

Uniondale,

1901.



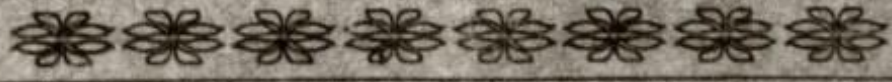
A Memento. of the Anglo-Boer

War,

BY

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UNIONDALE,
1901.



The Christmas holidays are over. Will 1901 be as exciting as 1900?

I feel refreshed by my rest at Beach Road, Three Anchor Bay. I think I shall call on my medical agent.

Two District Surgeons wish to have a holiday. One is surgeon for the district of _____, in the north part of Cape Colony. No thank you. The Boers and the British troops are there. The other is at Uniondale. There are no Boers there and they are not likely to visit it. To go to Uniondale you can take the coasting steamer to Knysna, and then travel by cart. Uniondale is about a hundred miles from the coast. The engagement will be for four or, if necessary, five months, at so much per month and travelling expenses, also your board and lodging at Uniondale will be paid.

“You don't think the Boers will come so far south?”

“I do not.”

“Then I shall go!”

“The boat leaves on such a day.”

“You will wire to the District Surgeon and tell him I am going up”

“All-right”

“Good-bye.”

“A safe journey.”

For the first few days in Uniondale my life is very happy, I walk and chat with some of the residents. The Boers will never come so far south is the prevailing opinion, then a rumour comes that a band of Boers are coming south, then reports that the Boers have attacked a town some thirty miles away, have been repulsed and are coming to Uniondale, where there are neither armed men nor rifles. On the tenth or eleventh day after my arrival, the Boers ride in and I am practically a Boer prisoner. Two months ago I was in Medical charge of a Prisoners of War Camp now I am a prisoner of a roving band of Boers and rebels, Such is War.

For two days before the Boers arrived, ladies and men were burying their valuables and clearing off to the coast.

The night before they came I went to see a friend who had shown me much kindness. His family had been away for a holiday and were returning. He had sent a message to prevent their return. He said: "The Boers will be here at mid-day to-morrow." "I leave about one o'clock in the morning." "I shall leave all my doors unlocked." "There will not be anyone in the house." "What are you going to do?" "You had better clear out or they will certainly shoot you." I replied: "I cannot leave my post and if I am to be shot then I can't help it." "I shall die at my post." The Boers and rebels, under the then notorious Scheepers, were looked upon as a merciless crowd. About eleven o'clock my friend and I parted. "You won't go, doctor?" "No. I will not." "Then we'll never meet." "That may be." "Good night, old man!" "God bless you!" "A safe journey." I again returned to the hotel and went to bed. "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." I slept soundly.



The morning of the eventful day has come, I rise, breakfast, and attend to my duties as acting-district surgeon. The day is gloomy and a mist hangs over the town and hills. The town is very quiet, It is Sunday. A few anxious people are seen here and there, evidently talking about the Boers. The coloured people are in their little homes and as silent as death, for, if reports be true, to Scheepers the life of any of them is of little or no value. Many familiar faces are absent. Some men have horses and carts in readiness to clear out. They wait to the last moment hoping something may turn up to prevent the approach of the Boers. I quietly await developments. "A watched pot is long in boiling." At last the monotony ends. A man rushes to me. "Good-bye, doctor, the Boer outposts are on the hills." "My cart is ready, I'm off."

It is now 11 a.m. About mid-day the Boers ride into town, most of them leading a spare horse. There is no demonstration on the part of the Dutch inhabitants, for Lord Milner's proclamations are posted all over the town warning the people against aiding in any way the Queen's enemies.

The Telegraph operator quickly despatches a message to the head office: "The Boers have arrived," and decamps taking a part of the telegraphic apparatus with him. A loyal woman residing outside the town sends a coloured messenger to a distant telegraph station with a message to be wired to the premier.

The Resident Magistrate meets the Boers as they enter the town. "Who are you coming into this town armed?" "We are the advanced guard of the Federal Army." "Then you take the responsibility of your action on yourselves." "Oh! that's all right." "We want your keys." He accompanies them to the Court House, hands them the key and goes to his home. During this time the Boers have been to all the stables and have seized all horses suitable for riding.

