

## **John Henry Boyer Warner (2 September 1849 – 12 April 1891)**

### **Introduction:**

John is best known in Quorn UK for selecting 'Quorn' as the name for a small township in South Australia but what more do we know about him?

### **Early Years:**

Well! John Henry Boyer Warner was born on the 2nd of September 1849 at The Cottage, Ashby Road in Loughborough, the first child of Mr. Edward Warner and Mrs Marianne Warner (nee Boyer). Mr. Warner was a partner in the very successful Loughborough firm of Cartwright and Warner, then the oldest and most important hosiery manufacturers in Leicestershire.

The family moved from The Cottage into Quorn Hall in 1855. John was sent as a border to Harrow School at the age of fourteen, where he excelled at sport and he remained there for five years, until 1868, when he entered Trinity College, Cambridge. He made the political economy his speciality and in 1872 attained, his B.A. degree. On 5<sup>th</sup> November 1870 he was accepted into the Honourable Society of the Inner Temple in London (one of the professional associations for barristers and judges). During his undergraduateship he paid visits to Egypt, Syria, Palestine, and the Indian Empire and in 1874 when only 24 years old John Warner contested the seat of Leicester as the Conservative Candidate but failed to be elected. Continuing his studies he obtained an M.A. in 1876. Travel, Law, Politics, and sport would form the major elements of his life.

### **Travels:**

JHB was on the steamer *Gaelic* from San Francisco on September 17th, 1875 on his way to Singapore, where in 1876 he was appointed Secretary to the Commission reporting on the defences of the Australian Colonies. Chief of the Commission was Sir William Jervois who was Governor of the Straits Settlements. During this role he was able to visit and examine Australian ports and coast. In October 1877 Sir William Jervois left Singapore and was appointed Governor of South Australia. JHB was then appointed by him to the responsible duties of Clerk to the Council, and Secretary to the Governor. South Australia at the time was a large area, sparsely populated and very arid. It became apparent that railways were needed to link new centres of population and of course, the settlements needed names. Sir William Jervois selected his own children's first names to name three Amyton, Carrieton (Lucy Caroline) and Hammond and his own surname Jervois for another.

As part of the preparations for extending the railways northward, a site for a railway town was surveyed in 1878 and Jervois's Secretary JHB as he was commonly referred to was asked to select a name and this he did, choosing 'Quorn' after his family home. He was a great traveller, and as well as the places mentioned above, he visited, the East and West Indies, Martinique, Guadeloupe, and other islands in various parts of the world, including many in the South Seas.

### **Home in Quorn:**

He returned home to Quorn Hall and in 1879 was working as a London Barrister. At this time he paid more than £6000 to join a business partnership with the Governor of Queensland Sir Thomas McIlwraith in the North Australia Pastoral Company (NAPCO). The NAPCO

partnership was formed in 1877 by Queenslanders William Collins, William Forrest and Sir Thomas McIlwraith, with Englishmen Sir William Ingram and JHB Warner. NAPCO became and remains one of the largest agricultural enterprises in Australia. In 1880 his name appeared on Leicestershire County Magistrate list and again contested the election for the Leicester seat but again was defeated. He was selected as the candidate in reserve for the Southern Division of the county of Leicestershire in 1881, but voluntarily retired due to another visit to the antipodes.

**More Travels:**

He arrived in Brisbane aboard the *Elamang* on Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> June 1882. There is a report that his wife (presumably future wife as he was not married until 1886) travelled with him and JHB participated in a regatta at George Sound in New Zealand arriving on the ss *Tarawa*. On his way home in 1883 he spent time in the Straits Settlements with the Governor, Sir F. Weld.

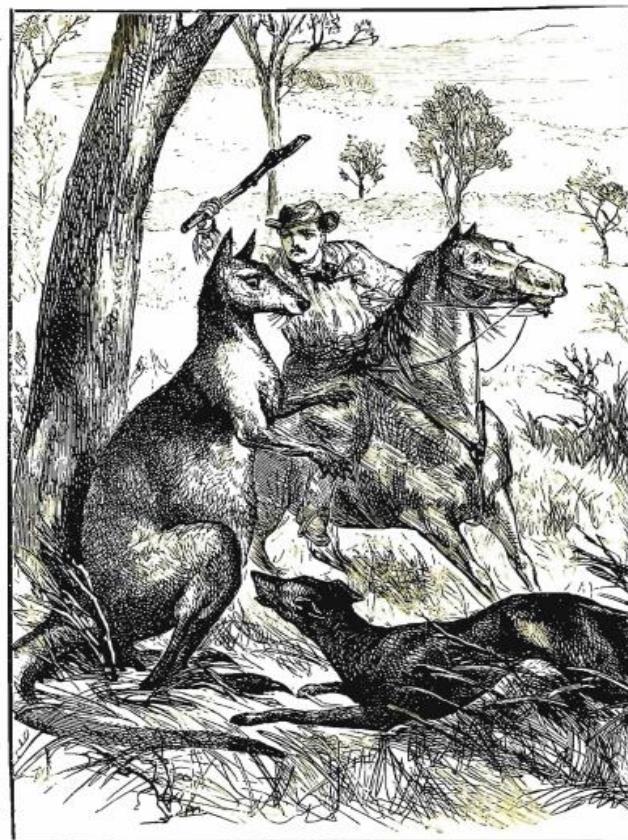


The Old Parliament House Adelaide 1872

In 1884/5 whilst the parliamentary candidate for Eastbourne and Hastings he set off again on another trip through Europe, Africa, Asia, and Australia where he took, in his words "a run round Australia in as short a time as possible, purely to visit my cattle and sheep stations and estates in South Australia, and look after my business in the Colonies." Also, during this time he wrote a series of letters to the local newspaper which provide an excellent insight into the views at the time of Empire, Slavery, and the Zulu Wars.

He also said that "my object in undertaking this journey was also to endeavour to initiate local branches of the Imperial Federation League, lately started in London, upon which I feel very strongly, and in which I have taken a great interest most of your readers know the object of the League, I will but may merely say that I have been most extraordinarily successful in

getting branch societies initiated in nearly all the colonies I have visited. I succeeded in starting branches in Hong Kong, the Straits settlements. Mauritius, and in putting it into good hands in Ceylon, New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia, and in Tasmania. I feel convinced that it is a matter of Imperial Federation, with some form of ultimate representation at home, or of the actual and speedy disintegration of the British Empire." (The Imperial Federation League was an organisation which aimed to promote the reorganisation of the British Empire into an Imperial Federation\*).



KANGAROO HUNTING ON THE DARLING DOWNS.

From the Book THE NEVER NEVER LAND: RIDE IN NORTH QUEENSLAND. BY A. W. STIRLING, B.C.L., F.E.G.S.

I cannot close this Preface without thanking Mr, William Senior and the other friends who have so generously helped me in the production of the following pages, and especially my friend, Mr. J. H. B. Warner, whose sketches have been of the greatest value, A. W. S.

#### Kepwick Hall:

On 25<sup>th</sup> April 1886 JHB was married at St. James Church in Piccadilly to Alice de Worms daughter of Baron de Worms MP. Despite being a lavish and happy occasion there was some controversy over the marriage, a union contrary to Jewish observance causing her father to sever his connections with the Jewish community. The couple spent their honeymoon on the Continent and made their home at Kepwick Hall in Yorkshire a property that had been purchased by his father in 1871. Also, in 1886 he stood again for parliament this time for the Rushcliffe division of Nottingham again without success. JHB was a party to the 1889 indenture setting up the Trust Deed associated with the Warner Trust which established the

Warner School in Loughborough. He had continued to travel a great deal after his marriage however, his health deteriorated and as 1890 closed he became afflicted with apoplectic seizures. After a grave relapse occurred he died on Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> April 1891.

### **Return to Quorn:**

The privations he endured during his journeys no doubt brought on the premature illness, which caused his death at the age of 42. His mother and brother, who were telegraphed for and arrived from Quorn a few hours before he passed, arranged that the body should be interred in the family vault at Quorn Church. Accordingly, after the first part of the funeral ceremony held at Kepwick Hall on Wednesday at 1pm the body was then conveyed from Yorkshire. The coffin was placed in a hearse drawn by two horses, and was conveyed to Thirsk Station for removal to Quorn Hall. The widow, accompanied by Mr. E. H. Warner, attended the funeral procession to the end of the village of Kepwick on foot, as did the estate tenants and the servants at the Hall. Throughout the village there were general signs of mourning. The coffin was placed in a through carriage at Thirsk Station destined for Barrow Station, arriving at a quarter past ten at night. A hearse was waiting, and the body was taken to Quorn Hall and placed in the Breakfast Room. On Friday at 1:30pm the funeral *cortege* left Quorn Hall for the funeral service, which was conducted at the Parish Church, Quorn by the Vicar, the Rev. A. C. Faithful. The body was interred in the family vault, situated in the churchyard at the north-east corner of the chancel. Having predeceased his Mother and Father the only previous interment in the vault was his sister, Charlotte Elizabeth Warner (1852-1863) who died aged 11. JHB had two brothers, Edward Handley (1850-1925) who worked in the family firm and inherited Quorn Hall in 1894 when his father died, and William Pochin (1854-1911) joined the Army and was Master of the Quorn Hunt from 1886 to 1893.



