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OBSERVATIONS.

The English and the Boers.

Sometimes the under dog is a snapping, vicious cur, who has taken advantage of his diminutive size and the magnanimity of his opponent, to make unwarranted attacks on a peaceable neighborhood. A small dog may steal a large dog's stored bones, a smaller man may affront and insult a large one with impunity, protected by the whole world, which, always, without regard to specific justice is on the side of the weaker.

A candid investigation of the causes of the war in Africa can but incline the man given to espousing the cause of the weaker, right or wrong, towards the English.

In the first place the Boer lover announces that the English have no right to object to the absolutism of Kruger, nor the obstruction of trade by the Boers because the latter were there first. This is not exactly true. The Dutch found Kaffirs, Zulus and other natives, both cultivating the ground and raising herds of cattle when they arrived in 1652. The Columbian encyclopedia published in 1893 says of the Hottentots that "they became the slaves of the Dutch settler or Boers. From this condition they have been delivered by the enlightened and humane policy of the British government, and as free laborers they make excellent herdsmen and drovers." An encyclopedia is supposed to be colorless and to re-

cord history impartially. This particular one was published in New York seven years ago. No sympathizer with the Boers has denied that their proteges enslaved the natives (nor that they have resisted, and when resistance was fruitless trekked) the efforts of the English to christianize the natives and make them into free laborers. The spreading of a race over the earth, is its own justification. From England, too small to contain all her sons, the English have colonized the earth. Compared with the freedom of the tyrannical, dull Boer, the constitutional government that groups of Englishmen establish when they make another country their home is the most complete freedom we know anything about.

It is popular to refer to the "brave little republic whom England has picked a quarrel with and intends to destroy." A republic is a government of the people in a certain definitely bounded locality by rules adopted, revised and enforced by all the people or their representatives. The Transvaal Boers have adopted a set of rules which the people whom they are pleased to call uitlaender had no share in making and which despoil them, who pay nine tenths of the taxes, of a fair share of the product of their toil and enterprize. These people are outlanders and not citizens because the folksraad has anticipated the results of naturalization and has passed laws to prevent it. England and the Transvaal has made several agreements. About 180 the Boers agreed that British subjects should have the same privileges and protection as citizens of the Transvaal, except some slight differences in the case of young persons coming into the country. In 1882 a law was passed which required a residence of five years and the payment of \$125.00 before citizenship could be acquired. This the British government accepted as complying with the slight exception as to young persons just coming into the country. In 1891 a new law required a fourteen years' residence and the registry of the emigrant's application for citizenship fourteen days after his arrival, in the Field Coronet's roll. Through ignorance of the requirement, or if for any other reason the newly arrived, neglect to register within fourteen days, the right to ever become a citizen of "this brave little republic" is forever lost. A concise statement of the wrongs long patiently suffered by the English in the Transvaal is reprinted on another page. It was delivered to a club of gentlemen in some city not stated. It is reprinted, not with the hope that it will convert any one of those who are always and hopelessly on the side of the under dog however he may deserve a thrashing, but for the edification of those who care to look into and to hear both sides before taking part in a quarrel.

All of England's colonies, in British

North America, in Australia, in India, in the islands of the sea are with her in this debate with the Boers over the right of men of all nations to settle in the Transvaal to do business there and to have something to say about the laws. If the rule of England were oppressive, her colonies would seize this favorable opportunity to declare themselves free and independent entities. On the contrary they are eager to help her.

There is little probability that America, will take any part, advisory or sympathetic, or belligerent in this war. But because England is a powerful nation and the Dutch are insignificant, we should not dull our sense of justice, our notions of right and our hope of constitutional development in all parts of the earth.

Assessments.

Convicts in the penitentiary are hardened and confirmed in evil by the difference in the sentences awarded to rich and poor criminals. The man who steals because he or his family is hungry is consigned without long preliminaries to the penitentiary, but it takes time and patience to imprison the man worth a hundred thousand dollars who stole two hundred thousand more because he needed the money, but concluded to spend all of it in keeping out of jail. That much money will keep a man out of jail a long time and it will shorten his final stay in prison, if his guilt is too plain for concealment. When he reaches the penitentiary and his case is reviewed by the poorer criminals, they are led to reflect on the coquettishness and frivolity of law as administered by judges or juries.

When a retired capitalist living on an income received from stocks, bonds and mortgages hands back to the assessor a list of furniture, jewelry, stocks, bonds and mortgages upon which the interest is computed at thirty-eight cents a year, the shock to his neighbor who has returned a fairly accurate list of his property is apt to disturb his faith in municipal integrity. The next time the virtuous citizen replies to the questions of the assessor his valuation of his own property will be much lower. These two individuals represent the reasons for the constantly sinking city assessment of Lincoln. One man after another finds out the unpatriotic duplicity of his neighbor, sees the assessor and his assessment is decreased. The result is that the income of the city is insufficient to pay the expenses of police, fire department and the various other departments. Unless a more equitable method of assessment is adopted the city's income will decrease more and more.

In Connection with the De Willoughby Claim.

Whatever may be said of the naturalness of Mrs. Burnett's characters

and plots, the stories she writes are always interesting. Her stories generally begin with the birth of and end with the happy marriage of the heroine. Her heroes accomplish something, her heroines are lovely, and thanks to her regard for our taste they are not of the Dante Gabriel Rossetti sort who pine and think and love and love and pine and think, never arousing to the necessity of accomplishing something for the sake of us who are reading about them. The Howells girl and the Rev. Watson man is entirely satisfactory to the student of effects and the story apprentices who are being taught to write stories for The Kiote and similar college publications; but the great unfed, on the outside are hungry for tales of adventure, of conquest over self and dragons. The world is still young. It is not so blazy as Mr. Howells has taught the book carpenters and their apprentices to believe. Indians, Norsemen, Greeks, the Israelites of Genesis listened to tales in the evening when the work of the day was done. "The Ship of Stars" that never came to port, would not have interested them and it does not interest us.

Unless the soul growth that Mr. Howells cultures so assiduously can be developed by action, incident and with the ancient story teller's charm and mystery his audience will go on dwindling till it is entirely included as it is almost restricted now to the literary department of the colleges which teach story writing as an exact science.

The De Willoughby Claim is from the first to the last page a very interesting story. Having begun it, even one of Mr. Howells' most devoted students will read it to the end, letting other things go, until the last page is turned. To be interesting is the first need of a novel. It profiteth nothing if a novel conform to all the rules and describes a soul's birth, growth and disappearance to the entire satisfaction of the professors of psychology and literature.

The author has to "make good" with the public. And every man knows that from the cradle to the grave he is alone. Every man knows that if he would, he could not throw open the portals that were locked before he was born. Moreover if he could there is perhaps not more than one who cares enough about him to enter, explore, and comprehend. All but the vulgarest of gossips shrink from explorations of this sort. Therefore the books of mysterious communings, aspirations and revelations are written to a few who have finally forgotten reserve and modesty for something they have been taught is art.

Mrs Burnett has not fallen into the prosing of the soul-writers. She tells a story very simply, it is full of incident, of the breath of the woods, of the cool air of the mountains and of unsophisticated human nature.