I ask my landlady to get me something to eat. There is an old saying that an army moves on its stomach. I am not an army nor indeed do I feel like one, but as the Boers may eat all the food in the hotel and in war time the rule "first come first served" holds good, I feel justified in looking to my own interests and quickly and quietly get outside enough food to suffice my inner man for at least twelve hours. I wish to go to the offices of the district surgeon but armed Boers are everywhere and it is my desire to avoid any friction, so I enter the smoking room. In a few minutes Scheeper's comes in. He has a bundle of letters, taken apparently from the Post Office, also a hunting whip. He looks at me and I at him. At last, to use a pugilistic phrase, I break ground: "It looks like rain." "Excuse." "It seems we are going to have rain." "Oh! yes." He sits down to read the letters, some of which seem to be official, and I retire. I go to the district surgeon's offices some distance up the villiage. I remain here some hours, I have forgotten to take something to read with me. I pace about the rooms. I shall venture to the hotel. I shall go to my bed-room, lock myself in and pass the rest of the day as quietly as possible.

As I enter the hotel I meet Scheeper's Captain, a Free State lawyer, named Hugo. "You are doctor —?" "Yes." "You have been attending the Boer prisoners at Cape Town?" "Yes." "I want to ask you about them." "We are going to have a drink in the bar." Step this way and join us." In the bar the Landlord, an Anti-English German, is busy serving drinks. There are

villagers whom I know and whom I do not know - men whom I afterwards found are loyalists and men who were subsequently arrested for disloyalty. I answer all Captain Hugo's questions – "I can only speak well of the treatment accorded by the British to their prisoners." "The small death rate surprises all." Then the conversation turns to Stormberg and Captain Hugo gives us his experiences there. Now comes the drink, and I feel myself in the tightest corner I have ever been in South Africa. All the town folk present look to me, as my social rank comes next to that of the clergymen and magistrate, who, unfortunately for me, are absent. To wish him success I cannot. To decline to drink with him may lead to trouble and to bloodshed. What shall I say? My Irish fertility of resource, or what some people unkindly call knavery, comes to my aid. I have some whisky and soda. I feel that intelligence officers are present who will report all I say and do. "Well! Captain Hugo, the only toast I can in the circumstances offer you is the wish that you may never trouble a doctor." "Thank you, Doctor." There are no musical honours. "Now, Sir, I shall take the liberty of asking you to excuse me." Someone then says: "O! you will excuse the doctor as he may have work to attend to." "Certainly, doctor." I bow and retire.

That afternoon the Boers released any white prisoners who were in the jail and put the magistrate and the jailer into the darkest cell. The English Church Minister who was disliked by some Dutchmen for his outspoken loyalty, was asked to take an oath of allegiance to the Boers and refused to do so. He was then told he must take one of neutrality. This he also refused to take. He was informed that if he did not do so he would be shot, and was marched to jail and locked up with the magistrate and jailer. The clergyman was a young Englishman. His wife is a British South African. I shall not cease to admire the bravery of this woman. Her life had been one of continuous toil for her family. Her husband's income was slender. In fact, he taught some private pupils to make ends meet. This brave woman, without a murmur, without a tear, saw her husband marched off to jail, with death staring him in the face. She felt her husband must die rather than make a concession to the Queen's enemies. When I learned of the clergyman's arrest I immediately went to his house. His wife told me she had been to the Boer officers and had asked and obtained permission to take a blanket, cushion and some food to her husband. For this she was grateful to them and smiled an anxious and grateful smile.

Night sets in, the Boers singing hymns, drinking Coffee, and enjoying the company of the young Dutch

girls all over the town. Many of the so-called Boers are foreigners. All apparently have much gold in their pockets, etc. "Now, Mr. Dutchman, you promised to help the cause." "Where is your money box?" "So much cash, or we burn down your house and carry you off."

My bedroom not having been molested I retire early, feeling that before twenty-four hours I shall have some excitement, and that a good night's rest will be beneficial. During the day I had had a slight intimation that the British Troops on Friday were some 40 miles away, but we could neither receive nor send out any messages. The Loyalists are very grave. They know Boer methods. The Boers do not shed blood on Sunday. What will they do tomorrow?

The Boer officers slept in rooms adjoining mine (only removing their boots). They drove pigs to market the whole night - snoring here, snoring there. I fear I also was in the pig driving contest or line, for my sleep, though several times interrupted, was most refreshing. Doubtless they considered the capture of an unarmed town a great achievement. They had damaged Government property, had burned records of certain years, had declared the town a Boer possession, and had established a court of justice (?) to try us offenders next day.

