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NOTE.—There are many subjects in Africa, such as Racial Characteristics, Political and Industrial Conditions, Labour, Disease, Currency, Banking, Education, and so on, about which information is imperfect and opinion divided. On none of these complicated and difficult questions has Science said the last word. Under these circumstances it has been considered best to allow those competent to form an opinion to express freely in this Journal the conclusions at which they themselves have arrived. *It must be clearly understood that the object of the Journal is to gather information, and that each writer must be held responsible for his own views.*

RHODESIA AND THE WAR ¹

I DECIDED to accept the very flattering invitation of the Council of this Society to deliver this address on two grounds. Firstly, because as a comparatively new member of the Society I did not feel justified in disregarding a request of this character; and secondly, because in these dark, but glorious days, when so much depends upon the mutual sympathy and co-operation of all the peoples of the British Empire, time given to discussion and understanding of the situation, spirit, and sacrifices of our fellow-countrymen beyond the seas cannot be ill-spent. Rhodesia, moreover, can justly claim your sympathetic consideration of its circumstances on special grounds. It is the youngest colony of the Empire, and, in the comparatively short period of twenty-five years, has won its way to a position in public estimation which, judged from the standpoint merely of population and

¹ This paper was delivered at a dinner of the Society held on 17th June. For report of other proceedings on this occasion see page 439.

material resources, may seem to be out of all proportion to its present deserts. The fact, however, remains that it has won, and that it holds, this position. The explanation of it which I suggest to you is moral, not material. It lies, I believe, in subconscious recognition of the fact that Rhodesia owes its foundation and its success to the survival in our times of that heroic spirit which led the adventurers of the Elizabethan age to regard the unknown countries of the world as our heritage, and which is to-day saving our Empire from destruction on the plains of Flanders and the rocky heights of Gallipoli.

Therefore, in addressing you this evening upon the subject of Rhodesia and the war, I do not propose to confine myself to a mere recital of what Rhodesia has done and is doing for the Empire in this crisis of our fortunes. In order that you may understand the spirit of Rhodesia and the temper of its people, I must ask you to follow me upon a short excursion into the past. The early history of Rhodesia is conspicuous both for its romance and for incidents of self-sacrifice and of personal heroism which should never be forgotten. Take, for instance, the original occupation of Mashonaland in 1890. A small band of pioneers, only 500 strong, marched into what was then an unknown country to a distance of upwards of 400 miles from any civilised centre, knowing that they had on their flank the organised forces of one of the most powerful military tribes of Africa. If attacked and defeated they were beyond the possibility of help, but they took their risks and succeeded.

Looking back, it is extraordinary to think how little was known at that time of the Rhodesia with which we are all now so familiar. Even the great hunter Selous, who guided the expedition to its destination, and who is now serving with the rank of Captain in the Legion of Frontiersmen in East Africa, had only a comparatively limited acquaintance with the country traversed by the column. The enterprise proceeded so smoothly that one is apt to overlook the cool audacity of the pioneers, many of whom have since given their lives in the service of their country. The Matabele and Mashona risings took their toll. A further number fell in the

South African War, but the fighting spirit still remains in the survivors, and though the passing years have in some cases brought grey hairs, many of them have again answered their country's call. You may like to hear what some of them are doing. My colleague, Lord Winchester, for instance, is second in command of a battalion of the Rifle Brigade; General Bodle, better known to us all as the Colonel Bodle who commanded for many years the Rhodesian Police, and who always manages to be on the spot when there is any fighting to be done, now commands a division of Territorials. With him as Brigade-Major is Mr. Marshall Hole, who was, I believe, the first official appointed by the Company in 1889, and who has subsequently filled many important positions in its service; Colonial Carden, formerly commandant in Northern Rhodesia, commands a battalion of the Wiltshire Regiment. Mr. Percy Inskipp, the first Secretary to the Administrator, who has lately been our Commercial Representative in Rhodesia, is commanding the Army Service Corps base at Harwich. Frank Johnson, that most cheery of pioneers, is now Major of a battalion of the Sussex Regiment. I would like to have mentioned other names if time had permitted. There are two which I will not at this moment give you for reasons you will understand. One of these pioneers now holds here the rank of Captain and the other is a subaltern. Their official age is 38, and their appearance does not give them away seriously, but each of them has the right to wear the Zulu War Medal, and they consulted me as to whether it would be wise to wear it. The Zulu War was, I believe, fought in 1879.

