

 British Colonial Policy scientifically
vindicated by a prominent Frenchman.

BOERS
OR
ENGLISH:
WHO ARE
IN THE
RIGHT ?

Being the English Translation of
"BOERS ET ANGLAIS : OÙ EST LE DROIT ?"

BY

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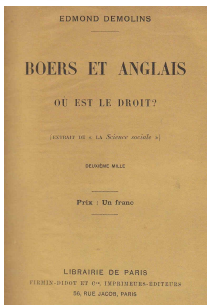
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Publishers' Note.



THE purely academic views herein set forth on the question of the hour by a prominent Frenchman, M. Edmond Demolins, whose "Anglo-Saxon Superiority" (*A quoi tient la Supériorité des Anglo-Saxons*) is almost as well known to the English as the French reader, come opportunely. At the present juncture, M. Edmond Demolins' just published *Boers et Anglais, où est le droit?* of which these pages are a translation, is being widely read. What Demolins writes thoughtful Englishmen as well as Frenchmen read.



BOERS OR ENGLISH :
WHO ARE IN THE RIGHT?



BOERS OR ENGLISH : who are in the Right ? is a delicate subject, which, to be discussed and properly understood, requires on the one hand a large amount of scientific calm, and on the other, a keen desire to cast off prejudices, and see the truth in its entirety.

I do not intend to deal here with the whole of the Transvaal question, but to extract therefrom the manifestation of some prominent social facts which throw into strong light certain points connected with social science.



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(6) It is not a judgment expressed on men and deeds. We have not here a purely political discussion. Science holds itself aloof from the disputes and actions of individuals.

In this conflict we do not consider the subsidiary causes, but the underlying forces which have been at work behind accidental circumstances. For instance, it is not stating the real cause of the Franco-German war of 1870 to attribute it to the question of a Prussian prince's candidature for the throne of Spain. That explanation can only satisfy the superficial mind.

It is just the same with the Anglo-Boer conflict, which many people try to explain by the dissensions in connection with the disputed two years more or less residence in order to acquire the franchise. People who thus argue are very simple-minded.

How can we believe that for so trivial an end the English, a practical people, are putting in line 70,000 soldiers and incurring the expense of such a campaign? It would be too large an outlay for a gold-mine crisis, which might easily be set right in another way. Moreover, does the franchise



question really exist? Everything proves the contrary. It is as mythical as the "secret dossier." (7)

What, then, is the true reason of this conflict?

I.

THE true story of this conflict is the repetition of a state of things which is as old as the world itself, and which continually asserts itself in the history of the human race.

Let us try to describe it in general terms, without reference to the Transvaal struggle :

Some traders, emigrants,—let us suppose them to be Frenchmen, or Germans, Spaniards, Portuguese, Romans, Greeks, or Phœnicians, it matters not what nationality,—intelligent, pushing and enterprising people, migrate to a country which does not belong to their social formation. As far as possible, at the outset, they instal themselves peacefully. Immediately two conflicting social systems are face to face. The more backward system, let us suppose it to be redskin, negro,



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(8) Chinese, Hindustani, Annamite or Arab, feels its inferiority and a suspicion of the elimination which threatens it. By the rights of prior occupation of the soil and the rights of sovereignty it naturally expects to rule. On the other hand, the superior social element does not admit that these claims can be allowed to constitute a permanent obstacle to human progress simply because the land and its sovereignty is held by an inferior race. After discussions on these questions of abstract justice there comes the question of fighting, and the superior race, after an expenditure of more or less time, and surmounting many difficulties, *always* gets the upper hand.

But this is what is to be noted and remembered : *when the thing is an accomplished fact, nobody maintains that it must be undone.*

Nobody contends now-a-days that the Greek or the Phœnician ought in fairness to have given up the soil and the sovereignty to the coast populations of Gaul and Africa ; the Romans, to the Barbarians ; the French to the Arabs, the Annamites, or the negroes of Senegal and the



Soudan ; the Spaniards and Portuguese to the South American Indians ; the Americans of the United States to the North American Indians. On the contrary, it is considered right, that a step forward in the path of progress has been accomplished and that the human race forges its way thus towards higher destinies. History itself has nothing but praise for these dominant races, while it treats those ousted with contempt. It even unduly elevates the former and abases the latter ; everybody approves, and in our schools we so teach.

