

itatively negotiate for peace upon any other terms. With a view to overcoming this difficulty, the Dutch government ventures to suggest, "seeing that the Boers' delegates are in Netherland territory and accredited to that government alone," that the British government give three safe conducts "permitting the Boer delegates to proceed freely to Africa, remain there freely for the time agreed upon," say a fortnight, "and return freely to Europe," being allowed the use of a telegraph code "with the view of appointing a place where the delegates could meet the Boer leaders." The Dutch government makes no claim to any authority from the Boer delegates to offer this suggestion. Neither does it propose to do more than to bring about, if possible, an opening of negotiations between the belligerents. On the contrary, upon the return of the delegates, should safe conducts be accorded them as suggested, it would expect only to "place them in communication with the plenipotentiaries appointed for that purpose" by Great Britain, and then consider its "task at an end."

Lord Lansdowne's reply, dated January 29, infers that the Dutch suggestion "was made on the responsibility of the Netherlands government alone and without authority from the Boer delegates or leaders," and while expressing appreciation of the humane motives of the Netherlands, declares the intention of the British government to—

adhere to the position adopted and publicly announced by them some months after the commencement of hostilities by the Boers, that it is not their intention to accept the intervention of any foreign power in the South African war.

The letter proceeds, however, to say:

Should the Boer delegates themselves desire to lay a request for a safe conduct before his majesty's government there is no reason why they should not do so. But his majesty's government, obviously, are not in a position to express an opinion on any such application until they have received it and are aware of the precise nature and grounds whereon the request is made. I may therefore point out that it is not at present clear to his majesty's government that the delegates retain any influence over the representatives of the Boers in South Africa, or have any voice in their councils. They are stated by the Netherlands government to have no such letters of credence or instruction of a later date than March, 1900. His majesty's government, on the other hand, understood that all the

powers of government, including those of negotiation, were now completely vested in Mr. Steyn for the Boers of the Orange River colony and Mr. Schalk-Burger for those of the Transvaal. If this is so, it is evident that the quickest and most satisfactory means of arranging a settlement would be by direct communication between the leaders of the Boer forces in South Africa and the commander-in-chief of his majesty's forces, who has already been instructed to forward immediately any offers he may receive, for the consideration of his majesty's government. In these circumstances his majesty's government have decided that if the Boer leaders should desire to enter into negotiations for the purpose of bringing the war to an end those negotiations must take place not in Europe, but in South Africa.

The Boer delegates to the Netherlands issued a manifesto on the 5th, declaring that Lord Lansdowne's letter proves the intention of the British government to exterminate the South African republics, and put a further obstacle in the way of negotiations for peace upon the initiative of the delegates.

British reports from the field in South Africa show no diminution of Boer resistance. In a fight on the 28th at Abrahams Kraal, near Koffyfontein, in the Orange Free State, a British colonel and eight of his men were killed. Other small engagements are reported, including one which is described as especially important because it resulted in the capture of De Wet's last field piece. In all these engagements the Boers were repulsed, and in some prisoners were made. Lord Kitchener's report of Boer casualties for the week ending the 3d shows that 29 Boers were killed, 6 wounded and 142 made prisoners, and that 48 surrendered.

Parliament has been dealing with the subject of the war in connection with the application of the ministry for supplemental appropriations amounting to \$25,000,000, which Mr. Brodrick, the war secretary, brought before the House of Commons on the 31st. In presenting the application he explained that this would bring the total expenses of the war up to \$305,350,000 for the financial year, making \$620,000,000 for the past two years, and that the weekly expense had now been reduced to about \$5,000,000. In this connection members of a committee of the House, appointed to inquire into war office expenditures, declared that their investigation had revealed suspicious conduct

in the purchase of horses. On one contract alone, said one of these committeemen, the profit on a horse purchase of \$555,000 was \$220,000, a percentage of profit which, if general, would show that the contractors had received \$40,000,000 on the total purchases. Notwithstanding these disclosures, a motion to reduce the supplementary appropriation was defeated by the vote of 106 to 75. This occurred on the 31st. But the scandal has grown, and on the 4th cable dispatches stated that the government organs were "almost wholly silenced or driven to join the radical press in such attacks on the betrayers of the people's interests as the stringent English libel laws made safe." Maj. Arthur Lee, who was accredited to the American army as British military attache during the Spanish-American war and is now a Conservative member of parliament, added fuel to the fire in a speech on the floor on the 4th by saying:

I, being military attache at Washington, was not informed that there was any intention of buying horses in the United States. I learned from the American newspapers that British officers had been sent to buy horses, but I was not informed who they were nor was I asked to give them such assistance as my position implied I was competent to give. At the time I had the opportunity, through the good will of a high official, of getting the services of the chief horse expert of the United States army as adviser. I cabled the suggestion to the war office, but I received no reply.

In the United States this speech is significant of something else than what makes it interesting to the British people; and on the 4th the American war department informally explained, through Adj. Gen. Corbin, that there are no facts to warrant any impression that the United States has assisted the British operations in South Africa by the shipment of horses or in any other way. Gen. Corbin said that there is no such office as "chief horse expert" in the United States military service, and suggested that Lee referred probably to one of the large army contractors who supply the United States cavalry with mounts.

Another of those coincidences which have frequently emphasized the parallel between the British war in South Africa and the American war in the Philippines has just occurred. As the center of interest regarding the former is shifted to London