The pioneers disbanded when they reached Salisbury, and in the most unconcerned way began to seek for minerals and to farm. This period, however, was still remarkable for romantic incidents, amongst which I may mention the wonderful journey of Sir Starr Jameson with one companion to Gungunyana's kraal in Portuguese territory, and the investigation of boundaries made by Colonel Heyman with a small force in the neighbourhood of the Portuguese post at Massi Kesi, which had the character of military operations.

The period of comparative peace which succeeded the

occupation of Mashonaland, where the white men did not come into close contact with the dominant Matabele race, did not last long. In 1893 the Matabele raided Mashonaland, murdered and plundered the native inhabitants, and defied the Europeans. The position became intolerable, and the alternatives were to submit to humiliation or to punish the Matabele. Sir Starr Jameson, the then Administrator of the country, and Mr. Rhodes did not hesitate. They organised two columns to enter Matabeleland and march on Bulawayo from Victoria and Salisbury, and by their magnificent audacity caught the Matabele to some extent unprepared. The combined columns defeated successively the picked regiments of Lobengula, who fled from his kraal, and died before the great mass of his people had had time to rally to his support. The tragic fate at this time of Alan Wilson and his small party, who fell to a man on the banks of the Shangani in a vain attempt to capture Lobengula, was one of those misfortunes which history will count as a gain to their fellow countrymen.

The magnitude of the dangers which had been faced by the pioneers, and later by the Victoria and Salisbury columns in 1893, became apparent in 1896, when the Matabele and Mashona risings took place. The whole country was up, every man in the territory was under arms, and though the assistance of considerable bodies of Imperial troops was obtained, it took some eighteen months to restore order. It was at this time that I had the personal privilege of coming into close contact with Cecil Rhodes, and of forming my own impressions of that most remarkable personality.

My own connection with Rhodesia dates from 1894, and I was with Mr. Rhodes at Umtali in 1896 when news came of the Matabele rising. We hurriedly returned to Salisbury, and within a fortnight Mr. Rhodes had organised a column, which he accompanied himself, to go to the relief of Bulawayo. I have been with Mr. Rhodes in many circumstances, but from the mere human standpoint I never saw him to such advantage as during those stirring times. I am sure, too, that he was seldom so happy. It was a time for him of great anxiety and severe disappointment, but he put his cares away. He enjoyed the veldt, he enjoyed the life, and he was the



RHODESIAN PLATOON, KING'S ROYAL RIFLES.



RHODESIANS IN THE TRENCHES IN FLANDERS.

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most delightful companion. His personal courage I need hardly say was of the highest order of moral determination. Nothing would induce him to carry a weapon of any kind, even when he was riding miles away from the column; and once, when I expostulated with him, he said that it would not give him any satisfaction to kill a man. I tried to urge the self-defence aspect of the question, but it was of no use; he would not listen, and continued to carry his sjambok. I happened to be with him the first time he was under fire. He simply took no notice of it. Afterwards, when I was not with him, he was in the thick of several stiff fights, and crowned his work by going unarmed with a few companions into the Matopos, where, by the force of his personality, he tamed the Matabele into submission. The influence of Rhodes upon the minds of Rhodesians is very remarkable and very real. It is hard to realise when in the country that he died only thirteen years ago. He is not merely a national hero, but, if I may so put it, a legendary hero. His memory is a great possession, and it is associated with all those romantic and imaginative elements which have played so important a part in the making of Rhodesia. Can it be wondered that his spirit pervades the land, and that the influence radiating from his lonely grave in the Matopos tends to keep the country which bears his name in the paths of courage and patriotism? "What would Rhodes have said?" is still the constant question in the country, and long may it remain so. The visits paid to his grave by his old associates are of the nature of pilgrimages, and have, I am convinced, often helped to clarify counsel, and fortify resolution.

I have dwelt upon the influence of Rhodes and his work, because it helps to explain much that would otherwise be inexplicable in Rhodesia. The passionate patriotism of the people and their keen desire to assist in our great national emergency are largely the fruits of his spirit, which has permeated the lives of many younger men, who according to their opportunities have endeavoured to follow in his footsteps. The work of the late Mr. Robert Codrington, formerly Administrator of Northern Rhodesia affords a notable illustration.