It is thus, moreover, that nationalities are formed—formed by the absorption, nearly always violent, of local independent regions. It is only at this price that the unity of Spain, France, Germany, Italy, the United Kingdom of Great Britain, &c., was accomplished.

But the phenomenon on which I lay stress, and of which I should like to try and find the explanation, lies in the fact that each of these absorptions, after having aroused furious opposition, has afterwards met with almost unanimous approval. Republican historians themselves



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(10) honour French royalty for having made "national unity," and for this alone they pardon a great deal.

Now, to establish the so much vaunted French unity, royalty was obliged to deprive each of our provinces of its autonomy and its sovereignty, and nearly always by main force.

If these dispositions are just, why protest against them? If they are unjust, why so unanimously laud them?

There is evidently here a problem the solution of which must be found, for our judgment is manifestly left entirely to chance.

Concerning the same phenomenon, an earnest man cannot bring himself to hold two such contradictory opinions.

We have an example before us in the history of the Boers and English in the Transvaal.

When the Boers established themselves in South Africa the soil was not unpopulated. It was occupied by the Hottentots and the Kaffirs. These two races had been, from time immemorial, the undisputed owners of vast territories.

Now, not only did the Boers dispossess these



original occupants by force, but they treated them brutally. (11)

The eviction was effected by an extremely simple process. A Boer family selected a spot which suited it, and then set up thereon a stake called *baaken*, which signified that the site was bespoken. Arrangements were then made with the neighbouring families to drive away by force the Hottentots who attempted to resist this invasion of their territory. This is how the Boers proceeded according to an eye-witness: "A few well-armed colonists assemble together; then, falling suddenly on an isolated body of natives, they compel its members to bring up all their cattle; then they select therefrom the animals which best suit them, and give for them whatever price they please. This is what used to be called 'making a purchase with a loaded rifle.'" * The Boers adopted the same summary process to obtain servants for themselves. Thus, by the same stroke, public property, private property, and the inhabitants themselves were confiscated.

* *Levaillant, Deuxième Voyage*, vol. I., pp. 19, 20



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(12) The occupation of the Transvaal by the Boers was "sometimes accompanied by atrocious massacres, wholesale exterminations; each advance of the whites in a northerly direction had to be purchased at the price of blood." * It is in this way that the Hottentots were gradually driven back from the territory which they had occupied for generations. When this territory no longer sufficed them, the Boers invaded that of the Kaffirs.

The Kaffirs are more stay-at-home, and, if the expression may be allowed, more civilized than the Hottentots. They devote themselves to a primitive agriculture, and possess a fairly regular system of public authority and a military organization. But they could not hold out for long against the pressure of the invading Boers, and were in their turn driven back or destroyed by force of arms.

The dispossession of the Kaffirs was effected under horrible conditions. Here is an example : †
"In the valley of the Vaal there is a celebrated

* Elisée Reclus, *Géographie Universelle*, vol. XIII., page 594.

† See *Le Correspondant*, August 10th, 1899.



grotto, about 100 or 150 yards in width and very lofty, which is full of human remains. For a long time the Boers asserted that it was a resort of cannibals, and that a native tribe held fearful orgies in it. It has now been proved that these skeletons are those of the blacks who had taken refuge in this cavern after having been defeated by the whites. Smothered by smoke, like so many foxes, they perished with their wives and children.

“The interior was a confused heap of human bones, calabashes and kitchen utensils. Some of the bodies have even retained their skin, but tanned and shrivelled; some have remained standing, glued to the sides of the grotto. In one corner a child's dead body still rests on the fleshless knees of its mother. This spectacle is so hideous that a great many travellers cannot endure the sight of it, and immediately quit this place of horror.”

It is thus that the Boers evicted the Hottentots and the Kaffirs. But now the English in their turn are undertaking the task of driving out the Boers and substituting their own rule for theirs.



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(14) Are these two acts to be judged by a common standard? In fairness, one is loth to condemn the Boers if one acquits the English, or to condemn the English if we acquit the Boers. The cases are precisely similar.

In the history of the world the elimination of one race by another occurs again and again with the most persistent regularity. And ever since the process has been in operation its legitimacy and the means of modifying it have been continually discussed.

Social science may come to the rescue by possibly throwing some light on much that is obscure.

II.