Monday morning! I rise early and go to the surgery avoiding every Boer I see. About 9.30 I think I might have some breakfast, and that the Boers being early risers will have breakfasted and left the hotel. I proceed to the hotel, I enter the breakfast room. All the Boer officers are enjoying their morning meal of meat, eggs, etc. I say, "good morning," and sit down to breakfast. Captain Hugo asks how it is I am not frightened like the other people, and I, outwardly gay, cheerfully reply, "I have not yet seen anything to frighten me." In a few minutes an armed Boer comes in. He wishes to see commandant Scheepers, who is at the head of the table. He whispers some message to him. Before five minutes elapse all the Boers have quietly gone out of the room and I am alone. Something is up! Is it the advance of the British?

After breakfast I sit a few minutes on the stoep (under the Hotel verandah), little thinking that a British 15 pounder on the distant hill is pointing to the Hotel. There are not any Boers about the front of the hotel. They are watering their horses, etc.

Taking my overcoat, as the morning is damp, I venture to cross over and see a Moravian Missionary living under a large hill. He is ill, and I have not been able to visit him for two days. While at his bedside I hear a noise similiar to that caused by a man hammering a wooden box. The clergyman's wife

rushes into the room, saying, "the hill is covered with soldiers and they are firing." I wish to see the fight. Taking my leave and my overcoat I set out for the town. The British soldiers seeing me leaving the house with an overcoat mistake me for a Boer and fire on me. I know nothing of this. The Missionary's wife and family see the ground being torn up behind me by bullets and hear a bullet strike the house. After I leave the clergyman's house I see the Boers galloping out of the town, then I see the people rushing to the main street and a soldier riding through the villiage to see if all be clear. As I approach the town I hear loud cheering. The coloured people are rushing out of their homes cheering. Tables are being placed outside the court-house. Boiling water, steaming coffee, biscuits and cigarettes for the soldiers and coming from all directions. The Union Jack is flying once more in the breeze over the court house. The jail has been broken open and the clergyman, magistrate and jailer released. The ladies are pouring out coffee for the troops, who are now entering the town. Hats off, gentlemen! Haul off your caps, boys (to the coloured men).

"GOD SAVE THE QUEEN!"

The excitement as the British troops march in is intense. All the British, and I feel confident at least sixty per cent. of the Dutch, are very pleased to see them. The average Dutchman likes to lead a peaceful life, and I am of opinion that most of them wish the Boers had never come here. The sympathy of many of them may flow towards the Transvaal and Free State, but they do not want trouble, and, therefore, do not care to take up a hostile attitude towards the British Government.

What would have happened to-day if the troops had not arrived? No one can definitely say. Would they have shot the clergyman? I do not think so. Would they have killed the magistrate and the jailer? Some people say they would have. Scheepers I certainly did not trust, but his officer, Hugo, is an educated man, and so far as I could see and learn is of a genial and kind disposition - a man who would enjoy giving one a fright but would not take life in cold blood. Would not Hugo have had at least some restraining influence over Scheepers? Of the men under Scheepers a few seemed to be jolly fellows and apparently looked upon fighting as a pastime, but many were morose and sullen and presented many traits of the murderous and daring criminal. I do not think these villainous looking men are natives of any part of South Africa. They certainly do not resemble any of the many Boers whom I have attended, and I fear acts of

violence are not foreign to them. Scheepers, however, had them well under control. for his first instructions were that none of his men should have drink under any pretext without an order from him.

This morning three of the Boers ordered a leading storekeeper to open his store. He replied that he would not as he was acting on Lord Milner's instructions. They asked him for the key and he refused to give it. They then asked where he had the key and he replied that it was in his pocket. Then said they: "We'll soon take it from you." "You'll have to kill me first" he retorted. They were about to break open the door, but thought it would be better to obtain Scheepers' permission. They told the storekeeper that when commandant Scheepers came along he would very quickly bring him to account.



Troops have been coming and going, leaving their sick' in my care.

A colonel asks me to take charge of some sick. "All right, sir and about supplies and nursing?" "You will order what you want and charge it to the military." "Please give me my instructions in writing, sir."