But while the personality of Cecil Rhodes dominates my recollections of those early days, there are other names I should like to mention whose association with Rhodesia have also contributed to that Rhodesian spirit to which I am proud to refer. Amongst them stands out that of George Grey, who died recently in East Africa as he had lived, a very gallant gentleman, beloved and honoured by all who knew him. There is the name of Maurice Gifford, who upheld in Rhodesia the traditions of his fighting family. In my own column we had Colonel Weston Jarvis, now commanding his regiment of Yeomanry in Egypt; Robert Coryndon, a great hunter, and one of the most effective of scouts, who now administers the Swaziland Protectorate; Sir Charles Metcalfe, whose great work for Rhodesia cannot be too fully recognised; Robert Beal, Captain Hoste, Arthur Eyre, Tyndall Biscoe, and many others whose names are household words in Rhodesia. At Bulawayo we met Lord Grey, that great Imperialist whose generous and high-souled nature endears him to all, and with him Hubert Howard, another most gallant gentleman, who met his death at Omdurman. Colonel Baden Powell, Chief Staff Officer to General Sir F. Carrington, now General Sir Robert Baden Powell, was with our column on the Umgusa, where for the first time he saw a shot fired in action. It was primarily in Rhodesia that the seed was sown of that scout movement which has been one of the most remarkable incidents of our time, and has had a wonderful success amongst the youth of Rhodesia. Later, during the Rebellion in Mashonaland, I had the privilege of being closely associated with General Alderson, who was in command of the forces in that country, and who lately commanded the Canadian Contingent before Ypres with such conspicuous success. Of the civilians serving with him I may mention Colin Harding, now Colonel Harding, C.M.G., who was recently wounded in France, and Captain Robin Grey, now serving with the Royal Flying Corps. Both of them were conspicuous for gallantry in a country where most men were brave. I could mention many others whose names will long be remembered, and there is

one I cannot omit, that of Major Nesbitt, V.C., whose leadership of the celebrated Mazoe patrol gained for him that well-merited distinction.

The record of Rhodesia in the South African War was equally good, and in connection with it the names of Gordon Forbes, Noel Llewellyn and Raleigh Grey were conspicuous for merit. Major Gordon Forbes, D.S.O., who led the advance on Spion Kop, is at the present time second in command of a battalion of the King's Own Scottish Borderers, and Captain Llewellyn is with Colonel Weston Jarvis in Egypt. Of the many gallant Rhodesians who fell in the South African War time does not permit me to speak, though I must just mention those of Tyrie Laing, Claude Grenfell, and Jack Spreckley.

This is not the occasion to speak to you of the great resources of Rhodesia, or to enlarge upon the development of those resources. That, too, has its romantic aspects. Nor do I ask you to dwell upon the material benefits which the Empire has gained through the work of Cecil Rhodes, Alfred Beit, and Sir Starr Jameson. To-night I ask you to consider what would have happened if that work had not been carried out and if the opportunity of acquiring Rhodesia for the Empire had not been seized. There is only one answer. Germany was only just forestalled by the foresight of Cecil Rhodes. The slightest mistake or delay would have given her her chance, and she would to-day have been entrenched from the Indian Ocean to the Atlantic, and would have been occupying a position of such strength and of such strategic importance, that the continued existence of our Empire in South and Central Africa might easily have become an impossibility. You must remember that these were the days before the South African War. Even granted our command of the sea, Germany firmly established in the North, and in alliance with the Boer Republics, would certainly have given rise to formidable problems in South Africa. We should also, in all probability, not have had the opportunity of securing for the Empire in its hour of need the services of that fine patriot, General Botha. One cannot prophesy backwards, but at

least one can realise with thankfulness the dangers we have escaped, and accord a full share of credit to those great men who saved us from them.

But Germany, while thwarted in her purpose, has never relinquished her ambitions in Africa, and has never ceased to strive for their accomplishment. Rhodesia has been the thorn in her side. But that position has had its dangers, for it has placed her in the unenviable position of having German territories on two of her frontiers. It is, I believe, the only Colony of the Empire which is so unfortunately situated in regards to its neighbours. I will refer again later to these geographical matters, but in the meantime I draw your attention to this point because, as you will readily understand, the extent of the assistance which Rhodesia has been able to afford outside its own territories has been necessarily limited by consideration of the problems of its own defence.