I NEED not say that innumerable crimes accompany the kind of acts which I have just indicated. These superpositions of domination and of race, with the details of which historians furnish us only too complacently, do



not show the human race in a very favourable light. In the immense majority of cases War is a very hideous thing. That is quite recognised, and I lay stress on it. I should like to raise the discussion to a higher level and, if possible, set forth separately the conditions according to which one race takes the place of another, and holds supremacy. In spite of appearances, these substitutions are not left to the caprice of man ; they are governed by a law to which all history testifies.

This law is not based on the right of the first occupant, as so many unreflecting persons assert.

Facts speak loudly enough ; the first occupant, in most parts of the world, is the savage, the hunter pure and simple, or even the troglodyte, the cave-dweller. He is being, and has been, evicted everywhere, and will soon be nothing more than a memory.

The upholders of the rights of the first occupant do not hesitate to reconcile themselves to the eviction of the ancient possessor of the soil. It is quite right, so far as savages are concerned, they say.



(15) But savage races are not the only ones that have been evicted, or ruled on their own territory. Here again, facts contradict the theory of the first occupant. The Asiatic nations, Hindoos and Chinese, for example, are not savages, and yet they have lost, or are in process of losing, their independence by contact with Europeans.

It is already an accomplished fact as regards Indo-China, where there are only essentially peaceful native populations, such as the Annamites. In 1860, China, highly civilized in many respects, was closed ; it is now governed by, and will soon be shared out among Russians, Englishmen and Frenchmen, not to mention Germans and Americans !

We Europeans do not therefore take much account of this right of the first occupant when it is claimed by the peoples of Asia or Africa. We only think of proclaiming it when it is turned against ourselves. Righteous on this side of the Ural Mountains and the Mediterranean—unrighteous on the other !

And when these nations evicted by us turn round and, as we can no longer invoke the right



of the first occupant, ask us the reason of this (17)
 spoliation, we loudly proclaim another right, *that of our Social Superiority*.

And in this we get near the truth.

But we shall see that this right, founded on our superiority, is a terrible weapon, which at any moment may recoil against us.

After all, a nation, when it is the weaker, cannot invoke the right of the first occupant, and when it is the stronger, the right of its superiority. That would really be *too* convenient !

This, nevertheless, is what we do not fail to do, for nations, like private individuals, do not stick at an occasional inconsistency when their own interests are at stake.

And this is precisely what the Boers did.

When they evicted the Hottentots and the Kaffirs, they based their claim on their social superiority, which was undeniable, and outrageously trampled under foot the right of the first occupant.

But when the English, following the same example, undertook the task of dislodging *them*, the Boers proclaimed their right as prior occu-



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(18) piers, and did not dream of bringing forward as an argument their social superiority. Perhaps it would have been difficult to demonstrate.

I think that we must now see the awkward position in which the human race has placed itself with regard to this question of nationalities.

If the sovereignty is the property of the first occupant, Europe must give up all her distant possessions, she must evacuate all her colonies without exception, for she is trampling on the indefeasible rights of nations.

There is no way of escape.

But if sovereignty is the natural right of social superiority, she may keep them with a perfectly clear conscience.

Let us, then, reassure our conscience at once ; *the world does not belong to the first occupant, facts sufficiently demonstrate this ; it belongs to the nations which possess Social Superiority.* And this is precisely what justifies Europeans, and explains their predominance.

But we must deal more fully with this matter.



III.

IF God—I am making an absurd supposition for which I crave pardon of the divine wisdom—if God had decided that the first occupant should enjoy an indefeasible right, He would have handed over the world to the exclusive domination of the inferior races, and no human progress would have been possible.

On the contrary, the predominance of the superior races has assisted the human race at large, century by century, in the path of continuous progress. In all ages, the nations which have ruled over others for any *length of time*, were superior to them socially. They have not always been superior because they dominated; but they have dominated because they were superior, I do not say in a military, but in a social sense.

As a matter of fact, nations which have only possessed a military superiority have only exercised an ephemeral rule, as in the case of the Tartars of Attila, Gengis-Khan, or Tamerlane.



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(20) With time, the social superiority of the dominating races has gone on increasing ; the Greeks and Romans were superior to the Egyptians, Persians, and Medes. The social systems of the middle ages were superior to those of the Greeks and Romans, because they raised the moral and social worth of man to a higher level ; the present great nations of the West and of North America, are superior to the great nations of the middle ages, and they have been the cause of the human race making further progress.