The family vault at the east end of St. Bartholomews Church in Quorn containing JHB, his Mother, Father and sister,

During his last few years he had lived the life of a country gentleman, fishing and shooting. He was also a staunch Churchman, strongly believing in the maintenance of the union

between Church and State. They say he possessed a genial face, was of easy manners, and seemed to have that sense of modesty and urbanity which are so frequently the accompaniment of true ability.

According to his Will and amongst other things, he left £136,801 plus Kepwick Hall to his wife. To his father he left his art collections, arms and armour, and wine at Quorn; and to his brother, Edward Handley, his personal objects of art and the paintings and sketches executed by himself at Quorn. To his brother, William Pochin all his pastoral (as distinguished from mineral) freehold and leasehold estate in Australia and eight acre close of land at Barrow-on-Soar, his real estate at Atterton, near Nuneaton, and all other of his real estate in the county of Leicester.



Memorial obelisk placed in the estate grounds on Howe Hill near Kepwick Hall – April 2020

John Henry Boyer Warner is remembered by a memorial obelisk placed in the estate grounds on Howe Hill near Kepwick Hall with the wording:

*In memory of John Henry Boyer Warner. He was a great and intellectual traveller throughout the world all his life, a popular candidate for parliament, a true and noble man, his mind was one of the first in which originated the germ of that grand scheme 'Imperial Federation' He was a man liked and respected by all who knew him, never to be forgotten by those he loved. He was a man take him for all in all, I shall not look on his like again. Not lost but gone before.*

English sculptor Harry Bates produced a marble bust of JHB Warner which was displayed at an exhibition in 1892 when he was elected associated of the Royal Academy. During JHB's relatively short life he had experienced much including hairbreadth escapes from death. As he spent much of his time travelling he was probably not so well known in the Quorn locality but having spread the name of Quorn to the other side of the world it is surely fitting that he should be interred here.

\* *The Imperial Federation refers to a series of proposals in the late 19th and early 20th centuries to create a federal union to replace the existing British Empire. No such proposal was ever adopted, but various schemes were popular in Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and other colonial territories. The project was championed by Unionists such as Joseph Chamberlain as an alternative to William Gladstone's proposals for home rule in Ireland. Many proposals were put forward, but none commanded majority support. The Imperial Federation League, the main advocacy group, split into two factions in 1893, with one group promoting imperial defence and the other encouraging imperial trade. Various proposals were put forward, with most of them calling for a single state with an imperial parliament headquartered in London. The new parliament would deal with internal trade, foreign relations, defence and other issues that affected the entire federation. The new parliament would rule India directly, while the dominions (Australia, Canada, New Zealand, Newfoundland, and South Africa) would have internal self-government. Ireland would also have self-government, which was expected to reduce demand for home rule in Ireland.*

*Since Britain left the European Union a similar idea has arisen as the CANZUK a unison between Canada, Australia, New Zealand and the United Kingdom as part of an international organisation or confederation similar in scope to the former European Economic Community. This includes increased trade, foreign policy co-operation, military co-operation, and mobility of citizens between the four states. The idea is lobbied by the advocacy group CANZUK International and supported by liberal think tanks such as the Adam Smith Institute, the Henry Jackson Society, Bruges Group and politicians from the four countries.*

**After the Hastings election in June 1883 JHB Warner wrote a series of letters to the Hastings and St Leonards Observer detailing his travels and observations. The letters as published follow:**

#### **Letter 1**

##### *Hastings and St Leonards Observer - Saturday 17 May 1884*

MR. J. H. B. WARNER ABROAD. The following is the first of a series of letters which Mr. Warner, the late Conservative Candidate for this borough, has kindly promised to contribute for the information of readers of the Observer;

#### **HEALTH AND PLEASURE RESORTS**

As I promised to send you a line on my travels, I take this opportunity of writing on arriving in Cape Town. I left England shortly after seeing you at Hastings, and passing through France, resting some time in Paris and Bordeaux, again visited several of the English winter resorts in the south. I found most of them very empty, and hotel keepers and others all grumbling at the very bad season, the worst they have had for some years. Arcachon and Biarritz were both extremely empty as far as English visitors and residents were concerned, but they seemed to be more popular among the Spanish and French than formerly. I attribute the absence of the British element principally to the mild winter you appear to have been getting at home. Certainly the weather I experienced in Biarritz was not much better than would be at Hastings during a mild season in winter. The health resorts and sea bathing places on the Spanish and French frontier have increased and improved marvellously during the last ten years. Biarritz is now quite a large town. St. Jean de Lor and St. Sebastian in Spain are both now prosperous watering-places, with large hotels and streets of lodging-houses. I visited these places some ten years ago on my way up to the Carlist War, and found them at that time quite deserted, and without any decent accommodation for strangers. The improvement has doubtless been owing to the termination of the war and the more settled state of the country since the accession of Alphonse XII. At Biarritz I found a capital new English Club with every comfort. There is also a pack of foxhounds there which were having excellent sport under the mastership of an old friend of mine, Sir Thomas Knox, K.C.B., whose hospitality I had the pleasure of enjoying some years ago in the far east in Siam, where Sir Thomas was for years British Minister and Diplomatic Agent to the King of Siam. The drives round Biarritz are very pretty, and some fine excursions are to be made into the mountains. It is also a very decent hunting country round. Biarritz was a favourite resort of the Empress of the French. She originally started the place as a fashionable one, and built a fine chateau there, which she has since handed to the town authorities, who have turned it into a casino. The journey to

#### **MADRID**

now very easily accomplished with sleeping cars direct from Paris, it is several hours shorter than it was some years ago, and one travels from Madrid to Lisbon in eighteen hours, instead of nearly double that time, by a new line recently opened. This city in February has one of the worst climates in Europe, indeed it is one of the worst in Europe all the year round, as it is situated on the high waterless, treeless plateau of central Spain, surrounded by the snow-clad

Sierras of the Guadarrama, open to every wind that blows. During the day the power of the sun is very strong and the change of climate from one side of the street to the other excessive. The best dress for the place is the picturesque Spanish "Capa," which is almost universally worn. This is long black cloak, which, in the sunshine, is left open, and hangs freely from the shoulder. On crossing the street, getting into the cold wind, the Spaniard lifts up the "Capa," and throws one side over his left shoulder, covering his face to the eyes, and leaving the bright-coloured lining of the "Capa" to show, and fall down the back a very picturesque effect. They say no one but a Spaniard can wear a "Capa" it certainly requires an education to wear one properly. The Spaniards have a saying about the climate of Madrid, which is, "Nine months of winter, and three months of hell." They are not far wrong. As this was my fifth journey to Spain, as I had on previous occasions visited nearly the whole country, I did not diverge much from my direct route to Lisbon. I again visited the Escurial to refresh memory with reminiscences of Charles V. and Philip II. I found that the coffin of the former great Emperor had been opened since I last was at the place. The body was found in wonderful preservation, the peculiar features of the dead monarch very unmistakable, the hair and beard perfect. A ghastly photograph of the body was taken, and the sarcophagus a second time sealed up. In the chapel of the Escurial the seat is shown where Philip II sat at Mass when the messenger delivered to him the news of the total destruction of the Spanish Armada by the English Fleet. It is said he never changed a muscle or uttered word. I also visited, for the first time, the town of Avilla, which is perhaps, the finest mediaeval fortified town in Europe. The walls and gates are all absolutely perfect, and the town within quite unique. This is a place rarely visited, but I would certainly recommend any travellers to Spain on no account to miss seeing Avilla. Of course I went again to

TOLEDO,

where I spent some days. This city, apart from its historical associations and magnificent remains, enjoys one of the most beautiful and romantic situations in Europe. It is built on an almost horse shoe shaped piece of land, with the grand and rapid river Tagus rushing round in a deep gorge amongst precipitous rocks, crowned with the remains of Gothic, Moorish, and Christian castles, palaces, mosques, and churches. The accommodation for travellers is now pretty good very much better than ten years ago. A brisk manufactory of the celebrated Toledo steel still goes on in this city, formerly so celebrated for its blades, and many very useful and pretty articles are made there at the present time. During my stay in Madrid the preliminary