The Boers in roving bands come around the town but never get in. Shortly after Scheepers was driven out, a military officer. Captain ----- , was appointed town commandant. This gentleman is one of the ablest men I have ever met. He formed a Town Guard, and, without any assistance, rendered the town a small fortress. He ferreted out every rebel in the district, and commands the admiration and respect of the loyal and disloyal.



"The censor wishes to see you, doctor, any time you are passing his office." "Well, censor, I have been told you want to see me." "Yes, doctor! Do you remember that Sunday the Boers were here?" "Yes." "You were in the hotel bar with some of them?" "Yes." "Kindly tell me the names of all you know who were there." "What was your conversation with the Boer captain, Hugo, about, and did you see any money paid for drinks?" "Thank you." "The commandant wishes to see you about that drink you had with the Boers." "You will find him in his office." "Ho! Ho! What next I wonder?"

"Good morning, commandant." "It has been reported to me that you wish to see me, sir." "Hollo! Doctor, what is this I have heard about you mixing, drinking and fraternizing with the King's enemies, ay?" "With the late Queen's enemies, Sir." "Well, with the Queen's enemies." "I suppose in your cups you hugged and almost kissed Hugo; wished him every success, and that the Boers may thrash the British and drive them into the sea." "No, Sir, I did not." "Then what was your toast?" " Sir, I merely said: 'Captain Hugo, the only toast I can in the present circumstances offer you is the wish that you may never trouble a doctor,' which may mean sir, that he may be shot dead or anything you like." "Clear out! you're an Irish rebel." "Thank you, sir." "Good morning."

My drink with Hugo and my having been brought to book by the commandant caused much amusement to everyone.



It is Sunday. We go to church and we see troops coming to the service. The rifles, with bayonets fixed, are stacked outside the church and a guard placed over them. Church is over. The soldiers form into line - Number : 1, 2, 3, &c. The officers and young ladies chat. Quick march! The ladies wave their handkerchiefs to the officers. We go to dinner. The mutton is very tough. Is it boiled goat? Has it been fished out of the sea? It is very salt. There is chicken pie. Can you see any skin on the pieces of chicken? Is It a young ostrich? Has it been overlain by its mother? I'll take mutton. "Waiter," pass me a sharp knife. This knife does not do justice to your mutton. "We thank thee Lord for all thy mercies." Many a poor fellow is eating dry biscuit on the veld and swallowing the filling of his teeth, which has become glued to the biscuit. Amusing remarks are often made about the food which is sometimes difficult to obtain, but our host always does his best.

There is no evening service in the church. Lights are not allowed in any house at night unless someone be very ill, and then the doors and windows of the house must be covered with blankets, etc. Anyone leaving his house after the night has set in is, if he have not a permit, arrested. At night we sit on the stoep. We cannot smoke. The German landlords says if Germany were fighting the Boers the ware would have been over long ago. He is inclined to

growl, yet he has made much profit on every regiment that has passed through the town. He is asked why he ever came to this country. There is likely to be unpleasantness. I throw oil on the troubled waters. "Landlord, be content with your lot." We are all in good humour again. We go to bed in the dark. Some Germans in South Africa are very fond of England.



It is morning and I go to the surgery. A wizened wiry soldier comes for treatment. He has veld sores on his hands. "Your name, your number, your regiment?" "You're an American?" "Yes!" "You come from Texas?" "You have been a cowboy?" "Yes." "When I came to this country I did not know which side I would join, but I thought my money would be surer on the British." He is in Brabant's Horse, No. 2, which has been here for some weeks and is said to contain men of thirteen nationalities. They are good fighting men, and know every orchard in the district. They are very popular, especially with the Dutch young ladies. A soldier of the passing regiment calls. "Why have you your tunic off?" "The back is worn out of it, sir, and I am ashamed to wear it walking through the town." The clothing of many of the men of some regiments were very war-worn. Our commandant does all he can for men so situated if they come under him.



A man with his horses and cart is brought in by one of the outposts. The man has not a pass. "Where do you come from?" "How did you get out of that town without a permit?" "Wire to the town about him." Reply: "He had not permission to leave. "You must stay here." "Take charge of his horses and put his cart in charge of his friends." The man is not a British subject. His consul obtains his freedom and he goes to the coast. If the man were a British subject he would probably be arrested and put in jail.