Thus it is better that the sceptre should be in the hands of the most worthy, rather than in those of the first occupant. The first occupant theory means the reign of chance or of sheer force ; the most worthy means a step forward in direction of justice and progress.

Only, the great point is to be and to remain the most worthy, by progressing towards the greatest possible perfecting of humanity, which is not a very easy matter.

It is in this respect that the Boers have remained behind, and allowed themselves to be



outstripped by the English, just as the Asiatics have allowed themselves to be outstripped by Europeans. (21)

The Boers are distinguished by remarkable moral qualities. They live in numerous family groups, under the domination of the head of the family, who is a kind of patriarch. The evening meal is followed by prayer and the reading of a portion of Scripture by the oldest member of the family from a large Bible.

But from the social point of view, their population has progressed very slightly, and has not utilized to any particular advantage the immense territories of which they have taken possession. Many families have appropriated vast tracts of land, which are hardly prepared for cultivation and almost entirely devoted to the grazing of cattle.

From the point of view of civilization, the Boers are very much behind the times. They live in rigid isolation on their farms, which often have an area of 5,000 acres and more. The Boers know nothing of music, art, or literature. They have taken practically no part in the scientific



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(22) exploration of the region. Education and journalism are principally in the hands of the English.*

Four times a year only do the Boers enter into communication with their fellow men. They repair to the chapel which serves as centre to their immense parish, from twenty to fifty leagues in diameter. "The married couples receive the sacrament, engaged couples have their marriage blessed, the younger ones are received as members of the church, the children are baptized. Then each family group goes off, to find again solitude and silence on the vast plains." †

Every step in the direction of progress has been made *by foreigners*, for the Boer has little inclination for anything except the peaceful and slothful life of the herdsman. It is almost an unknown thing for Boers to establish themselves as artisans or shopkeepers ; it is Englishmen or Germans who devote themselves to making a living in this way, and *a number of them, having become richer than the Boer farmers in the*

* E. Reclus, *Géographie Universelle*, vol. XIII., page 597.

† Id., *ibid.*



*vicinity, buy a portion of their land. In this way (23)
the land-holding upper class is gradually recruited
from elements foreign to the original Boer class.*

Among the other whites, it happens that those whom the Boers usually view *with the greatest dislike are their brothers by race and language*, the Dutch of the mother country. The Boer (like all semi-educated people) is very sensitive; he does not like the civilized Dutch to smile at African manners and reply pointedly in correct language to the corrupt dialect spoken by the farmers on the banks of the Vaal or the Limpopo.

“If the English are but a minority, they are none the less the representatives of a superior civilization, and *their language runs the official language very close in every-day conversation; it has altogether distanced it as an educational medium. Most of the teachers being English or Scotch, their language becomes that of the school;* it also becomes that of the towns, for it is there that the immigrants, traders and shopkeepers from Port Elizabeth, and other towns of the English colonies, come and settle down. Slowly, but surely, the substitution of one language for



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(24) the other is going on, caused by the numerous internal changes which are taking place day by day in the depths of society."*

M. Elisée Reclus wrote these lines ten years ago. Since that time, the social predominance of the English element has increased enormously, and the war now raging is only the natural consequence of this disproportion between the two opposing elements.

Let us once more lay down this principle, which is as indisputable as the law of gravitation :

When one race shows itself superior to another in the various externals of domestic life, it *inevitably* in the long run gets the upper hand in public life, and establishes its predominance. Whether this predominance is asserted by peaceable means or feats of arms, it is none the less, when the proper time arrives, officially established, and afterwards universally acknowledged.

I have said that this law is the only thing which accounts for the history of the human race, and the revolutions of empires, and that, moreover, it explains and justifies the appropriation

* E. Reclus, *Géographie Universelle*, vol. XIII., p. 597.



by Europeans of territories in Asia, Africa, and Oceana, and the whole of our colonial development. (25)

If we deny this law, it only remains for us to proclaim that all we Europeans are fearful monsters, deserving to be banned by the whole of the human race. We ought then to be looked on as beasts of prey by every savage or barbarous nation, or every nation less advanced in civilization than ourselves that we have unjustly and brutally dispossessed.