#### BULL FIGHTS

came off. The regular professional bull fighting with old bulls begins on Easter Sunday afternoon throughout Spain; the only really good places, though, to see first-class fight being Madrid, Seville, and Valencia. In these towns, during Easter week, capital fights are carried on nearly every other day. Those that take place before Easter week are merely the pupils learning to become bull-fighters, toreadors engaged with young bulls. The element of cruelty here is also mostly avoided by the young bulls having wooden balls on their horns, and not being killed. However, even in these fights some animals are always killed to please the populace. I will not describe to you a regular bull fight, although I have seen many, but there were some curious points connected with this combat of pupils and young bulls worth

mentioning. One of these young bulls jumped the lower ring amongst the people over twenty times. This is quite unprecedented, and if an old bull fighter was to see this letter he would hardly credit it. Of course there was a tremendous stampede each time amongst the occupants of the lower row, but as these were principally rowdies and boys it did not much matter. The bull was always let into the ring again by an ingenious arrangement of doors, which barred his further passage, and compelled him to again enter the arena. This bull was considered a very bad one on account of his jumping propensities, and orders were given by the President that he should be killed, which was accordingly cleverly done by the pupil, "Espada," on his first attempt, although several of the others made a great bungle when their time came; one especially, after several trials, had to retreat amidst the hooting of the mob, whilst another was called in to finish his work. At the conclusion of these pupil bull fights another very curious performance took place. After the killing of the last bull the ring is thrown open to all comers. All who liked could enter the arena, with or without "capas" or cloaks. About 200 boys, pupils, amateurs, and sporting men entered the ring. At a signal from the President a wild bull rushes in, but with the balls on his horns. Then ensues a most extraordinary scene. The bull rushes at the first person he can catch, and I certainly saw some most extraordinary falls and tossings. Many were knocked down, tossed, and trodden on, but all seemed to pick themselves up again pretty quickly. It is a most dangerous amusement, and I am told many often lose their lives at it. I must say I should not like to attempt it. There were four of these "Embolados," or bulls with balls on their horns, turned into the crowd one after another, and many accidents must have taken place, although they did not appear at the time. I will not enter into any arguments about bull fighting in the abstract, but I think we should remember that it is thoroughly the national sport of the people, who flock to a fight by thousands, as they do with us to a racecourse. To the men engaged it is not so dangerous as steeplechasing; of course the worst point of all is the slaughter of the horses. If this could be avoided there would not be so much cruelty. I forgot to mention that, when the bulls had balls on the horns, the toreadors, or riders, were sometimes mounted on donkeys, which turned the affair into a farce, and seemed to amuse the people very much. When the Prince of Wales was in Spain he refused to see a bull fight on account of English feeling on the subject. Of course an ordinary private individual has no such reasons to keep him away, and I find most Englishmen in Spain loth to go and appreciate bull fights. Four or five fights at least should, however, be seen before it is understood, and proper opinion can be formed. I ought not to leave Madrid without mentioning the great picture gallery in the

#### ROYAL MUSEUM.

It certainly is one of the finest, and perhaps the most representative of any in Europe. It is the only place to study the Spanish masters at all, containing as it does more pictures of the Spanish school than all the galleries of Europe put together. There is also a most magnificent collection of Italian masters, and many more Dutch pictures than any gallery in Holland—these last collected during the occupation of the Low Countries by the Spaniards. This gallery is, practically, inexhaustible to the student, and well repays an express visit from England for no other purpose. I passed most of the mornings there. It has at present the great drawback for English people of having no good catalogue—except one in Spanish—owing to a recent re-arrangement of the pictures. The people of Madrid are of a very gay disposition, and the Park is filled every afternoon with an immense array of carriages, considering the population. The "turn-outs" are not, according to our ideas, very smart, and a peculiar effect given by

many of the best carriages having mules instead of horses. A Spaniard will nearly starve himself and his family—or, any rate, live the greatest discomfort at home—for the sake of making a show with his carriage in the Park of an afternoon. I was glad to see the Spanish "mantilla" almost universally worn still in Madrid. The Spanish women are very handsome, and the mantilla sets off and exactly suits their style of beauty. As I mentioned before, the journey to Lisbon from Madrid now only occupies 18 hours through the plains of Estremadura, which always much remind me of parts of Australia, being a treeless and badly watered country and also, like Australia, a capital sheep country. Indeed, it is said that Estremadura is the original home of the far-famed Merino sheep. The change from Madrid to

## LISBON

is very striking, both climate and other ways. The climate in Lisbon is as good as that of Madrid is bad. It was simply perfect during the fortnight I was there, and made me wonder that it was not more used by the English as a health resort, being only three days' in the best of ocean-going steamers—the Royal Mail—from England. The town is beautifully situated on the banks of the Tagus. The position of the best hotels is capital, overlooking the river. Here is a magnificent sheet of water, more like a large lake, covered with shipping of all nations, and a very favourite resort of our Channel Squadron. There is not much sightseeing in Lisbon, and I had witnessed on previous visits all there was, I was soon contented. With the exception of the great Convent Church Balem, and the Cathedral, there are no churches much worth visiting, neither is there any picture worthy of notice as in Madrid. The great attraction near Lisbon is Cintra. This place is the great health and pleasure resort, about fifteen miles off, over a dusty and uninteresting road, fenced in most of the way with high walls. On arriving the traveller finds himself amongst beautiful cool woods, and wonderful masses of flowers of all sort. I think it is one of the best places for flowers I have ever seen in my travels. Pines, palms, tree ferns, and all sorts of semitropical plants seem to do well here. I noticed particularly the Norfolk Island pine and Australian gum tree, of which I saw finer specimens in Cintra than anywhere in Europe. At this town the beautiful Semi-Moorish chateau, and magnificent, well-kept gardens of Don Fernando, the King's father, called Pena Castle also a very fine old Moorish fort on one of the hills. Another fine old Moorish castle is now turned into a palace for the Kings of Portugal in the town; one of the great curiosities of which are the immense Moorish kitchen chimneys, like hollow pyramids, towering far above the whole structure. Near Cintra is the enormous

## PALACE CONVENT

of Mafza, built by an obscure Portuguese King to rival the Asencial. It is said to be the biggest building in the world, is now deserted, but still kept in repair. The present King sometimes comes there for a week's shooting. I was asking the guide why it was not used as a barrack. He said it was too big, and would contain more soldiers than the whole Portuguese army consists of; it amounts to 25,000 men. From what I saw of it I believed him. Lisbon is a dull place compared to Madrid, having no Park or public resort, where people drive or promenade. The river though, and walks along the banks, are always charming. I found an English steamer bound for Rio Janeiro, on which I got a lift to Madeira, and after a rough passage of three days, landed there on a cold, wet, and dismal evening. Madeira has

been quite under cloud in every sense this season. While you have had such mild weather at home, the winter in Madeira has been the most severe ever known, and the English visitors very few. The island is most charming, and the rides in the mountains and through the valleys are delightful; but as an English resort, it is an exceedingly dull place. Most people being invalids, or having invalid friends, do not indulge in much gaiety, and very speedily disappear after dinner of an evening. There are three or four capital hotels kept by an Englishman, Mr. Reid, entirely on the English plan, where one can be most comfortable. The peculiarity of Madeira is the absence of all wheeled carriages, none of which, I believe, exist on the island. Sledges drawn by bullocks are used instead over the pavements made of stone pebbles. As these sledges are constantly greased, the roads become very greasy and slippery, and a stranger has to be very careful about his walking. The climate of Funchal, the capital town, is always mild and delightful, but it is sometimes very bad higher up the hills. The day before I left, in April, I rode about 6,000 feet up the mountains, and encountered such storms of hail and snow, and found the cold so trying, and the mist and fog so thick, that I had to return to the warmer regions below. They have a curious mode of making the descent about 2,000 feet into Funchal by sledges guided over the roads as I previously described, by two men with ropes. These sledges slide down sometimes at a break-neck speed over the well-polished and greased stones, the men acting as drags behind, and keeping the sledge on the path. It is quite an

#### EXCITING AFFAIR,

making the descent with two good men. On arriving at the bottom the men carry the sledge up again to the top on their heads, ready for the next descent. The people of Madeira are very poor and hard working. Considerable emigration is now going on, and 500 emigrants had just started for Honolulu, in the Sandwich Islands, as indentured labourers, to work on the sugar estates there. I could not help thinking what useful Colonists many of them might make in Australia with their special knowledge of the cultivation of the vine, sugar-cane, Indian corn, semitropical fruit, wheat, &c. I left Madeira on the 1st April in the s.s. Norham Castle, of Sir Donald Curries line of Castle packets for the Cape, we had a splendid voyage and not too many passengers. The accommodation on these steamers is capital. On Good Friday we touched at the solitary island of St. Helena, and had

#### A RUN ON SHORE

of four or five hours. The view of the island from a distance is very picturesque, as is also the view of Jamestown from the anchorage. As we arrived about sunset we had a very good view. Unfortunately, however, it got too dark to ride over the rough roads to Napoleon's tomb and residence, called Longwood, so I was obliged to be content with seeing what I could of the small town, scattered up steep rocky gully, and climbing what is called Jacob's Ladder, which is fearfully steep and long flight of steps, numbering 699, up the side of mountain to the barracks on the top. During the voyage have been reading all the books upon South Africa, and am getting all possible information from fellow travellers on the subject. As there are several old Colonists of many years' standing on board I have learnt something of the Colony from them. I have been met with one remark several times from them, that is: "If it had not been for Gladstone's Midlothian speeches there would never have been a Boer war at all." It also seems to be a general opinion that the Transvaal once having been taken should

never have been given under the circumstances it was. There seems to be no doubt that the Transvaal is the most fertile and productive territory in South Africa. I will not enter upon any of these questions myself at present, but if you wish I will give you my impressions of South Africa when I have been some time in the country, and had some opportunity of becoming acquainted with the place and people, their politics, and geography. I post this from Cape Town, where I arrived yesterday. I intend now I am here to do all I can to become acquainted with the Colony.

