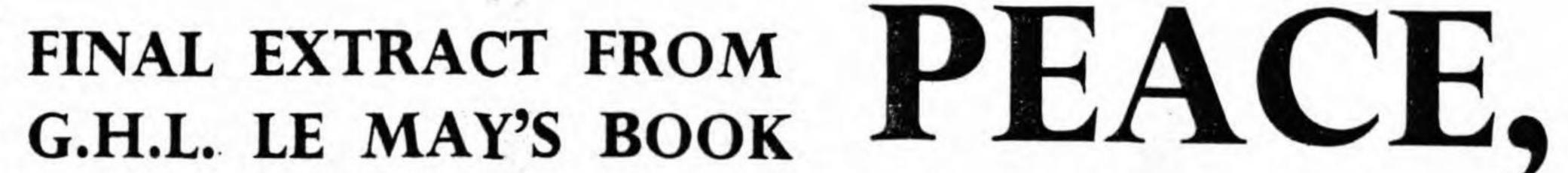
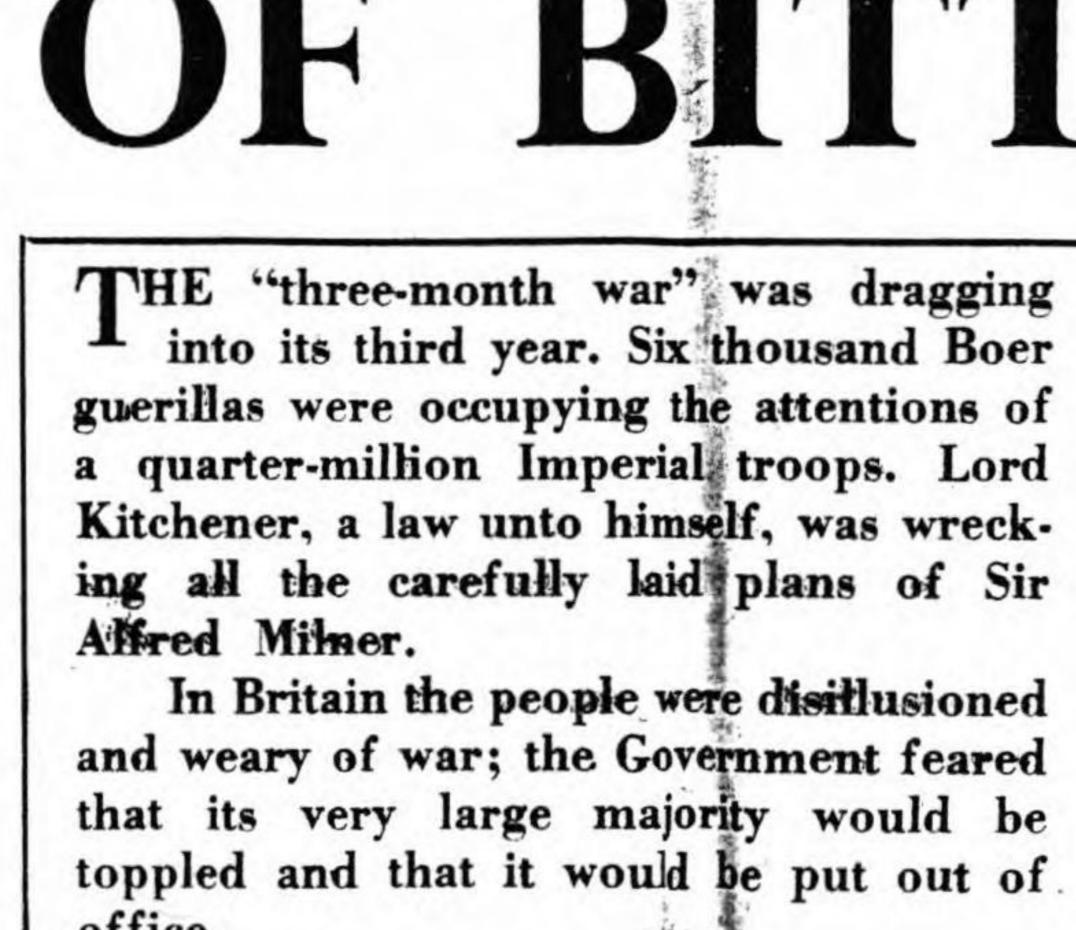
# British Supremacy in South Africa: III



# AND ITS TRAIN OF BITTERNESS



Lord Milner . . . his grand design failed.



In Britain the people were disillusioned and weary of war; the Government feared that its very large majority would be toppled and that it would be put out of. office.