We must give back to these nations their supremacy, and return to barbarism pure and simple ; we must moreover give up all attempt at understanding anything in the history of the world, and declare that the divine order of things is a monstrous iniquity.

Are we prepared to accept these consequences? That is the whole question. It is worth reflecting over.

The present struggle between the Boers and the English is merely a manifestation of this law. The Boers are certain to be beaten sooner or later, whatever their personal courage, and how-



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(26) ever strong their armies may be, because they have already been beaten socially.

The military struggle is never anything more than a *secondary* episode of the social struggle. It is the latter, not the former, which decides the victory.

There only remains to the Boers one chance of re-asserting themselves in the future, and that is to adopt energetically as progressive a social system as possible.

They have dominated the Hottentots and the Kaffirs because they were more civilized than they; it remains for them to assimilate among themselves the civilization which is now in process of ousting them, and especially to bring up their children in it. Let them learn how to make themselves the equals of their conquerors, and they will one day be able to share with them the government of South Africa.

If not, the only course open to them will be to get into their waggons again, resume the wandering life of which they have unfortunately retained the habits, and drift farther north. There they will probably gather together again, and



massacre savage tribes, whose territory they will again portion out among themselves, until the day when the increasing Anglo-Saxon pressure comes once more, and forces them still farther towards the equator. (27)

IV.

HAVING reached this point, the reader, somewhat disturbed in his previously conceived ideas, will doubtless wonder, in face of this law, what becomes of the rights of ownership in the soil and of the sovereignty of territories.

We must come to a fuller understanding on this subject.

The rights of *property* are, in reality, more limited than is generally supposed. Ownership is justified socially *because it is favourable to the public interest*. If the free disposal of the soil were not left to a man, there would be no labour bestowed on the land ; it would remain in its



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(28) original condition ; it would only give forth what it produces spontaneously. Observation shows that if ownership is conceded before labour, it is only conceded *with a view to labour*.

Social interests demand ownership. But if, on the contrary, this concession of exclusive use of the land tended to prevent the productive working of the land, it would gradually fall into disrepute, be opposed, and once more placed under productive conditions. This is the case in all agrarian crises, which are numerous and important in history.

In all periods and all countries, violent protests have been raised against the monopolization by great landlords of immense tracts of land left almost uncultivated. It is said that the *latifundia* were destroyed in Italy ; they also lost Poland, Scotland, Spain, &c. The same thing is happening at the present moment to the Boers who have shown more energy in taking possession of vast tracts of land than in cultivating them. They have also violated even the law of proprietorship, and the violation of this law recoils on them, as it has recoiled on the great occupiers of land in all



countries when they have not cultivated it. If (29)
this law had not operated pitilessly, the surface of
the land would have been reconquered by the
forest or the prairie, and the human race would
have ceased to exist for want of sustenance.

You see perfectly well that the law must
operate in spite of everything and everybody ;
otherwise extinction is the result.

It is just the same with a nation's claims to
sovereignty.

We allow a part of the human population
to exercise ascendancy over a certain territory,
because there would otherwise be no local
adaptation to the interests controlled by public
authority ; and anarchy would be the result.
But if this adaptation becomes antagonistic to
the interests of the human species, it leads to a
crisis. It is these crises which bring forth
political revolutions and changes of nationality.

Mankind must therefore thoroughly realize
that the exercise of his sovereignty has, as a
fundamental condition, the general well-being,
and that it is not a right contrary to this
well-being.



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(30) If the Boers had ever been able to understand this law properly, which operates in spite of everything, they would have taken care to direct their minds towards a change in the nature of their rights on the soil and on the sovereignty, without embarking on a struggle which can never terminate in their favour, even if the English are, for the time being, thoroughly beaten.

In short, national independence cannot be maintained as an *absolute right to be held in spite of everything and everybody*, as is sufficiently shown by the history of the revolutions of nations.

This is what has happened to the local districts which were formerly independent, that is to say, to the provinces. They are now merged in greater nationalities. It is thus that the unions of Spain, France, Germany, Italy, the United Kingdom of Great Britain, etc., were affected.

It is not royalty, as is believed, which has effected these fusions or these unions ; it is, on the contrary, this natural movement which has



built up royalty, which has been the explanation (31)
of the part played by royalty, of its strength and
of its credit. In short, *it has served as instrument
to a spontaneous force, which it has done nothing
towards creating.*

Nowadays, nobody would wish to return to
the old position of independent nationalities,
which have been lost by the exigencies of public
interest and acknowledged general needs.