## Letter 2

*Hastings and St Leonards Observer - Saturday 19 July 1884*

MR. J. H. B. WARNER ABROAD. The following is the second of series of letters which Mr. Warner, the late Conservative Candidate for this borough, has kindly promised to contribute to this journal for the information of its readers:

### AFFAIRS IN ZULULAND

"Camp of the Inniskilling Dragoons.  
Echo Native Reserve, Zululand."

My dear Sir,—In my last letter I promised to write you further about affairs at the Cape of Good Hope, but as Zululand appears to be attracting considerable attention at home just now, you may perhaps be interested in a letter from headquarters here. I can write you further on Cape affairs later on. Through the kindness of Admiral Salmon, V.C.C.B., I left the Cape in H.M.S. *Boadicea*, the flag ship on the South African Station, and came direct to Natal or Durban. From Durban I was sent through with the Admiral commissariat carts and mule trains to the front. After two days of hard travel and rough roads, we arrived here. Your readers remember that Echowe is the fort where General Pearson was shut up for nearly three months, and was eventually relieved by the column under Lord Chelmsford. A very fine new fort has since been constructed by Colonel Curtis, of the Inniskillings during the last nine months, and the old Fort Pearson abandoned, as being in a bad position. Echowe is now our headquarters in the reserve territory, and is situated not more than twelve miles from the boundary of Zululand Proper. At the residence of our Government Resident (Mr. Osborne), a grand plateau in the midst of a beautiful park-like country, and as fine a camping ground as could possibly be found anywhere. It may be necessary for me to go back a little, and explain the present position of affairs in Zululand. On the restoration of Cetewayo, all the 13 chiefs, set up on the " Pacification of Zululand." by Lord Wolseley, were deposed, including Chief John Dunn, excepting the Usibepo and Hlubi. The territory of Hlubi is in the reserve. That of our ally, Usibepo, is outside Zululand Proper was always our ally he considered himself under British protection, and always refused to act without the permission, or against the advice, of the British Resident. At the death of Cetewayo the whole of Zululand was in a state of confusion, brought about by our absurd policy in restoring Cetewayo; but could have been reduced to order in a few weeks, probably without the aid of military at all, by our Government merely establishing a permanent chief, and leading the Dutch Boers to understand that they were not to invade Zululand. But, as you know, the Gladstonian Government refused to have anything to say to Zululand. They refused to support either Usibepo, our old ally, or even to support Dinijulu, Cetewayo's son and heir, but preferred to let Zululand "stew in its own juice," with what results you now see. As a natural

consequence constant fights and bloodshed took place throughout the whole country and our own position in the reserve, and even the Colony of Natal itself, became very seriously menaced, and is more so at the present moment. We now arrive at the worst of all complications.

#### THE DUTCH BOERS,

numbering about 600 from Natal our own Colony—and from the Transvaal, started a filibustering expedition, under the poor excuse of restoring order in Zululand, but really to make a simple raid on the land and cattle of the Zulus. On 1st May this year these Freebooters—or Boers, the terms are synonymous—elected a Committee of six persons, crossed the frontier into Zululand, and on the plea that the British Government would do nothing, and that the present reign of terror and bloodshed should cease, they actually took upon themselves to crown as King of Zululand Dinijulu, Cetewayo's son, about 14 years of age. At the same time Usibepo, our ally, was summoned to lay down his arms, and to acknowledge his enemy as king. Of course, this meant simple ruin to Usibepo, loss of his cattle, and extermination, in all probability, of his tribe. Usibepo naturally refused these offers, and, as is duty bound, represented the whole matter to the British Resident, who was unable to give him any help on account of instructions from home. The Boers then crossed in force and immediately joined the Usutus as Dinijulu's people are called. About 20<sup>th</sup> May they crowned Dinijulu, and then commenced their so-called mission of peace to Zululand. "This mission of peace" is better explained by the graphic account I enclose to you of Mr. Dartre, you will observe that it commenced within three weeks a most horrible and bloody battle, a wholesale slaughter of men, women, and children, and robbery of cattle and land. I was in camp at Echowe on the 12th. riding home after a successful hunting expedition on a capital mount given me by one of the officers of the Inniskillings, when the five fugitives came in. You will see by the letter; the fearful hardships they went through, I had an interview with Usibepo through the kindness of Mr. Osborne, who speaks Zulu perfectly next morning. He is an intelligent, fine-looking man, with none of the crossness of the Cetewayo about him. The poor man is utterly broken down. He lost seven brothers in battle, six or seven hundred men, 100,000 cattle, all in his territory; worse still, the whole of the refugees, women and children, are now being indiscriminately slaughtered with assegais by the Usutus, under the auspices, and the direct encouragement of those benevolent and philanthropic Boers we hear so much about. Reading the printed account of the battle you will observe how the courageous Boers took care to keep at long range, and how they deliberately got off their horses, sat down and potted Usibepo's people - our allies —in endeavours to swim a river and escape up a steep bare rocky mountain side. During the whole fight I believe they never were in any danger themselves.

#### POOR USIBEPO,

our faithful ally, said to me during our interview, "Yesterday I was a great king: to-day I am nothing." As a matter of fact, he had nothing but a blanket with him as he sat huddled in a corner of Mr. Osborne's room, and actually had to get a flannel shirt "on tick" from the neighbouring store. You will thus see that affairs here are in a pretty state. I have no hesitation in saying that, if our Government had taken proper action even six weeks ago, these disasters could all have been averted. I am in a position *to know* that they were

thoroughly well informed and advised from here about the matter by the proper authorities, but shut their eyes to everything. The present position of affairs is this: The conquering Usutus are now ravaging all Zululand supported, morally and physically, by the filibustering Boers. They are asseg-y-ing (killing with assegais) all the enemies— men, women, and children—they can catch these enemies being our allies, who find themselves in this position simply because they trusted to British promises instead of looking after themselves. Even our reserve territory is actually menaced, and rumours are afloat to-day that Usutu's have actually crossed into our territory. Meanwhile, at this very camp we have a magnificent force numbering 900 men, which could easily be raised to 1,403, without reinforcements from home - with their hands tied, looking on at the horrible slaughters of our allies. Can you imagine a more humiliating position for a British officer to be placed in? I would point out that the conquering Boers and Usutus regard all friendly natives, or natives who have ever been under our protection as deadly enemies, and "go for" them at once, beyond this, our friendly Zulus are partially un armed, so that should an invasion of the reserve take place by the Usutus, the slaughter of native allies, unable to protect themselves, would be something fearful. The Boers are now urging on the Usutus to invade our territory, and publicly state that they have beaten us at Majuba and that they can do again, that they will drive the British into the sea. All this the ignorant Usutus believes and puts down our inaction to cowardice. I would not myself be at all surprised to find an attack made upon one of our detached forts, such is Intumeni on the edge of the Reserve, any night by the Usutus, urged on by the Boers. You see to what a deplorable condition five years of Radical misrule have reduced this unfortunate country to. I have to-day touched upon Zulu affairs, but things in Natal and Cape Colony are really nearly as bad. The race animosity which had slumbered for years between the Dutch and English in South Africa is now more rampant than ever, and is fostered every day by Liberal action. The fact is we should never have given in after Majuba. That miserable war with the Transvaal, concluded by a most miserable Peace, has left a legacy of hatred between races, which will either require more bloodshed or a very different Imperial policy to that of our present Radical leaders to wipe out. News has just come into camp that our friendly allies in the reserve are crossing over and throwing themselves into the arms of the Usutus and as a last resource, and as an only means of saving their lives, as they cannot trust to our protection in our own country. Is further comment wanted? What is the Aborigines Protection Society about in England? I must now close for Mail, but will write you more on a future occasion if my letters, prove any interest to our Hastings friends.

Believe me,

Yours obediently, J. H. B.

June 14<sup>th</sup> 1884

### Letter 3a

*Hastings and St Leonards Observer - Saturday 08 November 1884*

Mr. J. H. B. Warner Abroad. The following is the first part of the third of a series of letters which Mr. Warner, the late Generative Candidate for Hastings, has kindly promised to contribute to this journal for the information of its readers.

