by Mr. Redmond to say that if any one wishes to ask him a question he will be glad to answer it."

A man arose from the body of the meeting and ascended the platform.

"Mr. Chairman," he said, "I have a question, but he never got any further. He was recognized at once as a notorious Orangeman, and, quick as a flash, a great, big specimen of an Irishman sprang at him and struck him in the temple."

The man fell like a log, and it was thought that he was killed by the blow. They carried him out on a stretcher and sent for doctors. Imagine the excitement all this time, continuing for a quarter of an hour.

Finally the chairman rapped gently on the edge of his desk, advanced to the front of the platform, with his eyes fixed on the man who had fallen, and there was quiet at once. Then, very deliberately, the chairman said: "Gentlemen, is there any one else who would like to ask Mr. Redmond a question?"

A SURPRISED BISHOP.

A certain well known bishop recently went to a town to perform a marriage ceremony. He arrived the day before the wedding, and he left at the same time the bridal pair did, although he was driven to a different railway station. As he passed through the station, carrying his traveling bag, he was aware that he was creating a sensation, but was totally at a loss to account for it. On the platform he found that he was still the object of amused attention. The porter positively snickered as he passed his carriage, and the church dignitary felt forced to demand the reason. "What is the matter with you, my man?" asked the bishop.

The porter's smirk broadened into a laugh.

"Ain't you left the good lady, sir?" he chuckled.

"Eh?" exclaimed the bishop in surprise. Then his eye fell on the side of his traveling bag, which the porter had just turned round. There, glued to it, was a wide strip of white satin ribbon, on which was printed in large letters: "Married this morning."

The facetiously minded best man had mistaken the bishop's traveling bag for that of the bridegroom.

HAUNTED RAILWAY ENGINES.

There are on nearly every railway locomotives that are known as Jonahs. Some years ago an engine on a Scotch line blew up, cutting the engine apart with a segment of boiler iron. The engine was rebuilt and made as good as new, but no driver could be found to run it more than one trip.

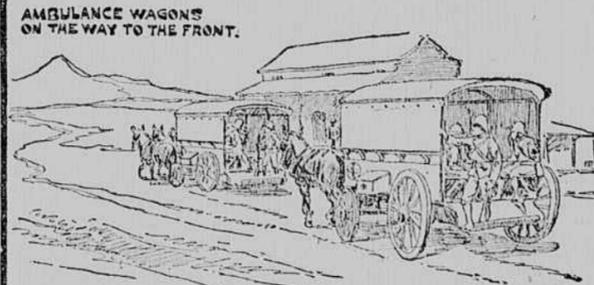
It was soon whispered about that it was haunted—that the headless stoker had an unpleasant habit of appearing on the tender and insisting on firing up. One night a driver and his stoker descended the locomotive when out on a run. For a month the engine lay in the shop. Then a driver who was compelled either to take it out or lose his place mounted it. Before it had run a dozen miles it went through a culvert, wrecked the train and killed nine people. It was never rebuilt.

THE SMITHS ABROAD.

The Smiths are everywhere. In Italy they are called "Smithi"; in Holland "Schmidt"; in Russia, "Smifowski"; in Spain, "Smithus"; in Poland, "Schmitz"; in England the Smiths are the most numerous of all families; but in Ireland they are content to rank fifth, after Murphy, Kelly, Sullivan and Walsh.



BOERS FIRING ON AN ARMORED TRAIN.



AMBULANCE WAGONS ON THE WAY TO THE FRONT.



THE LAST MOMENT BEFORE THE FINAL ASSAULT.



FIELD HOSPITAL.



DAWN AT LAST.

smaller and numerically weaker as to population causing the popular heart to beat in unison with that of the oppressed people and a great wave of sympathy to sweep around the globe. Whether, however, such an impulse results in concrete benefit to the object of its solicitude, or, in other words, ever materializes in the shape of active interference and assistance by force of arms or through the offices of diplomacy, is another matter, as to which only an appeal to the chronicles of history can enlighten us.

At the present time, and in view of what has recently transpired, we are forced to contemplate one of the oldest and strongest nations of the earth arrayed against two of the newest and most diminutive republics in the world—on the one hand, England, or, rather, the empire of Great Britain, with its teeming millions, its all but invincible armaments on sea and land, its illimitable resources, its hitherto irresistible might; on the other hand, the Transvaal and the Orange Free State, with no navies, practically no standing armies and a combined white population not more than half as great as that of the city of Philadelphia.