A horseman arrives. His horse is white with foam. The rider does not speak to anyone. He rides straight to the commandant's office. There is a roving

band of Boers, probably 300 on his neighbour's farm. All farmers have to report when Boers appear in their neighbourhood. "Put your horse up at such a place." "You will draw horse feed and rations till able to return to your farm." The commandant sends his compliments to the captain of the troops stationed near the town and wishes to see him. The Boers are at a farm six miles away. The captain of the town guard doubles the outposts. Scouts are sent out. Water and ammunition are quietly sent up to the little forts. A telegram is despatched to the head-quarters of the district: "Town threatened by 300 Boers coming from north east." No one in the villiage excepting those immediately concerned, know anything. One scout, then another, returns and reports: "Boers are now some four miles away." The church-bell rings! The shops close. The children run home from school. The town guard men go to the forts. All not in the town guard go to their homes and remain inside closed doors. "Listen! they are firing outside the town!" A very stout Dutchwoman returning from a cup of coffee with a friend hears the shots and will not take time to go in by the gate leading to her house, but dives head foremost through the wire fence around her home. Her foot is caught in the top wires. Someone releases it. She rushes into her house and falls from stoutness and shortness of breath on the floor. "May all the black spooks (ghosts) take those Boers!" "We have never had peace since those cursed Boers came here." "Oh! Almighty, we'll be all killed." I put a red cross badge on my arm, as I do not wear a uniform. I go to the house used as a hospital. A red cross flag flutters from a pole fastened to the chimney of the building. A cup of coffee and some biscuits are very acceptable. The convalescent soldiers in the hospital are amusing themselves at draughts and other games. To them a skirmish is nothing. One has been in 76 fights and scraps (skirmishes). He keeps a record of them.

The firing is becoming more rapid! The outposts are falling back on the town! They are firing from the forts. The Boers are on the hills but have neither pom-poms nor large guns. They do not waste their ammunition. They see that they cannot take the town They are retiring. The town outposts push out again to their old posts, firing on the Boers as they do so. The scouts follow the Boers and, keeping them in sight, watch their movements. The Boers have gone! A telegram is despatched to headquarters: "About

300 Boers threatened town for two hours. They made one dash to get in but were repulsed. They have retired and are now some six miles to the north-west of the town moving in the direction of -----."

Men in the town guard and not on duty return to open their shops and to follow their usual occupations, hut will sleep in the forts to-night. The ladies go to play lawn tennis.



The mails have arrived and the censor has gone to the post office. The letters for the commandant, officers, soldiers and loyalists are stamped by the censor and delivered. The letters for disloyal persons are taken to the censor's office to be opened and read. The censor opens a letter. It is from a young Dutch lady to another, and is written in Dutch.

My dearest Jacobina,

O! I have such a lot to tell you but I hear you have an awful creature there as a censor. Has he a nose like a monkey? Excuse my rudeness, but has he a tail?

We had a dance here on Wednesday. Some English officers were at the dance. I danced with one of them. He is a nice fellow, but he would not tell me anything.

I have got a new dress and a new hat.

Your loving,

Johanna Willemina.

P.S. I have made a blot on the paper. Excuse the blot and take it for a kiss if the horrid censor do not steal it on the way. - Johanna.

The censor receives some unkind knocks from the Dutch young ladies. Ladies do not like men to read their private correspondence.



The mails have not arrived to-day, a roving hand of Boers has seized the mail cart, taken the horses and the mail bags. The mail man has come in on foot.

I have lost my weekly letter from my wife, who always sends me two x x. I meet a lawyer and tell him the Boers have taken a letter for me from my wife. It contains two valuable presents in the form of x x. "To whom shall I apply for compensation for my loss?" "The postal department has contracted to carry your letter for a penny, apply to them."

I meet another lawyer and I tell him of my serious loss. "You cannot make the postal department pay, as in their contracts they do not hold themselves responsible for such losses."

I tell the lawyers they are not any good, as one says one thing and another says another thing. One lawyer retorts – "Never mind, doctor, bad and all as we are WE don't bury our mistakes."

I am now convinced a medical man should steer clear of lawyers. They only mislead him and then amuse themselves at his expense. The postal department also has its faults. It is not honourable to undertake to carry a letter for a penny, and, failing to carry out the contract, to refuse compensation for the loss sustained.