No other solution than the utter rout of the Boers in the field presented itself, for the Boers would not yeld the independence of their republics And the Boers refused to be routed. Iilner was near despair, but refused to surender his vision of a great, British outh Africa.



A group of Lord Milner's kindergarten. Back row: Lionel Curtis, Nel Hichens, Peter Perry, Hugh Wyndham, Herbert Baker, Geoffrey Dawson. Sitting: Lord Selborne, Robert Brand, Patrick Duncan, Lady Selborne, Richard Feetham. On floor: Philip Kerr (later Marquis of Lothian), John Dove, Dougal Malcolm.

Orange Free State were a hattlefield. wasteland of wrecked farms, dotted with blockhouses and criss-crossed with hundreds of

strating an eagerness for peace. still in the field.

kraals.

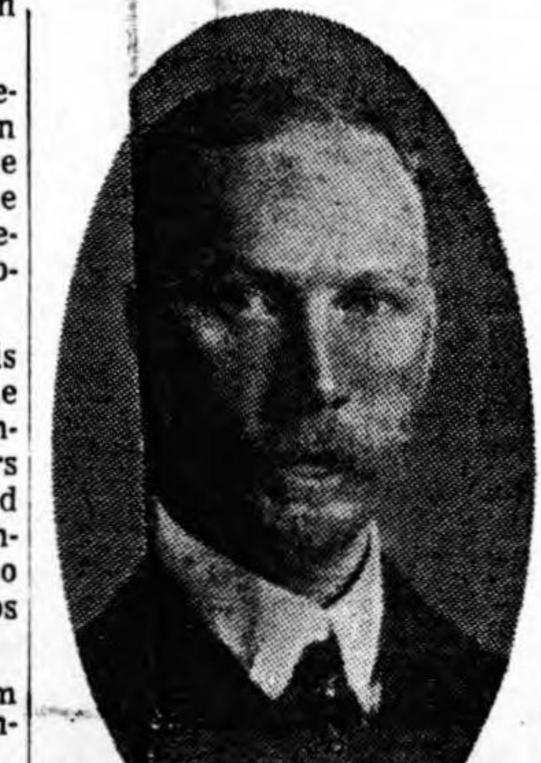
vith the British as National dos.

and suggested that they fall in,

The Boers refused, but Kitchener agreed to send their terms in miles of barbed-wire fencing. British Cabinet rejected the a modified form to London. The The Boer commandos were in terms but instructed Kitchetatters, arming and feeding ner to press for further propothemselves by raids on British sals.

wagon trains or even on tribal The Boers came back, and this time Milner was present. But the The policy of separating talks faltered on the rock of in-"tame" from "wild" Boers in agreed that if they had to yield the prison camps was begin- they could only do so on a manning to show results; more and date from the "people," who more prisoners were demon- were defined as the commandos

By March, nearly 2,000 Kitchener promised them prisoners had taken service facilities to consult the comman-



# The failure of Milnerism

THE first direct challenge to most certain to fall at the im- was especially bitter about "the Bannerman stopped the impor too busy with the business of right).

administration pending elections and that the British." came not from the Boers but Liberals with rather more liberal

He claimed that serious injury appeared to be a demonstration from the British. The Boers were ideas would succeed it (he was had been done to the "best in- of the authority of the "imperial terests" of the Transvaal "by factor," for it violated contracts personal survival for politics; the The bitter taste of defeat was this trick—and it is often noth- legally entered into. ing more than a triple\_of nor .

tation of Chinese labourers. This



hes made by British war artists on the



on camp at Norval's Pont — a conmporary photograph.



ransvaal and Free State were a ecked farms. This is a war artist's f the storming of a farmhouse.

more prisoners were demon- were defined as the commandos strating an eagerness for peace. still in the field.

with the British as National dos. Scouts. Their value was out of On May 15, the Boer Assembly proportion to their scanty num- of the People met at Vereeniging ticularly valuable as guides and scouts. And they were increasing numbers.

British public opinion-and it included King Edward VIIbecoming increasingly critical of the prolonged war and British Government's demand: unconditional surrender.

Word of this filtered back to the commandos and on April 9 representatives of the two Republican governments met in Klerksdorp to discuss the possibilities of peace in the new circumstances.

The previous difference between the two republics arose again. The Free Staters, who had come into the war on a point of honour, refused to yield

"The average Boer really is the most goodnatured, manageable creature in the world as long as he clearly realizes you have got the thick end of the stick." -Milner, 1902.

unless their continued indepen- over. dence was assured. The Transvaalers saw it differently: if they fought on their leaders would be thrown open to the Uitlanders and the "hands-uppers." Timely surrender was the only means left of preserving the core of Afrikanerdom.