I must also ask you to bear in mind that in Rhodesia, as in other tropical and sub-tropical colonies, there is no European proletariat. All unskilled labour is done by the native inhabitants of the country. The number of the European population is consequently restricted to at present about 32,000 people, men, women and children. Moreover, in a community of this character, every male European is primarily an organiser or supervisor of native labour, so that there is a definite limit to the number which can be withdrawn for military purposes without shutting down entirely the railways and industries of the country. But the quality of the population is, I venture to say, unsurpassed in the British Empire, and I say this with the fullest appreciation of the magnificent courage and devotion displayed by the Canadians in Flanders and the Australians and New Zealanders at Gallipoli. Man for man, our Rhodesians are just as good, and the only pity is that there are not more of them. Since the outbreak of war they have been clamouring to be employed in Europe, and if the brake had not been to some extent applied, we should have been left with no Civil Service, no Police, and a country without any fighting population. Fortunately, we have been exceptionally well served by our Administrators, in the first instance by Sir William



MAJOR STENNETT WITH MAXIM GUN
AT ABERCORN.

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Milton, and later by Mr. Drummond Chaplin in Southern Rhodesia and by Mr. L. A. Wallace in Northern Rhodesia, and also by our distinguished Commandant-General, Colonel Edwards, to whom the territory and the Company are greatly indebted.

It is estimated that at the present time nearly 5,000 Rhodesians are under arms, representing about 40 per cent. of the adult male population. Upwards of 500 have come to Europe, the majority at their own expense, to serve with His Majesty's Forces in Europe. A large number have joined the King's Royal Rifles, in which there is a Rhodesian platoon, forming part of the Company commanded by Captain Brady, of the Rhodesian Civil Service, who, having spent the last six months in the trenches, is taking a short rest and is with us this evening. Another considerable body is serving in King Edward's Horse under Colonel Harding. I have reason to believe that our Rhodesian sharpshooters in these and other regiments have made themselves exceedingly unpopular amongst the German snipers.

In Rhodesia itself our people have been busy. Very early in the war our police occupied the Caprivi Zipfel, that inconvenient German salient—I am sure you know the term—by which our diplomats gave Germany access to the navigable waters of the Zambesi. I may add that a few miles below this point these navigable waters fall with a sheer drop of 400 feet at the Victoria Falls, and continue in a gorge of unbroken rapids for thirty miles. I know that my friend Mr. Schreiner views with grave suspicion any suggestion as to a possible rectification of Rhodesian frontiers in this region, but I hope that he will, at any rate, be prepared to make concessions in regard to this strip. This is the nearest point at which we meet German South-West Africa. Further south, in the same territory, a Rhodesian contingent has been assisting General Botha in his conquest of the principal centres of that territory.

The second point at which Rhodesia touches German territory is at the extreme north-east corner of Northern Rhodesia, at the south end of Lake Tanganyika. Here there is a long frontier to defend, which lies partly in Belgian

territory, partly in Rhodesia, and partly in the Nyasaland Protectorate. Forces from all these territories have been co-operating in the work, so that the Belgians and ourselves are fighting side by side in Africa as well as in Europe. Our own troops are made up of a number of Northern Rhodesia Police lately commanded by Major Stennett, and of volunteers drawn from every part of Northern Rhodesia, including the territory of the North Charterland Company, in the development of which my friend, Sir Harry Wilson, takes such an active interest as Chairman of that Company. These volunteers are under the command of Major Boyd Cunningham, whose great knowledge of local conditions and transport have been of the utmost value in a region where tracks take the place of roads and tsetse fly abound. Our forces in the north which are now commanded by Colonel Hodson, Commandant of the Northern Rhodesia Police, have had several engagements with the Germans, and have repelled all attacks.

Another Rhodesian contingent is taking part in the operations against German East Africa, which are being conducted from British East Africa. There has always been great sympathy between the settlers of Rhodesia and those of British East Africa, who also regard themselves as followers of Cecil Rhodes. It is accordingly certain and most advantageous that a strong bond of fellowship and understanding knits together the units composed of the settlers of the two territories.

I do not propose to dwell upon the material contributions in money and in kind which have been made by Rhodesians to the war, beyond saying that they have done their full share, and that the women of Rhodesia, as well as the men, have shown themselves to be willing and eager to accept the sacrifices which the war has asked of them. They, too, are imbued with the Rhodes spirit, of which the essence is that the individual should be glad to sacrifice himself for the cause of patriotism and humanity.

H. WILSON FOX.