A DRIVE THROUGH SOUTH AFRICA

" Government House, Cape Town".

My Dear Sir, I believe my last letter was addressed to you some months since from the camp of the Inniskilling Dragoons at Echowe, Zululand. Since then you will have seen that, the inaction of the British Government at home, has borne fruit out here, and that the Boers have taken the entire country, have issued a proclamation establishing a Republican form of government over Zululand, and are now engaged, after several bloody encounters, dividing the lands of the Zulus amongst themselves. I wonder if any of your readers or people in general in England understand what this state of affairs really means. It means, in plain English that the entire population of Zululand-excepting the population of the "Reserve" territory still protected by England has been handed over to the tender mercies of those worst enemies of all the native races, the South African Boers. It means that the whole Zulu race has been handed over to the worst form of slavery, which must end no long time in the extermination of those unfortunates under Boer rule, or their flight into our reserve territory, or into Natal. Already reports are coming in on the flight of the Zulus into our already much over populated territory to escape from the rapacity of their Boer friends. It is even said that Dinizulu their lately crowned King, is himself trying to escape from his newly found friends, whose friendship he now is experiencing in their present action of dividing cattle amongst the free-booters who took part in the late filibustering expedition, or were present at the late battle with Usibepo, which I sent you an account of in my last letter. So much for Zulu affairs at present. You will see what a miserable scene of ruin, disorder, and bloodshed has been caused in this beautiful country, and amongst this brave people, by the fearful misrule of the Radical party at home. I am not now writing a political letter, but am going on to describe to you my personal travels since my last: at the same time I cannot refrain from pointing out the miserable position of Zululand at present. We see here that there have been great meetings of the

#### ANTI-SLAVERY

Society, and that large amounts of money are still being spent in England for the suppression of the slave trade in distant parts of the world, and for other philanthropic purposes having for their object amelioration of native races. In the face of this I wonder whether people at home know that a brave and large population of our allies has just been handed over, bound, hand and foot, to the worst form of slavery South Africa can show; and handed over not only willingly, but by the actual connivance and encouragement of the Government at home. What makes things worse is that our Government have had on the spot during the whole time in, the "Reserve," a force amply sufficient to have prevented any movement of the Boers towards Zululand, amply sufficient to have kept order there, and to have helped our unfortunate allies. This force - notwithstanding, I believe, the urgent representations of the Authorities here to the Home Government - was never allowed to move one step, while the whole population was being enslaved under their very noses. You can more easily imagine than I can describe the feelings of high-spirited British officers and men under such circumstances. The position of affairs is truly lamentable. Nearly all classes here are agreed on the position, and cannot make out what the Home Government is about. The Boer Proclamation is worth reading. The Republic is to be called

#### THE NEW REPUBLIC

but it is suggested here that it should be called " Gladstonia," as it owes its existence to that great man. Three-fourths of the whole country is at once to be divided into farms of from 5,000 to 10,000 acres each. Amongst the freebooters, who spent nothing but the cost of a horse and a gun, the natives become slaves, or cross into our territory. Truly this is a paying concern, and a capital thing for a young man to join who can " shoot and ride "—as the advertisements put it — and who cares for a 10,000 acre farm with slaves to do the work for him. I will now leave Zululand for the present, and give you some account of my further travels in South Africa. We returned in H.M.S. *Boadicea*, to the great disappointment of many of the officers, who had quite expected to form a landing party in Zululand—from Durban to Port Elizabeth. Port Elizabeth is the second town in the Cape Colony, and as far as trade, and commerce and prosperity is concerned it is before Cape Town. It is a thoroughly English place, where the Dutch element is barely noticeable. The streets are broad and well paved, and not altogether spoilt by the universal "staep" of Cape Town. The staep I must inform your readers is a kind of verandah which projects into the street from each house at its own particular level, thus rendering the footpath impossible. The town is clean and pretty. We enjoyed a week's hospitality at Port Elizabeth, where we had an excellent ball at the Club, and a good day's shooting in the country.

#### THE SHOOTING

was in a rough country and was all done from horseback. Our day's sport consisted of about ten bucks of different sorts—some being very fine; one bush buck weighing over 160bs.—ten hares, and six or seven brace of birds — partridges and pheasants, &c. The shooting from horseback is difficult at first, but one soon gets into the way of it. It is always done in Africa and has many advantages. From Port Elizabeth a long over land journey was to begin. I had made all enquiries and been in treaty for a carriage and horses for some time. I therefore took the train to Graham's Town, a very pretty, but quiet inland town. There the railway stops, and I drove 80 miles in a Post cart—a by no means comfortable mode of travelling—to King William's Town, which is on the frontier of what is the Cape Colony proper. I here found my man, horses and carriage, which, as they were to carry me so many hundred miles, I had better describe to you. The man —or conductor, I will call him—is a capital specimen of a colonial born Irishman, his father being a private in a Lancer regiment, who has done well here. He speaks Dutch and Kaffir both, well, which I found invaluable on the road. He is a thoroughly independent character, always respectful, but with a subserviency about him. The team consisted of six very good, rough-made horses, that looked—as they afterwards proved—up to any amount of work. The carriage was American built, what is popularly called out here a " spider," being on four wheels very light, with large tent or awning all over, and seats for four, a very good Kaffir boy accompanied us to ride one of the spare horses, and lead the other, as we only drove four. With my man and the Kaffir boy, the same six horses and carriage, I eventually did a journey of about 2,000 (two thousand) miles, driving without any accident or misfortune to speak of. As it would be tedious to you to describe the travelling day by day, I will only give a general description of

#### THE MODE OF TRAVEL,

and a short account of the countries I visited. We never drove more than four horses out of the six, having the spare ones for a change and in case of accidents. I was always on the road

by daylight in the morning, and the mornings were very cold, and dark, this was the most unpleasant part of the work. After two or three hours' drive, about nine a.m., we would *outspan* the veldt for breakfast "Outspanning" is the word always used in South Africa, for taking out and unharnessing the horses, and to *inspan*, is to put them in again. The veldt is the word used for the country, whenever you do not find an inn, or farm house, or habitation. I had provided myself with kettle, gridiron, &c, and while he used to look after the horses, I used to cook the breakfast, &c. After about an hour and a half, we would *inspan* and do another two or three hours' drive, outspanning again for lunch, then another two or three hours' drive to our destination, generally arriving from three to four, in time to have the horses well fed and groomed before sunset. We generally arranged to get to some country inn, trader's store, farm house, or Kaffirs hut for the night, and were very lucky in never once being overtaken and having to camp out in the open for the night, although we had all arrangements made to do so if necessary. In this way I did from 30 to 40 miles a day while, travelling, of course giving some days' rest in between, and eventually travelled over 2,000 miles of country. I had my gun with me and got a fair amount of sport with partridges, pheasants, ducks, bustards, &c all of which helped the commissariat immensely. Unfortunately, I left my rifle behind me otherwise I could have had some fine buck and antelope shooting, in the Transvaal and Orange Free State where I saw thousands of buck by the road-side, but always out of range of a shot gun. The parts, of South Africa I went through are —Kafiraria, Natal, Zululand, the Transval, the Orange Free State, the Diamond Fields, and the whole of the "Old Colony", as the Cape Colony itself is generally called out here. Perhaps my best plan will be to write you my short account of these places in order.

#### THE FIRST JOURNEY,

from King William's Town to Pietermaritzburg—the capital of Natal—was right through the whole of Kaffraria, British and Native. British Kaffraria, often called the Transkei, includes Thembuland, East Grigualand, and is under the protection of the Cape Colony, although not altogether an integral portion of the Colony. It constitutes a sort of outside territory under the protection of the Cape. It has been the scene of a great many Kaffir wars, but is now, with the exception of Pondoland, pretty quiet. It is a beautiful country, very well watered, and very well suited for sheep and cattle: in fact, the best cattle country in South Africa. The only part of Kaffraria which has not yet come under British rule is Pondoland, which is still under its own native chief, Umquekela, whose name you may see in the English papers before long. Certainly no stronger argument could be used in favour of putting these territories under British protection than the present position of the protected territories, as contrasted with that of Pondoland. I must say that in British Kaffraria the natives seemed to be doing well, and to be prosperous and happy. The many mission stations—specially that at Umtata, under the Bishop of Kaffraria—seemed to be doing much good in civilising the Kaffirs. The traders are not allowed to sell any strong drinks to the Kaffirs and the villagers. Stores and people here all clean, orderly, and prosperous, and seemed to be doing well. The moment you cross the frontier into Pondoland—under the Kaffir chief Umquekela—all this is reversed. I believe Pondoland is a refuge for those traders who have been turned out of places under British rule, and is, consequently, the resort of all kinds of ruffians.