The argument swayed back and forth, under a British truce, and two days later it was decided to ask for a meeting with Kitchener.

He agreed at once and two delegations-British and Boerleft for Pretoria that night by

The anti-Milner faction in the Cabinet was able to arrange for the exclusion of Milner from these preliminary negotiations.

## GRIEVANCE

Kitchener opened the talks " as one with a grievance."

He complained that he had been unjustly described as one who wished to exterminate the Afrikaner people. Then, abruptly changing his mood, he asked for the Boer proposals.

Kitchener showed surprise when he realized that the Boers were demanding independence. Speaking as a "candid friend," he said that military rule would be followed by self-government,

By March, nearly 2,000 Kitchener promised them prisoners had taken service facilities to consult the comman-

bers; they knew the coun- and the argument began again, try, they knew the habits of the with the Free Staters still procommandos, and they were par- posing a fight to the bitter end.

> "The Boers are the cleverest nation in the world in politics. He will be found to be as able with the vote as with the Mauser, as formidable with a portfolio as with a Long Tom."

-Progressive candidate R. Orpen, as reported by The Star (1905).

Schalk Burger of the Transvaal answered them: "Perhaps it is God's will that the English nation should suppress us, so that our pride may be subdued and that we may come through the fire of our troubles purified."

The negotiators moved to Pretoria. Several of the Boer leaders still would not yield, but at last a compromise was hammered out in which military rule by the British would be replaced by self-government "as soon as circumstances permit."

On May 31, 1902, in Pretoria, the "Treaty of Vereeniging" was signed. The Boer War was



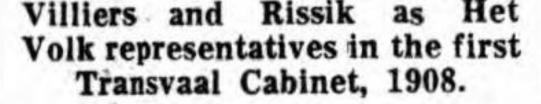
J. C. smuts, photographed in

Londor in 1906 during his visit

Johan Rissik . . . General Louis Botha chose Smuts, J. de Villiers and Rissik as Het Transvaal Cabinet, 1908.

prisoner (of whom 600 died).

Kitchener gave figures show- Twenty-one thousand burg-



truders; Merriman spoke in the that something had to be done Cape Parliament of a "kinder about it. The constitution he garten" of young men from Balliol, and the name stuck. (As a majority to the Boers. He saw matter of record, New College the risks but saw no way out. was predominant.)

benevolent.

ing. Gold production was sub- failed. stantually lower than in 1899, and the expected influx of British settlers did not occur.

Depression was ascribed to the shortage of Black labour; the labour force was 33,000 down on find labourers elsewhere Africa failed.

### UNITED

Milner then made the decision hastened his departure South Africa: the importation of Chinese mine- This was not the British Race workers. He made it reluctantly Patriot talking. The dispatch was because he saw no alternative. received in the Colonial Office vision had of surviving was pros- liamentary Secretary wrote: perity for the Transvaal; pros- "Nowhere else in the British

Boer and Briton in opposition to Colony, has it interfered less."

Milner's rule was communicated enough. to the British Cabinet; disenchantment grew.

ing the Boer losses: 20,000 dead hers still in the field sur- retary in succession to Chamber- dishonoured. in the concentration camps, 3,800 rendered: more than three times lain, warned Milner that the rul-



General Louis Botha and Mrs. Botha. As leader of Het Volk, he formed the first Transvaal Government after the war. The wheel had turned full circle, the Boers were in command again. But Botha promised: No revenge.

came not from the Boers but Liberals with rather more liberal from the British. The Boers were ideas would succeed it (he was too busy with the business of right).

personal survival for politics; the The bitter taste of defeat was returning Uitlanders came as in Milner's mouth. conquerors and found Milner too

By May, 1904, the demand for in- that Milner reported to Lyttelton bursts of hysterical abuse." proposed would have given a

Prosperity was slow in return- feat; the grand design had ever that we got off the right

### SHOCKED

for Milner's proposals and asked described to Asquith in for February 22, 1907. The main for new ones.

in are clearly entitled to the ad- produce a united opposition. vantages of their common origin He had done much to improve joined in alliance with the Resand capacity for acting together. the racial laws, but he had not sponsible Government Asso-The non-Dutch must take the been able to persuade the South ciation (English-speaking but consequence of their original African Whites to distinguish be- not concerned with mining), on heterogeneity and fissiparous disposition."

