

of the war by the surrender of the Republics?"

"Neither immediate nor remote" he replied to this. "Mr Steyn has expressed his intention not to surrender so long as three hundred burghers remain in the field and I firmly believe that he will keep his word; and you may depend upon ^{it} our ^{other} generals are no less determined to resist to the last."

I asked, finally, as to his opinion of the prospects of the war Mr Hunt said, "The outlook is certainly somewhat gloomy, but we by no means despair, and of our ultimate success and the ~~triumph~~ ^{triumph} of our right I have not the smallest doubt. We may be conquered by Great Britain but we shall never be subjugated. We went under in 1855 but we came up again in 1880, and although we ~~may~~ ^{might} not recover our lost position so quickly - it ~~may~~ ^{might} take ten, or twenty, or fifty years - that we ~~shall~~ ^{should} do so eventually is as certain as that the sun will rise tomorrow morning."

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The above words, spoken in a quiet and unimpassioned manner but with an intense earnestness and obvious belief in their truth, well illustrates the feeling dominat ^{ing}

the Boers as a whole, of undying love of independence and their intention to recover it at the first opportunity, if perchance it be now destroyed.

This feeling was even better exemplified when a few days later the position became really serious for the Boers, after how Roberts had advanced well into the Transvaal. Excitement now rose rapidly in both Johannesburg and Pretoria and manifested itself in various ways. Not the least remarkable and certainly not the least pathetic was the serious endeavour made by the Boer women

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to obtain permission from the Government to go to the front and fight. On May 12 a large meeting of women was held at Irene Hall, in Klein Street ^{Johannesburg} to consider what would be the best way in which the women could help the Government and work for their country in the trying circumstances then prevailing, and this was followed by several

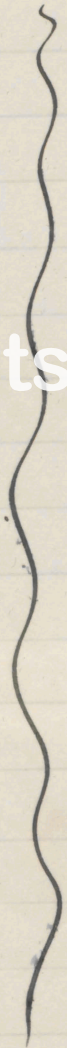
similar meetings at both Johannesburg and Pretoria, the meeting in the second Raadsaal at the latter place being attended by over five hundred women. At these meetings more than one woman expressed not only her readiness but her intention to fight if the men failed in their ~~work~~ ^{duty}, and such was the temper of these patriotic women that there is no doubt that had

the Government at all encouraged the idea ~~it~~ ~~would~~
~~readily have obtained~~ many hundreds of women
 volunteers, ~~who~~ would have taken their places in the
 fighting line by the side of husbands, sons and lovers,
 or in the places of those who had fallen in battle.
 This idea may sound fantastic to some, and may cause
 the undiscriminating to smile. To those who understand
 and appreciate the intensity of the love of independence
 inherent in the very nature of these people, this incident
 constitutes one of the most extremely pathetic episodes
 in connection with the war. ~~It~~ surely, could
 better prove ^{not only} the unyielding love of independence referred
 to but the equally intense belief in the righteousness
 of their cause.

Nor was it only, or even mainly, the rougher and
 poorer classes of women who thus testified to the bitterness
 of their despair and the depth of their patriotic senti-
 ment, but delicately nurtured ladies, the wives and
 daughters - ay, and widows - of officials and burglers
 in the professions and higher walks of life were
 equally ready to endure the hardships of the lager

and the ~~valley~~ and to risk their lives in the field if per-
adventure they could, to however small an extent, avert
the threatened destruction of the dearly-bought and
highly-prized independence of their country. The pity
of it ~~is~~!

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The Government, however, would not consent to the extreme measures proposed by the women burghers in question and eventually it was decided to engage them in the Government and public offices as far as possible, which would serve the same purpose to some extent, by releasing a corresponding number of men for service at the front. But there is no doubt that, not only towards the end, but right through the war, a large number of women did actually accompany their husbands to the front. This was sufficiently proved by the many women who were found with their husbands when he and his men were compelled to surrender at Paardeberg.

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As a propos of the above the following interesting account of a fighting woman burgher at the front may appropriately be inserted here. It partook of the nature of an interview and appeared in the "Standard and Diggers' News" for May 15. under the headlines:-

Trooper Bouwmeester.

The Woman's Part

Strange Story of the War.

Last evening the North-Western Hotel was startled

by the appearance of a well-cropped slim little Boertje, bare
 shined up to the eyes, and with the chauser slung on the
 tender back. "It's a woman" said one. "No, it's a man,"
 said another. But a woman it was. It had been smok-
 ing in the bar, had the young Boertje.

"One had to do these things in the lager" - she afterwards
 explained. "If they offered me tobacco, I had to smoke; if they
 gave me ~~stuff~~, I had to squeeze; if they suggested pruin-
 tabak, I had to chew."

After dinner I got the fascinating little person into the
 reading-room, and her story was as follows: -

["My name is Helena Herbst, of Leerust. I am 25 years
 of age. The trousers you see are foreign garments, and I
 did not know what they were until I married Police-
 Constable Wagner of the local force. In the begin-
 ning of January I was reduced to my beam ends.
 My poor baby sickened through lack of nutrition;
 I buried it.