#### LICENSES

In Pondoland, any trader can get a licence from the chief. This is generally done by driving a bullock waggon loaded with Dutch gin over the border, and treating the chief until he gives the licence. As a matter of fact, there the stores are scenes of drunkenness and bestiality, and I am credibly informed that there is hardly a Pondo chief that is not a confirmed drunkard. Drink and disease are eating up the country. It is certainly a striking contrast to that part of Kaffraria under British rule. I am much afraid we are in for a disturbance in Pondoland yet, as the more recent news is, since I was there, that Umquekela, the chief, has closed the road to our troops passing through to the garrison of St. John's river, and also put a prohibitory tariff on traders' wagons and stock passing through his territory. My idea is that the sooner the rule of Umquekela comes an end the better. (To be concluded.)

### **Letter 3b**

*Hastings and St Leonards Observer - Saturday 06 December 1884*

MR. H. B. WARNER ABROAD.

The following is a continuation of Mr. Warner's letter, which appeared in the Observer of November 8th:-

From Pondoland I passed through East Griqualand. A fine part of the country, which was given over to and settled by Adam Kok, a half-caste Hottentot chief. It is thinly populated, and a very good country for English emigrant farmers to go to. The Cape Government are now encouraging emigration there, and giving out farms in the district. It is a good wheat country, and is almost the only portion of South Africa I would recommend to the farmer emigrant. We now travel through a most picturesque and charming country into Natal, the whole drive to Pietermaritzburg being very lovely. This journey from

### **KING WILLIAM'S TOWN**

to Pietermaritzburg I accomplished in thirteen days, being 395 miles. The country was very hilly, and we forded about 90 rivers and creeks. My horses came in as fresh as when they started. I had also a friend with me the whole way, which made three in the trap besides baggage, guns, and ammunition. In Pietermaritzburg I was most hospitably entertained by my friends, by the Governor (Sir Henry Bulwer), and others. There I gave my horses a rest of ten days. I shall not trouble your readers with much of an account of Natal. It is a comparatively new colony, has had a great deal to contend with, and is not at present in a particular favourable financial position. The great talk in the Parliament or Council which was then sitting was about retrenchment, extra taxation, and railway reform. Natal is a charming country climate, and a good place to emigrate to for anyone with small capital. Its proximity to Zululand is a disadvantage. It is already over populated with Zulus who have fled from their own country to be safe under British rule; and, as I before pointed out, the present action of the Boers in reducing Zululand to slavery will immensely intensify that evil, and probably be the cause of some future great disaster to Natal. On leaving Pietermaritzburg I determined to again enter Zululand and visit the battle-fields Isandlana and Rorke's Drift; also to inspect all the battle-fields of the Boer War. I therefore drove my carriage to Helpmakaar; took a pony, and rode on to Rorke's Drift, about 18 miles.

### **AT RORKE'S DRIFT**

I found some of my old friends of the Inniskilling Dragoons and 58th Regiment, who had been ordered up there quite recently to form a camp just over the ruin in the Reserve Territory for the purpose of protecting our ally, the Zulu Chief Alubi, whom I mentioned to you before. Now, why should we leave Usibepo to his fate? I must leave the Home Government to decide. They are both equally our allies, only Alubi lives in the Reserve and Usibepo outside; I suppose this is the reason we leave Usibepo to his fate, to be "eaten" up by the Boers. At Rorke's Drift our troops were hard at work constructing a new fort, something like the Echowé Fort, only smaller. They were having some trouble, as the ground is very rocky, and much blasting was necessary. They had, however, only been up about fortnight, and had already made good progress. At that time an attack upon Alubi was quite expected to be made by the combined forces of the Usutos and Boers, and there is no doubt, it was only the promptitude of General Sir Leicester Smyth's action fortifying Rorke's Drift, and sending a force to support Alubi, which prevented such an attack. From Rorke's Drift I made an expedition to the now celebrated

#### BATTLE-FIELD OF ISANDLANA,

about 12 miles ride. Of course, your readers will remember most of the particulars of that awful catastrophe, and of our crushing defeat by the Zulus; still, a few particulars of the present aspect of the battle-field may be interesting. The hill of Isandlana itself is one of the most striking natural features that can be found anywhere. It rises directly from an immense plain to the height of many hundreds of feet, the top being perfectly precipitous. On the eventful day of the battle, our Army, under Col. Durnford, was encamped immediately under the hill; General Chelmsford being absent on a reconnaissance for the day. Your readers will remember how the camp was attacked by the Zulu, and all our Army, with the exception of a few mounted men, cut to pieces to a man. The position of the head-quarter staff is still distinctly visible, the rings of the tents being still marked in the ground. The spot where Colonel Durnford and many British officers fell also easily distinguished. On the exact spot where the two Companies of the 24th Regiment went out to stop the advancing Zulus, and, having exhausted all their ammunition, were killed to a man, stands the pretty little Mission Church, recently built by Bishop Mackenzie, Bishop of Zululand, surrounded by the Mission buildings and gardens. The bones are constantly found and collected by the Bishop, who has built a mortuary for their reception. The whole ground is covered with remnants of the battle, but little is to be picked up worth having, the grass fires which always burn up the country in autumn have now passed over several times. At the same time, a few days before we were there a purse containing £30 was picked up. The terrible ride of those who escaped over the river by

#### THE FUGITIVES' DRIFT,

is easily distinguishable by the graves of the foot soldiers trying to escape. You follow this dreadful valley down some way, and trace the retreat by the graves of our soldiers. It is not far before you arrive at the spot where the last man on foot perished. The nature of the ground to ride over is something awful, and to English riders would seem impossible for any four-footed animal except a cat to get over such a country. The active naked Zulus, leaping from stone to stone, and from boulder to boulder, would beat any horse. As a matter of fact,

only those did escape who were mounted on active native ponies. Many of them only escaped to be drowned trying to cross the rapid river which at this point, called the Fugitives' Drift, is really impassable, or to be assegaied by the Zulus in their attempts. The remnant, as you know, galloped back to Rorke's Drift and gave the alarm, which resulted in the heroic defence of that place against the victorious Zulus. There is no doubt that, had Rorke's Drift not been held, and the Zulus repulsed there, that Cetewayo's conquering army would have over-run and ravaged half the Colony of Natal. The repulse at Rorke's Drift restrained them. It was a lovely day on which we visited Isandlana; the grand and lonely mountain and surrounding deserted country looked beautiful. It has been my fate to wander over

#### MANY BATTLE-FIELDS,

but none more impressive, from its associations and scenery, than the field of Isandlana. When it is remembered that our entire army was massacred, with the exception of a very few mounted men— Natal Volunteers principally—who galloped away down the awful valley I have described; that the fatal field was only visited that night as it were, by stealth, in the dead of night, by the General, on his retreat into Natal; that the corpses of our brave soldiers lay actually unburied for nearly six months after, with the tent's and waggons still standing around, and the oxen dying in their trails; when these facts are remembered, this battle will certainly be considered as one of the most extraordinary and interesting of modern times. After the battle the Zulus seemed to regard the battlefield with its unburied bodies with great superstition, and the camp and our dead remained untouched until our Army entered Zululand again many months after. Such is the field of Isandlana! We were hospitably entertained by the Bishop, who has a very nice house there filled with trophies of the battle, as well as the church before mentioned, and rode back to the hospitalities of the camp at Rorke's Drift after. The new fort is being built on the Zulu side of the river, and about one-and-a-half miles from the old Mission Station and Fort, where the celebrated defence took place. Of the old fort so nobly defended, not much now remains. After a very pleasant stay at Rorke's Drift I re-joined my horses and carriage at Helpmakaar, and drove on through Newcastle to Northern Natal.