And the last chance his grand with shocked surprise. The Parperity built on the Chinese Empire has 'Downing Street' so unanimously con-The Chinese influx united demned, though in no Crown

The corollary that Milner had civilized African. The rising tide of opposition to failed, though unsaid, was plain

Milnerism was dead, and in no requirements of the pass laws, place other than his land of that gradually White opinion Alfred Lyttelton, Colonial Sec- birth was Milner becoming more would change and that the

> The Chinese issue meanwhile mitted to something approachboiled under the surface.

The Boers, arising from their least in personal rights. wounds, began to organize pli- The Indians complained that Smuts, J. de Villiers and J. Ristically. Louis Botha and Ewald although their rights were large- sik; from the Responsibles he Esselen began to form Het Volk. ly unchanged, the British were chose E. P. Solomon and H. C.

South African scene in April, ministration of their restrictions 1905, with the knowledge that than were the Boers. his work had fallen far short of And so Milner left the wreck- command again. But Botha its purpose.

transformed into an outpost of achieved of his great plan for England. The Boers had neither southern Africa. been cowed nor persuaded into The Lyttelton Constitution, deed they were better organized by Milner, was about to be put

# BITTER

He could point to remarkable governments, to telegraphs and constitution. telephones, to better police and A great deal of argument, disbeginning of the grand design.

He blamed his failure on facts.

had been done to the "best in- of the authority of the "imperial terests" of the Transvaal "by factor," for it violated contracts this trick-and it is often noth- legally entered into. ing more than a trick-of per- It was perhaps no coincidence

In only one respect did Milner admit publicly to error: he re- vative view; undoubtedly a ferred obliquely to Article VIII jaundiced one. The Liberals of the Treaty of Vereeniging basically were opposed to rule when he said in Johannesburg without consent. This was an admission of de- that he believed "as strongly as lines when we threw over Mr. Rhodes's principle of 'equal

"The rule of the capitalist is another thing to which both races (Boer and Briton) are equally resolved not to submit." -John X. Merriman, in a letter to Campbell-Banner-

tween the civilized and the un-

man's adviser, James Bryce.

the educated African from the Labour 3 and Independents 2. "superior" African would be ading equality, if not in political at try.

Lord Milner retired from the much more efficient in the ad- Hulls.

age of his grand design, a war promised: No revenge. The Transvaal had not been on his conscience and little

nerman came into power.

This constitution, among achievements-to new railways other points, allowed for the ments in agriculture and irriga- The clause was carried through

before this constitution went In his last address in Johan- into effect. The Liberal Party, im- emerged as the leaders. nesburg he made a plaintive bued with the new spirit of lea: "Defend my works, when humanism, found that its

He claimed that serious injury appeared to be a demonstration

petual fault-finding, this steady that he announced, two months drip, drip of depreciation, only later, the granting of self-His officials were regarded as self-government was so insistent diversified by occasional out- government to both former re-

That, at least, was the Conser-

# 'FOR EVER'

first elections for rights for every civilized man'." the Transvaal were fixed, after Milner had not been able to an extraordinary set of man-The Cabinet had little taste avoid the dilemma which he had oeuvres by the interested parties, 1897: that any move to establish contestants were the Progressives the pre-war figure. Attempts to Milner replied: "The Dutch the equality of the races would (the mining interests) on the one side, and Het Volk

> Lord Selborne (who had replaced Milner) reported: "Personal considerations operate as usual in the direction of fissiparousness as far as the British and in the direction of solidarity as far as the Boer section are concerned."

The election results were received by the "British party" with horrified surprise. Het Volk won 37 of the 69 seats, the Progressives 21, the Responsible He had hoped, by exempting Government Association

Smuts exclaimed: "We are in

Louis Botha, leader of Het Volk, was asked to form a Minis-

From Het Volk he chose

wheel full circle; the Boers were in

Milner had set out to break the power of acceptance of the Empire; in- based on an alternative proposal Afrikanerdom. He sucand more subtly led than ever into practice when the Unionist ceeded in uniting it as government fell and the Liberals under Sir Henry Campbell-Banable to do.

During the probuilt and planned, to improve- loading of rural constituencies. longed resistance the tion, to the foundation of local in the Campbell-Bannerman patriarchs, the takhaars, disappeared; a prisons—but these were only the cussion and debate ensued new, youngelite

> That is what Milner theories did not always fit the did for Afrikanerdom.

developments which he con- Immediately on taking office Extracted from British Supremacy in sidered outside his control. He in December, 1905, Campbell- Le May (Oxford University Press).