The town is again the scene of war. It is full of troops in hot pursuit of a large band of Boers, who are in the district.

A soldier has been brought to me. A bullet has gone right through his chest, traversing his right lung. He felt very dizzy when hit, then fainted, and on consciousness having returned, he walked to a place of safety. There are two openings, one at the front and another at the back of his chest. His ribs in front are not injured. One rib at the back has been slightly injured, but is not broken. There is not any blood. No large blood vessel has been torn. The bullet probably has been very hot owing to friction with the air, and has sufficiently seared the flesh and lung, while passing through, to prevent bleeding from the small blood vessels. The patient looks pale and complains of a slight burning pain in his chest. A light dressing is applied to the wounds and is retained in place by a bandage. "Soldier, you must stay in bed for three or four days." "Nurse,

please keep him quiet ; keep him lying on the injured side, so that if any bleeding takes place the blood will not get into the sound lung, which must be kept uppermost." "Give him a cool milk diet, also give him this medicine to relieve the pain." "In a few days he will be better and can sit up."



A man has been shot by the Boers and the body will be brought in to-morrow. His name, number and regiment have been taken. His letters, note-book, and valuables have been placed in a large envelope and the envelope has been sealed :
Valuables and effects of Sergeant ----- No ----- Regiment ----- killed in action at -----
on ----- 1901.

The ladies of the town are making a wreath.

It is a dull grey morning. The church bell is tolling in solemn tones ; the body is coming in; the ladies have sent the wreath to be laid on the body as it enters the town ; and the grave is ready. The bearer party carry the remains on a stretcher and march slowly up the village. The villagers of all shades of opinion line the street and respectfully fall in and march after the corpse. There is no coffin. The body is in the overcoat of the deceased, and his blanket has been neatly wrapped and fastened around the body. The clergyman meets the remains. The body is lowered to its last resting place. "Dust to dust, ashes to ashes." He was an Australian. Some dear ones will miss him. The elderly ladies think of this and a tear here and a tear there is silently wiped away. The children and young ladies strew flowers on the grave. The carpenter makes a small wooden cross and paints it white. He also paints on the cross some particulars of the deceased in black letters and figures, as the name, the regimental number, etc. The cross is erected as soon as possible. The people on Sundays visit the church-yard, and members of the Loyal Women's Guild see that flowers are placed on the grave.

"But though hearts that now mourn for thee sadly,
Soon joyous as ever shall be ; though thy bright orphan boy
May laugh gladly as lie site on some comrade's kind knee,

There is one who shall still pay the duty of tears for the true
And the brave, as when first in the bloom of her beauty
She wept o'er her soldier's grave." -

Honourable Mrs. Norton.



After an absence of a couple of weeks, the Boers have again surrounded the town. They are in large numbers and, if rumour be true, have large guns. A large number of Imperial Light Horse are here. It is night and pitch dark. The out-posts send in a Boer escorted by two soldiers. The Boer is blind-folded, and has come in under the white flag. He is taken into a room and the blindfold is removed. He hears a message from the Boer commandant, who demands the immediate surrender of the town. There are some British officers in the room. He is asked to have some refreshments, to have a cigar, a cigarette, and an officer chats pleasantly with him. The senior officer present - a colonel - leaves the room. "Where is the captain in charge of the out-posts?" "Strengthen the outposts and keep a sharp look out." The senior officer returns. A reply to the Boer commandant's demand is written and handed to the Boer, who is then blindfolded. "Sergeant, take this man blindfolded to such an outpost and release him." "Good-night." "Safe return to your commandant." The reply is - the town will not surrender. Very few of the villagers know the Boers are about, and I keep a very stiff lip in connection with anything mentioned to myself. There is a doctor with the troops. We have consulted about the illnesses of some men left in my charge, and we have done some minor operations. He is short of some medicines and I am short of others. He has more of some medicines than he will require for a long time, and I have more of others. We have ceased to be medical men for a time and have made a deal in medicine. He has tried to get the best of me and I have tried to get the best of him. He has an overstock of certain drugs and my stock is running extremely low, but I have not let him know that. He is a Welshman and I am an Irishman, and for the honour of my country, which is at stake, the Shamrock, is not to be done down by the Leek. O! dear no! He seems well pleased with his deal and I shake hands with myself over mine. I have arranged

for him to sleep at one of the two houses used as hospitals, and a bath is ready for him when he will awake. The red cross flag is flying over the hospital and all the arms of the sick soldiers, who have come in during the afternoon, have been sent to the court-house. As usual I go to bed in the dark. My bedroom is under a small fort. Will the Boers pom-pom the town during the night? Will they pom-pom me? Shall I retire without undressing? Is the window clear for a bolt out? Oh! bother the Boers, I'm tired, I want a sleep.