#### THE BOER BATTLE-FIELDS

The three battle-fields of this most deplorable and useless war, with its disastrous results, were Lang's Nek, Injojo, and Majuba Hill. I have not space here to enter into the causes and merits of the war with the Boers, but I do not think myself they are far to seek. There is no doubt that the Boers hate with an intense hatred, and that many of them simply joined in the war for the purpose of having a shot at a British soldier, never expecting to have a chance against us. Many more, more or less loyal and more timid Boers, were coerced by their friends into joining in the war; and doubt many went in to it never intending to fight at all. Without doubt one severe lesson at the beginning would have put an end, at once, to the contest. Could we once have got at the Boers with the cold steel they would never have faced us again, but this we never were able to do. As was said at the time, it was like fighting an "army of deer stalkers," and certainly the firing on the Boer side was wonderfully good, while ours appeared to have been equally bad. The first battle-field I visited was that Injojo, where, it will be remembered, we did hold our ground, but retired from the position during the night,

leaving our wounded on the field. The battle field is on the flat top rising ground, surrounded on all sides by a mountainous country. On the smooth grass a quantity of stones and rocks crop of various heights, but generally only just enough to afford cover to a man lying down. Under these stones our men found a very poor cover from the splendid shooting of the Boers during their attack on the hill. These stones are a marvellous sight, one of them not projecting more than 16 inches from the ground, and just long enough to afford shelter to a man's shoulders, I counted nine or ten bullet splashes, as well as the edges of the stone all chipped away. The bones still cover the ground where our Artillery horses were, and every one shot, at long range and guns rendered unworkable. The graves of our soldiers are all in very good order, the bodies being collected in stone enclosures. There is also a very nice monument or two put up by the 60<sup>th</sup> and others, brother comrades and friends. I next visited Langs Nek about 12 miles on from Injojo. Here the position of the Boers was magnificent, and our mounted men had to charge up a steep hill. With such shots as they were, of course, half our saddles were emptied at the first volley, amongst others being Colonel Deane, in command of the 58th Regiment. We had no mounted reserve to take forward, so the Boers won the day. It is even said they were in full flight when one of their men turned round and saw our army retreating: seeing this they again advanced to their old position and continued the fight until our final retreat. Both from Injojo and Langs Nek can be seen as the most prominent feature in the landscape, the striking mountain of

#### MAJUBA HILL,

now celebrated as the scene of our last and greatest defeat, and as the primary cause of that most disgraceful and humiliating peace which is now bearing its baneful fruit through the length and breadth of the colonies and states of South Africa. Majuba would be a striking mountain anywhere, and it certainly struck me curious that our great disasters in this country, both Zulu and Boer, were always associated with such grand natural scenery. I rode most of the way up Majuba, leaving my horse and climbing for the last ten hundred yards. I ascended on the side the Boers came up to the attack, not on the side Sir G. Colley and our men marched up. Sir G. Colley chose the most difficult side to ascend, whereas, the Boers, from a perfect knowledge of the country, came by quite an easy road. The space on the hill top is much larger than would be supposed from looking at the mountain, and no doubt much larger than Sir G. Colley imagined. At the same time, with proper precautions, it could easily have been defended by the men Sir George took with him. From the accounts it would appear that few precautions were taken by our people, after their arrival on the top, as the place, was considered nearly impregnable. By curious fatality all the difficult sides of the mountain were defended, while the side perfectly easy access was left to take care of itself. The Boers left their horses some four hundred feet below, and gradually climbed up under cover, until at last they were within forty yards of our men, who were sheltered under a row of stones, little better than what I have described to you at Injojo. Long before this, the long range shooting of the Boers had begun to tell, and poor Captain Romilly, of H.M.S. "Boadieca" was killed by a very long shot, while exposing himself unnecessarily on the brow of the hill against the Skyline. The Boers fought under cover the whole way, and never exposed themselves. When within 40 yards of course their vastly superior shooting began to tell on our men. There seems to be no doubt that at this point the battle could have been retrieved by a bayonet charge from our men. Unfortunately, the orders for this charge were never given, although only yards separated the combatants, and the Boers were armed with *rifles only*, having

neither bayonets or swords. It is said that Sir George Colley was frequently pressed to allow his men to charge, even at the last moment. As a matter of fact, when our men did get on their legs, tired of being mercilessly potted behind stones both in front and rear—for the Boers were now taking them in front and rear also—instead of charging the enemy bayonet in hand over the intervening 40 yards, they threw away their arms and made straight for the precipice, which they had all ascended that morning at four a.m.

#### A REGULAR STAMPEDE

ensued, our men running to the edge of the precipice, and the Boers potting them as they went. This precipice is not so bad as I imagined, long overgrown with bushes and shrubs in such a way that a man in cool blood might descend without much chance of an accident, but our men went helter-skelter down under fire, the whole way many were killed and severely hurt in the descent. The Boers now came to the edge of the precipice, and, standing at the edge, deliberately potted any escaping red coat they could see amongst the rocks and bushes on the side of the precipice. Many of our wounded men were thus killed, and several young officers of my own acquaintance were severely wounded at this point. On our men's rifles being picked up at the last point, only, as I before mentioned, 40 yards from the Boer sharpshooters, many of them were found to be sighted up to 500 yards. We need not wonder that they did no execution. It is exceedingly significant and a little known fact that out of the thousands of shots fired by our men that day, only one military Boer was killed, and I have even heard some Dutchmen say that he was killed by accident by their own people. As you all know, Gen. Colley met with his death at the last moment, shot through the head, never having moved from his post. Such was the battle Majuba Hill, undoubtedly the cause of the most disgraceful and humiliating peace ever by a British Ministry in a moment of panic. That peace is the cause of most of the intolerable evils under which South Africa has been, and still is suffering. In the opinion of most thinking people, the Boer War, in some shape or form, will still have to be fought out, or South Africa, with large English and native elements, definitely abandoned by Great Britain to the tender mercies of these bloodthirsty filibusters. The top of Majuba is at present a desolate height, and there are buried the men of H.M.S. Boadicea, where they fell, Lieut. Maude, General Cooley, and the others are buried below at Mount Prospect Cemetery. It may be of interest to anyone having friends killed in these engagements to know that all the graves are now in very good order, and well looked after. (To be continued.)

#### Letter 4

*Hastings and St Leonards Observer - Saturday 27 December 1884*

Mr. J. H. B. Warner in South Africa. [Continued.]

After my visit to Majuba I visited the Natal Boundary and entered the Transvaal, the present home and country of the Boers, conquered by them, taken from us, given up to them by the Gladstonian Government after the battle of Majuba. The country consists of an immense high plateau, well grassed and watered, but with not a tree to be seen for hundreds of miles. It is impossible to imagine a more dreary and uninteresting country to travel through, although a very good useful country for agricultural and pastoral pursuits, and

also rich in minerals and precious metals. I had here to push my horses along at the rate of sixty miles and over a day, the farm houses are few and far between, and there is nothing to be got on the road. Before entering the country I was told I should be insulted and hardly allowed to proceed by the Boers. I must say that such was not my experience. They were never cordial or pleased to see me, but at the same time usually offered me a rude, sullen, and bearish hospitality. Their food I always refused, as it was too bad, and I carried my own, but accepted their bed for a night's lodging which I usually paid for in the morning. I also managed to buy forage for my horses from them. The

#### BOERS ARE NEARLY BARBARIANS,

a fact with regard to cleanliness and comfort, I would far sooner sleep in a native Kaffir hut, than a Boer farm house. There is not the slightest pretence of civilization or comfort either inside their houses or out, hardly anything in the way of decency or respectability. An owner of 8,000 or 10,000 acres of good land will live with his family like a pig. They rarely or ever change their clothes, and often all sleep in the same room. They pretend to be very religious and make a great display of the bible, but this does not prevent them going and shooting down the natives, or enslaving them under any pretext in the most rascally manner. I believe they are the most idle people in the world, all my travels amongst them and I never once saw a Boer farmer with spade in his hand, or ever attempting to do a stroke of work. What little is done on their farms is done by the Kaffirs they enslave and never pay any wages to. They ride, but ride clumsily and badly and they certainly shoot to perfection, we know to our cost. Many of them, in old days, lived on the game they brought down with their rifles. This accounts for their good shooting. They never farm their land properly, never fence, manure, or do any good with the immense estates they own. They have never any decent stock or cattle. Their wool is worth about a third less than Australian wool, on account of their dirty, slovenly habits. Their great object in life is to have whole country side to themselves, and

#### NEVER TO SEE THEIR NEIGHBOURS' SMOKE.

A Boer farmer would ruin any country he ever got hold of. I myself think that one of the chief causes of the ruin of South Africa—for ruined it is at the present—is the alienation in perpetuity from the Crown, or Government, of enormous blocks of land to landowners who will do nothing whatever to develop the land when they get it, and who are not compelled by Government to do anything. I drove through the dreary country already described to you, to Pretoria, the capital, where some of our troops were shut up so long at the Fort during the late war. I was lucky enough to arrive in Pretoria on the return of the Delegates from Europe, and to hear their debates in the Volksraad, or Parliament, which was then sitting. The Members are a very rough-looking set, and, I believe, very illiterate. Our English labouring-man, in his Sunday clothes, looks a gentleman compared with almost any of them. They were principally engaged, when I saw them, in abusing England and the English, the Convention, the High Commissioner, and everything connected with Great Britain. They adjourned about every hour for a drink and a smoke, but during the sittings every member was present. The room where they sat, although called the High Court, was little better than a barn, and it was altogether a most curious scene. After stopping some days in Pretoria, I pursued my journey and got into the Orange Free State. This State, as you are doubtless aware, is another Boer