This is also what has happened and is
happening *in all newly discovered countries.* All
the independent populations of America, Africa,
and Oceania, have one after another lost their
nationality by contact with peoples of superior
formation, by contact with Europeans.

This is also what happened to the populations
which the Boers overpowered. The same thing
is now happening to the Boers themselves at the
hands of the superior race which has afterwards
appeared on the same spot.

Even with peoples who at the present time
take front rank in the civilized world, the original
local independence becomes effaced before general
needs ; it is thus that the colonies of America,



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(32) each originally independent of the other, federated themselves, and created the United States. The mutually independent colonies of Australia have just decided on federation.

The absolute independence of the Transvaal disappears in this movement, which dates back to the beginning of all time, and is still continuing.

This law would have been ascertained, if it had been more thoroughly realized that autonomy is not *so absolute* a right as people think, nor a state of affairs which can be maintained *so absolutely* as people suppose.

The formula in which this right is usually laid down is too short and incomplete. It is the business of science to revise these insufficient formulæ. It does not contradict them by opposite formulæ, but brings them nearer to the truth by completing them ; it makes them more exact. In this lies the progress of knowledge, which does not abolish what is known, but adds to it.

This is a work which is very valuable and fruitful in results, for many of the difficulties and conflicts of this world have their source in



error resulting from insufficient knowledge, rather (33)
than from vice or passion.

If men knew the real inner working of this natural phenomenon of nationality, they would avoid a multitude of discussions on the subject, because in the very nature of things, whatever they may do, the point at issue is in the long run decided by the force of events.

Now, the facts of history show that nationality cannot be maintained in cases *where it obstructs the progress of the human race.*

The free hand which mankind allows to public authorities is founded on the benefit which the inhabitants as a whole derive from it, and *on the effect which this well-being of a portion of mankind has on the remainder.* But as soon as this free hand no longer has this result, but tends to the contrary effect, the reason for its existence ceases. Then the free hand is called in question, and soon comes to an end.

This is how original nationality disappears and changes its condition. The territory hitherto independent is annexed or included in the federation.



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(34) Another crisis of the same kind occurs, no longer between territories previously separate, but in the actual interior of some territory.

Let us suppose a self-governing territory gradually occupied by new comers, who bring with them, or adopt on this territory a social system different from that of the first arrivals, possibly because of their having a different means of existence. This is the case with the Boers appearing among the Kaffirs, or the English appearing among the Boers. These new arrivals in the end protest against the government of the place, *if the latter exercises its power in a manner antagonistic to the interests of the new comers.*

It is always the same phenomenon: *an exclusive right is left to you, conceded to you, only on the implied condition that it will result in the greater well-being of the majority which allows you to exercise it.*

We are not called on to believe that this law which applies to private property corresponds to the socialist doctrine, any more than that this fusion of nationalities and the accession of new classes to power are anarchy.



The rights of property and of sovereignty (35) are here reinstated in their original condition, not suppressed ; they are merely freed from contradictory errors put in circulation, on the one hand by people of conservative views, and on the other by those of revolutionary tendencies.

Conservatives claim the right to abuse the power of proprietorship and sovereignty. As they generally hold both, this doctrine is more convenient for them. They consider, for the same reason, that property and power are sacred, and that it is impious to lay hands on them.

Revolutionaries, who usually are neither owners of the soil nor holders of any public powers, argue on the contrary that proprietorship and sovereignty must be done away with ; and they also are looking at things from a party point of view.

The conservative therefore tends to sacrifice public interest to what he wrongly conceives to be private interest ; the revolutionary tends to sacrifice private interest to improperly understood public interest.



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(36) Both, therefore, have only got at a portion of the truth ; it is even by this partial truth that they mislead and impress men's minds.

But they are both mistaken, either in sacrificing private interest to public interest, or sacrificing public interest to private interest.

Each of them only sees one side of the problem—the one which is the most favourable to his petty interests, his prejudices, or his passions.

Science, on the contrary, is neither conservative nor revolutionary ; it endeavours to see facts as they are, and evolve laws therefrom, without troubling about the people whom it unsettles in the quietude of their preconceived theories.