It has long been a recognized fact that Great Britain has girdled the globe with her forts and military stations and that her "morning drumbeat rolls around the world," even though the mother country is of almost insignificant proportions. Starting from that group of small islands known as the United Kingdom, with its total area of less than 122,000 square miles, the British empire has extended until it dominates more than 11,250,000 square miles of the earth's surface today. Within the confines of the home country dwell less than 40,000,000 people, yet they have brought under subjection, won over or made tributary to them nearly ten times that number, or a total of 400,000,000 souls.

Nearly 300,000,000, to be sure, exist in India and are servile subjects, who contribute but scantily toward the enrichment of the dominant race; yet of the vast annual revenues of the empire, estimated at \$1,125,000,000, one-half that amount is yielded by the colonies, and it is not to be wondered at that the efforts are persistent and continual to extend the borders of "Greater Britain."

On the other hand, what? If relative proportions were to be considered, we should expect to find pitted against the might of Britain at least Russia and France, or all the nations of Europe. But instead we see two small republics, the area of both combined being 100,000 square miles less than Britain's contiguous colony of the Cape, or scarcely

ing this statement to be correct, what shall be said of the British, who, until the present war was inaugurated, had not for many, many years faced a foe their equal in the scale of civilization? In fact, they had been accustomed, veterans as they were, to make war mainly upon barbarous or semi-civilized peoples, such as the Ashantees, the Zulus, the Basutos and the fanatical hordes of Arabs led by the khalifa. This may be said without in any manner depreciating the courage of the men or the capacities of their commanders, for the innate bravery that will support one under the terrific charges of Arabian horsemen, reckless of life and bent solely upon death as a means to gain a future paradise, that will stand by soldiers isolated in far off Afghanistan attacked by overwhelming forces of relentless barbarians, is not to be despised.

Still it is not equivalent to the force that springs from love of country and is inspired by the defense of home. With his back against a wall, and behind that wall his loved ones, his home, his all on earth, a man will fight as never man fought or before for any other cause. Defeat is a consideration that does not enter into his calculations, surrender a thing unthought of. It is a fight to the death, and under such circumstances one man is sometimes equal

larger fishes. The "lion lies down with the lamb," but the latter is usually inside the former at the conclusion of the story.

There are exceptions, it is true, as, for instance, Switzerland, which for centuries held out against the single and combined onslaughts of greater powers, to eventually slide into the satisfactory position in which we find her today, rather as the arbiter of peace than as the object of continental contention.

Looking further back, into the very twilight of history, we find innumerable instances that go to show how the process of absorption went on despite the protests of the victims and the wallings of the world at large. One of the conspicuous examples of a weak but brave people resisting is to be found in the memorable siege and destruction of Troy. There are those who aver that Troy and all its inhabitants, together

they entered it and possessed of a formidable fleet that made them at that time the first naval power in the world. This was the beginning of Holland's greatness as a world power, and it was brought about by the endeavor of her enemies to reduce her to nothingness.

It was by their prowess against the Spaniards that the Dutch not only saved their country, but gained for themselves those rich islands of the east—Borneo, Java, Sumatra, Molucca, the Celebes, etc.—from which today they derive an annual revenue of more than \$50,000,000. Some of them took from the Spaniards, but most of them from the Portuguese, and they have held them for more than 200 years; but not one of them is yet actually and wholly in their possession, as they have never quite subdued the wild tribes living there and are still obliged to maintain an army of 10,000 men.

Such have been the outcomes of some of the wars between small states and

EVERYDAY WAR SCENES IN SOUTH AFRICA.

brothers in their struggles for freedom, and it was only in the new world that others similarly situated were enabled to achieve their independence by friendly aid, the eyes of the struggling Boers are turned this way as to a last forlorn hope.

But sentiment is one thing, and diplomacy is another. As matters are now it would appear that the South African republics will have to stand or fall by their unaided endeavors. They undoubtedly have the world's sympathy, if that can be any satisfaction to them, but the world's material aid has so far been withheld, and is likely to be until the end. This may arrive sooner or later, but whatever the outcome of the terrible struggle, the Boers may congratulate themselves upon the defense they have made, the victories they have already gained and, most important of all, the worldwide recognition of their inextinguishable patriotism.

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