["I had no money (she continued with just a little sob)
 and only the meal and salt allowed me. I determined
 to join my husband's way in the Free State. I wrote

in. To that effect, told him I was lonely and hungry here, and threatened to come down to Colesberg, armed cap-a-pie as you observe me now.

He wrote back to say he would shoot me if I ventured near the fighting front, on in the men's lagers. But what was to do? My child lay buried in the cemetery and I set out —

"To perform the Woman's Part?"

"Precisely; like another Joan of Arc. I clipped my hair, and cutting down my husband's clothes, ~~and~~ ^{and} ~~trunk~~ (donned) the unmentionables, and supplied the ~~trunk~~ net for a knicker and cartridges. These I got. I am not a bad imitation of a boy, am I? I do hope the Sanitary authorities won't run me in under the regulations. It isn't as guerading, is it? I was forced to do it; I was so poor and hungry. And I have done my share of brandwacht (entry-go); I have had my dose of lycidite; anyone who was at the Spion Kop and Pout Drift battles will tell you that. But at least I got my share of food.

"Your identity and sex were never suspected?"

"Never once. I took like an 'orientlyk jong

'Boertjie' (good-looking young Boer) - as you call me - don't
 I? I slept in the same tent with a number of other
 young fellows, but nobody dreamt of questioning me.

Now, didn't we pepper those ~~black~~ at Spion Kop? and at
 Pont Drift; the Lydiate was awful. Then we retired
 from the Tugela, all the time in trousers, to Van Louder's
 creek.

↳ "Paardemiter of roetganger? (cavalry or infantry)"

↳ "Oh, I was cavalry every time. I came from Zeebust,
 you know, where we Boer girls are taught these things.
 When we got to ~~the front~~ I heard my brother lay
 in Johannesburg Hospital; and here I am. Here's my
 verlof-brief, (furlough-ticket) if you wish to see
 it, signed by commandant Viljoen and countersigned
 by General Lukas Meyer. But the man I want to
 see immediately is Dr Krause. During my absence
 at the front all my women's clothes have been stolen
 and you see me here in all the wardrobe that I own.

↳ "and now?"

↳ "My husband won't let me go forward again. He says
 it's no life for a woman and there are positions

~~Answer~~

be taken up in the Telegraph Office. But nothing short of
 1st Criminal Lawdrest will suit me. Haven't I been
 under the bombs? Man, when those Lee-chetford's at
 out Drift went rat-tap, fact-rat, think I was
 frightened? Frightened? Those that ~~and~~ were there will
 tell you young Bowmeester is no coward, and when
 they shouted 'Posi-sies, burgers, Po-sie-sies!' I didn't
 put much urging. I am no fake; and that's why I
 went to see Dr. Krause.

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"And" adds the voracious chronicler of this extremely
 interesting talk, "when Dr. Krause sees Trooper Bow-
 meester he will see one of the quaintest little bodies he
 ever saw. She epitomises every sentiment expressed
 at Irene Hall last Thursday."

Chapter XII

Visit to British prisoners at Waterval - condition of the camp - what the Germans said regarding their treatment - the food supply - impressing of the camp - burning of the city of Johannesburg - capture of Mookburg - and of Eland'sfontein - watching the fighting - excitement in town - the Hospital & the Fort - their proximity cause uneasiness - demand for surrender of town - armistice arranged - surrender agreed to - Dr Krause's proclamation - day of surrender - renewed excitement - hoisting the Union Jack - surrender of Pretoria.

[Having heard rumours in Johannesburg to the effect that the British prisoners of war at Waterval were being harshly treated by the Boers, towards the end of May, on the occasion of one of my numerous trips to Pretoria I obtained through the good offices of Mr State-Attorney Smuts the necessary permit to visit the camp of ~~the British prisoners~~ at Waterval, and did so, my object being to investigate for myself the treatment accorded the prisoners by the Boers, and to ascertain what causes there ^{existed} ~~were~~ - if any - for complaint.

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[Before going out to Waterval I asked Mr Smuts if there were many complaints received from the men or made on their behalf, and, if so, how they were disposed of. He replied that there were not many complaints, and when any were received they were invariably investigated and when found to be legitimate the causes for complaint were as far as possible removed. "But" he added, "there are men who would still complain if we gave them feather beds to sleep on and three meals a

day of seven courses each. And it is only to be expected that among such a large number of men there would be a certain number who would be unreasonable in their expectations; but on the whole they seem to be fairly satisfied with their treatment. However "he concluded," go and see for yourself, that is the best thing you can do "and accordingly I went.

I arrived at the camp I first made a tour of inspection, examining the washing and bathing and the cooking arrangements, the huts occupied by the men; the latrines, etc., and my investigations led me to the following conclusions. That the ablutionary and cooking accommodation were amply sufficient and quite satisfactory; that the huts were somewhat overcrowded and far too dirty; and that the sanitary arrangements left much to be desired.

On pointing out the dirty condition of the huts to my superior quite he said that it was for the soldiers themselves to keep them clean and their custodians

Collection Number: A1203

Collection Name: Edward Bushnan Rose

PUBLISHER:

Publisher: Historical Papers Research Archive

Location: Johannesburg

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