The fact is that the right of property, as evolved by science from facts, *puts in admirable harmony private initiative and public interest.*

Science demonstrates that the exclusive right of the individual exists for the general good, *which can only be secured by him.*

In this way, but without intending it, it pleases the conservatives.



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But it demonstrates at the same time—and (37)
without going further to please the revolutionaries—that this right cannot be exercised in opposition to the public good. Otherwise, it is opposed and conditions essential to the public good restored. But this restoration can only be secured by private initiative, not otherwise.

This close analogy, established by the facts concerning the harmony between private right and public interest, between particularism and the claims of socialism, is extremely curious and instructive.

It is the triumph of social science to disentangle these contradictory laws, and find the exact and clear formula, based on facts, between two extreme formulæ which intersect and do not find their organic, vital, necessary agreement.



V.

FROM all that precedes, it does not follow that the means employed by England to extend its dominion are irreproachable.

They are very far from being so. And Dr. Jameson committed, as a matter of fact, an act of brigandage. The inevitable social law operates ; but those who are instrumental in carrying out this law have not necessarily clean hands. Let the ruling nation with clean hands stand up and show itself ! We Frenchmen, however good an opinion we may have of ourselves, our policy and our colonial work, should we dare to maintain that we have clean hands ? The history of nations is unfortunately only too stained with acts of violence ; social laws operate amidst war and carnage.

But that, at least, is not necessary and inevitable.

In proportion as the social law, which we have just formulated, becomes better known ; in proportion as we learn to understand better the



fundamental conditions of the right of property and the right of sovereignty, we shall be able to avoid many an armed struggle, and settle by peaceable means many a question at issue between nations. (39)

It is to this end that international arbitration will be able to intervene, which is still working tentatively and in darkness.

If the great nations of to-day, those which lead the van in civilization, had come to an understanding, they ought to have said to the Boers : " You must progress in the direction of a better social system, a better utilization of the soil and of your sovereignty. You must act in combination with your English neighbours, for you and they have many interests in common. Otherwise you will see yourselves forsaken and forced to reason by all the great nations which understand how to assist the human race forward in the path of moral, intellectual and material progress, in the direction of the greatest possible perfection in all things."

If this language had been used to the Boers, they might have understood.



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(40) Unhappily for them and everybody, the famous telegram of William II., after the suppression of Jameson's act of private brigandage, seems to have misled them as to the true position of affairs.

We must, then, hope that in the future arbitration will gradually act in the way which we have just pointed out.

It will do so the more in view of the fact that we are entering on a new era which will be characterized by an event the consequences of which are incalculable: *the partition of the world among a few great nations most advanced in civilization.*

This partition, which is destined to cause the most backward nations to enter on the progressive path of the western nations, and so entirely change the face of the earth, has already commenced in earnest.

France has received her share, in Africa and Asia, and it is a fairly good one, if we know how to utilize it to the best advantage, and do the work of colonizers and civilizers. At all events, we have no interest in claiming a larger one,



which would clearly be beyond our strength and become rather a source of great danger to us. (41)

Germany has no colonial empire. But she is casting her eyes in the direction of the East, of Palestine, of the Euphrates and the Persian Gulf. The recent voyage of the Emperor of Germany is sufficient evidence of that.

Russia has her Trans-Siberian and her Hoang-Ho Valley in China, with a fleet in the Pacific.

England already holds the greater portion of Eastern Africa, down to the extreme south. She is particularly desirous to possess the southern region, which is the route to India *via* the Cape. The Suez route is too liable to be cut off.

Such are the broad and visible lines of this partition of the world.

The chief among the great nations which are thus dividing among themselves the surface of the earth, and which intend to civilize it, would not give a very exalted idea of their intelligence and of the needs of the world, if they were incapable of arriving at a mutual understanding and a mutual arbitration.

The one solution which forces itself on us,



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(42) instead of all these wars with their inevitable consequences, is that it would have been more expeditious, more economical, more moral and more humane to do it before and without war.

And then, these great nations must understand that their pre-eminence is based solely on the fact that they are, for the time-being, the most worthy to exercise it.

But this right of ascendancy is not imprescriptible, as we have clearly shown. If it happened that any nations exercised this right against the interests of the human race, they would gradually find these very interests turning against them, and their pre-eminence would pass into the hands of nations remaining worthy to wield it.