Forty-eight hours later the Boers are miles away and the troops have also gone in pursuit. The town has not been attacked this time.



There are no Boers in the district, and the commandant's staff and others think we might have a smoke-night.

The commandant is approached. Hurrah! A smoke and musical evening in the dining-room of the hotel to-night. Window blinds to be carefully drawn and all lights to be out at 11 pm. ; the censor to issue permits to 11.30 p.m. to all at the smoke.

I have a standing permit, and when anyone in the village becomes seriously ill at night, a messenger is sent to the nearest member of the town guard on duty. The town guardsman either sends the messenger back to his home and passes the message on to me, or takes the messenger to the office of the town guard, when one of the men is ordered to report the case of illness to me. All messengers are escorted back to their homes.

The landlord of the hotel gets the room ready for the smoke. There is a piano. "Do any of you fellows know anyone who can play the piano?" "O I there is J.S., he can pawr the piano as well as anyone." "Bill Jones can knock spots out of him at tickling the ivories." "We don't want any ivory-tickling, dude." "We want someone who can play." "Well! there's so and so, a private or something in Brabant's." "He can punch the machine as well as anyone this side of kingdom come." Mr. So and So is selected as our pianist for the evening.

The smoke and concert opens at 8 p.m., a veterinary surgeon plays a piece and does it very nicely. It is his only piece. A lawyer, with a remarkably fine lyric tenor voice, sings "Anchored." The pianist of the evening accompanies the singer and retains his reputation as a piano puncher, for his fingers come down vigorously on the keys. He also keeps the strictest time by counting 1, 2, 3, 1, 2, 3. He does not allow any breathing time to the singer. The singer is not to be outshone by the pianist and the music and singing proceed apace. I quietly wonder who will get to the end, or finish first. At last the final line of the song: "Safe in his Father's Home" is sung or proclaimed in a manner to impress it for a lifetime on the villagers around, and the piano receives the best shaking up it has ever had. The song has ended. There is loud and continuous applause, during which the singer wipes large beads of perspiration from his victorious brow, the pianist feels his reputation is enhanced, and the landlord looks as if his furniture are far from being safe at home. Stories, recitations, and music make the evening pass very enjoyably. Finally the Commandant delivers one of his humorous speeches, in the making of which he is a past-master. The concert ends in the usual way. It has been a huge success.



A farmer has come into town. His family are ill and he wishes me to visit them. I apply to the commandant for a permit. "Please, sir, have the out-posts informed that I am returning to-night. It will be very dark."

Going out the town guard and the out-posts see my pass. I am driven in a cart drawn by mules. The horses have been taken from the farmers lest the Boers take them. The hills are high and the road in places is very steep. The mules will not trot uphill but gallop downhill at a terrific speed, and are liable to shy at any object and overturn the cart.

When returning the outposts stop the cart. "Who goes there?" "Friend." "Stay where you are." A soldier approaches holding his rifle ready to shoot me. "I am the district surgeon." "Do any of you fellows know the doctor?" "See if this is him." Two men come forward. "Yes, we know his voice." In the dark they cannot read my pass. The driver,

a coloured man, has not a pass. "What's your name, boy?" "Where do you live?" "Report yourself when you get into town and don't try to come out without a pass.

During the daytime farmers and their servants can come into town but must immediately report their arrival and cannot return home without permits.



It is my last day in Uniondale. I have been round the village and have said farewell to many - Dutch and British - I have handed over everything to the district surgeon, who has returned from his holiday. The commandant and many others have been to wish me a safe journey. I have been about five months here. The mail-cart is about to start and I have my permit. Good-bye, German landlord, you have always done your best to supply my inner man. You'll be a very loyal British subject before long?

"What a beautiful home this world would be
If all lived here in unity ;
If each would forgive another's wrong,
And smooth it over with a song."