

would have upon other nations than because of any substantial assistance the colonies could render during the progress of hostilities, because, all told, the combined contingents will not exceed a thousand combatants. To New Zealand the honour belongs of being the first to despatch its mounted rifle corps of 212 officers and men a week ago, and to-day the transport will leave Melbourne conveying to South Africa the total strength from the Colonies of Victoria, New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia, Western Australia, and Tasmania. To outside nations it would appear not a little odd that self-governing colonies seven thousand miles away from the scene of strife should send off bodies of men to do battle against people they have had no quarrel with, or that they should think it necessary to assist in the subjugation of a people who claim the right of self-government the same as they do; but the jingoistic spirit at the Antipodes is too inflamed just now to care anything about the rights or wrongs of the question. What is uppermost in the public mind is that the Transvaal Republic, as a nation, must be effaced, and the whole of the South African Continent painted an Imperial red from the southern limits of Cape Colony to the Equator. Of course, no one for a moment doubts that England can accomplish this unaided by colonial troops, and why, therefore, should these distant colonies interfere at all? In money alone, it will cost the principal of them £50,000 a piece before they have done with the business. Victoria, New South Wales, and Queensland have voted £30,000 each, and New Zealand £5,000 in excess of that amount; but if the war lasts for six months they will require to make calls upon their respective Treasuries which will bring each colony's contribution up to at least £50,000. When enthusiasm cools down, no doubt people will begin to think that the money would have been spent to better purpose on public works within the colonies themselves, but they cannot help remembering the fact that a precedent has now been established, and that the colonies will have to take similar action upon any future occasion, even without any justification for the belief (as in the present instance) that the safety of the Empire is endangered.

Wellington Terrace, Wellington, 15th February, 1900.

SIR,—I am in receipt of your letter of 13th instant, enclosing an extract from the *Dunedin Evening Star* of 29th January, containing portions of my article to the *New York Times*, published in that influential journal of 26th November, 1899.

I will preface my reply to your request for information as to the authorship of that article by observing that this is not the first occasion on which this same individual connected with the *Dunedin Evening Star* has displayed the strongest possible animosity against me under the cloak of anonymity, and has shown personal malice to an extent which must meet with the reprobation of all honest, upright, and respectable journalists. The individual in question, however, is not a journalist of any weight or position outside the parochial radius of that paper's circulation, and very little within that limited area. Professional etiquette, straightforwardness, or the instincts of journalistic camaraderie, could not be expected from such an uncultured source; and I leave him, as all paltry things like him should be left, to the contemplation of his own littleness and to the enjoyment of whatever fruits may come from the ventilation of his jealousy and maliciousness. He has my assurance, however, that, whether or not he succeeds in his present attempt to do me an injury, it is a matter which will neither derange my appetite nor induce insomnia.

As to the article contributed to the *New York Times* from which these extracts have been republished, I beg to inform you that I was the author of that article, and that I adhere to the opinions therein expressed regardless of consequences.

In the first place, let me inform you that throughout my life I have belonged to the party of peace, and have been an uncompromising opponent of recourse to war for the settlement of international difficulties. I had made a special study of the Transvaal question, had read all the available literature connected with the subject from every standpoint, and had become, as an impartial and conscientious observer of events, a staunch adherent of the humane and enlightened policy of England's greatest Commoner, Mr. Gladstone, with regard to the Transvaal Republic. When war was first hinted at, in the winter months of last year, I could not bring myself to believe that hostilities would actually eventuate, and made no disguise of my sentiments that, if war did ensue, it would be one of the most unjust and unrighteous wars recorded in history. I could not, however, believe that the British nation would allow itself to be deluded by a band of greedy and grasping capitalists into undertaking a war against a people whose right to self-government had been fully recognised; for I maintain that it is a war which has been fomented by capitalists, and it is lamentable to think that so much precious blood has been, and will be, spilt and so much treasure expended at the instigation of these moneyed magnates for purposes of their own aggrandisement. Does anyone in his proper senses, anyone with the smallest atom of intelligence or fair-mindedness, really believe that but for the gold and diamond discoveries in South Africa the Boers would ever have been disturbed in their isolation? All candid and thoughtful men, however reluctant they may be at this juncture to confess it, must feel in their hearts that the greed of unscrupulous capitalists is in truth the real *raison d'être* of the present deplorable conflict, the primary cause which lies at the bottom of the hideous tragedy which is now being enacted in South Africa.

Immediately before and after the commencement of hostilities I regarded with deepest sorrow the wave of jingoistic hysteria that inundated these colonies, the unreasoning and unthinking manner in which this jingoistic spirit was fanned, until provincial jealousies and rivalries have now actually developed in this frantic desire to send contingents to South Africa beyond anything that was ever contemplated when the movement began.

When I considered the marvellous wealth of Great Britain, her inexhaustible resources in men and money, her population of forty-four millions of people to draw combatants from, her powerful navy to defend her against any possible or probable concert of European nations, I could not suppose that England required assistance from her far-off colonies in settling her differences with a comparative handful of people like the Boers—two hemmed-in republics in South Africa, without a seaboard and without ports for replenishing supplies, which in course of time must