Republic, has been independent for some years, and has got on tolerably well. The Boers of the Orange Free State, although very rough, are certainly more civilised than the Transvaal Boers. The country is equally uninteresting, but fully grassed and good horse and cattle country. Bloemfontein, the capital, is a nice town, well laid out, with excellent climate, said to be wonderful for consumption; the great difficulty for a consumptive patient is its inaccessibility and enormous distance from communication. I drove all through the Orange Free State from one end to the other, on my way to the Diamond Fields at Kimberley, which are situated in Griqualand West, very near the Free State boundary. I experienced no disasters on the drive with one exception. Camping out one day to cook my tea for breakfast, I lit a fire where there seemed to me to be no, or very little, grass. The fire burnt well, and I put on our kettle to boil, having spread all our breakfast things, tea, sugar, bread, &c., around ready on the grass. Had also put out large cartridge case of fully loaded cartridges, ready for the day's shooting. I turned round for some minutes, and to my horror, on looking up, found the whole place in a blaze, and a strong wind blowing. I knew what this meant with the veldt, or plain, covered with tall dry grass, I had just time to throw the cartridges away from the fire, and to drag out one harness and buggy, with the help of H. All our breakfast and utensils were burnt, and in a few minutes the whole plain in a gigantic blaze. It impossible for me to describe to you the speed with which the flames spread. We had just time to harness our horses and gallop off with the fire raging behind us. After driving a couple of miles or so, I first saw a Kaffir horseman or two in the distance, then more, and, at last, a whole party, headed by some

IRATE DUTCHMEN,

caught us up, got to the horses' heads, and threatened to shoot us if we dared to move on. Then ensued a long argument. The Boer farmer insisted that we, being English, had set fire to the plain on purpose, and that I should be fined £500. The flames were now spreading fast all round us, and the whole country for miles was in a blaze, and we were all very frightened. I, however, eventually settled with the Boer by giving him £5 down, and drove off to reach the other side of river some miles ahead, which we did safety. I think I got off very cheaply, as we saw the fire burning for at least two days after. A few days after this mishap I again entered British territory, and will now describe to you my visit to the celebrated diamond fields of South Africa. The town of Kimberley, the headquarters of the mining industry, owes its existence entirely to the finding of diamonds on this spot. The country around is almost perfect desert, almost valueless, for agriculture and water are very scarce. The town itself is a miserable place, almost entirely constructed of corrugated iron buildings, and one of the most dusty and dirty places in the world; but the mine, which is situated quite in the town, is altogether unique. It is the largest artificial hole in the world. The only thing it reminded me of is the crater of a volcano. In this immense hole thousands of people are at work, and the buckets full of diamondiferous earth keep constantly coming up full and going down empty on wire tramways, I must say I have always found most mines rather a deception as far as sight-seeing goes. The great Kimberley Mine is quite the reverse, and one of the sights and wonders of the world. The open hole is now between 400 and 500 feet deep, and shafts have recently been sunk some way below this. The blue earth, or diamondiferous soil is brought up in the buckets before-mentioned, and then spread out thinly for some months on the ground, being subjected to the action of the sun and water. At the end of this time the earth is decayed and is then washed for diamonds. I went to see the

"washing-up" of one of the Companies. This washing-up represented the earth taken from the mine in one day only five or six months beforehand. The amount of earth was gradually reduced until it got to two or three wagon-loads of gravel and stones, which was placed on slate tables. Then the exciting time commenced, and the search for the diamonds began. The earth was carefully looked over and diamonds picked out. That afternoon I saw about three or four large muff-boxes full of diamonds picked out, varying in size from as large as the end of my thumb to the most infinitesimal stones imaginable. The Manager told me the diamonds picked out that afternoon were worth from £6,000 to £8,000. Notwithstanding this, the mines are not, I believe, paying the shareholders well at present. This is to be accounted for, probably, by the amount of diamonds stolen, secreted and sold surreptitiously by the workmen and others connected with the mines. Notwithstanding the most stringent legislation and strict searching, many stones find their way into the hands of the "I.D.B.'s," or "Illicit diamond buyers" so well-known in South Africa. Altogether the Diamond Field is the great sight of South Africa, and one of the wonders of the world. It is said that the deeper they get the richer are the mines, and there are, no doubt, many more mines still to be found, the Diamond Mines should continue for many years one of the

#### PRINCIPAL INDUSTRIES OF SOUTH AFRICA.

Small-pox was raging at the fields during my visit, and playing great havoc amongst the Kaffirs. I consequently had to undergo the horrors of fumigation leaving Kimberly. After again entering the Old Colony Proper, I visited many farms, with a view of forming some idea of the Agricultural and pastoral resources of the country. The weather was very dry, the country looked miserable, and I was not favourably impressed with the farming capabilities of the country, at the same time there is plenty of good sheep country with fencing and proper management, especially in the country known in South Africa as the Karoo country. The ostrich farming is also very interesting and well worth studying, I thus pursued my journey nearly back to Grahamstown, disposed of my horses and carriage, and took the train into Cape Town, after three or four months' absence, and after a really good travel through South Africa Proper, I also visited the towns and country districts round Cape Town, and also the western districts, farms, &c. That the whole of South Africa is in a very difficult and dangerous condition politically, financially, commercially, socially, and in other respects, there can be no doubt. I, together with the majority of people here, consider this state of affairs to have been brought about entirely by the maladministration of the present Radical Government of South Africa on account of our utter want of faith towards our native allies, to our ignoring all our imperial duties and responsibilities where the weaker ones around us are concerned which has ended in handing over whole nations to slavery and eventual extermination. Secondly, to the most painful and humiliating peace with the Boers, after our signal defeat Majuba Hill, and the session of the Transvaal, bringing in its train the establishment of the Africander Bond "—African Fenianism of the worst type—and the actual supremacy of the Dutch party over the British, and consequent humiliation of our race and fellow countrymen in South Africa. I might conclude with a word to intending emigrants from England. My advice is most emphatically: do not select South Africa. The country itself is good enough, but it has been ruined by mismanagement, and is getting worse day by day. I will now conclude, I fancy your readers must have had quite enough of South Africa. Believe me,

Yours truly,

J. H. B. WARNER.

To the Editor Hastings Observer, Hastings.

**Letter 5**

*Hastings and St Leonards Observer - Saturday 21 February 1885*

MR. J. H. B. WARNER'S TRAVELS. We have received the following letter from Mr. J. H. B. Warner, and are sure it will prove of great interest to very many of our readers: "Her Majesty's Ship Osprey, At See, Southern Indian Ocean," 13th December, 1884.

On arriving at Mauritius by the mail steamer, we were unfortunately quarantined for three weeks on account of having touched at Durban (Natal), where small-pox was supposed to exist at the time. We had got through nearly a week of our term of twenty-one days on the passage over, we had only about sixteen days to run. We were at once sent to the quarantine station of Mauritius. This is a small island called the Platte, or Plat Island, about thirty miles from Fort Louis, the capital of Mauritius. Our party consisted of only three first class passengers besides myself, and 66 rank and file of the 41<sup>st</sup> Welsh Regiment, on their way from Durban. We steamed down to the island, being naturally somewhat curious to see what our imprisonment for sixteen days would be like. We were very agreeably surprised, being landed, to find most capital bachelor quarters for the four of us, on a most lovely and romantic little coral island. At one end was a high cluster of rocks with a lighthouse, and the rest of the island consisted of a large flat savannah or plain, very well wooded, the whole surrounded by coral reefs and outlying islands. We had a capital party, consisting of the officer in command of the 60 men, a Colonial doctor, and a Mauritius planter, all very good fellows. We got over a good cook and servants from the main land, and except for the fact of being prisoners we really enjoyed ourselves. The climate and scenery were lovely, and what with fishing, shooting, sketching, skinning birds, whist, &c, I managed to amuse myself very well. The Government kept us in everything excepting drinks, and including a good supply of ice, for 3s. a day all told. I enjoyed by far the cheapest living I have ever had. In this Robinson Crusoe like way we got through our sixteen days quarantine, but were not sorry finally to be landed in a Government steamer on the mainland of

MAURITIUS.

I suppose most of your readers will know Mauritius by name simply connected with sugar and the sugar interests. I must say that with regard to the cultivation and manufacture of sugar in all of its branches, Mauritius is about the headquarters of the world. The worst of the place is that it relied on nothing else, and has no other industry, consequently the sugar industry being now much depressed, everything and everybody in Mauritius is in the same depressed state. The failure of the Oriental Bank —since iocuscitated has had a very bad effect upon the prosperity of the island. This island is exceedingly pretty, and a railway runs nearly all round and up to the high lands in the interior. All the merchants and business men have houses in the country and come by train to business, returning in the evening. Formerly, before the fearful outbreak of fever in the island, some years since, which carried off a large percentage of the population, everyone lived in or near Fort Louis now everyone lives on the high central plateau, out of town. The people are most hospitable, and I was most hospitably entertained during my entire stay of six weeks in the island. I stopped a week with Sir John

Pope Hennessey, the Governor, at Reduit, the country Government House, and one of the most charming residences in the world. Politics at the present time in Mauritius run rather high, as the Governor has taken very strongly with the Creole French party, which has given some offence to the more English part of the community. Nearly all the labour on the sugar estates is done by Indian Coolies, who are indentured for a period of years to the Planters. The system works admirably, and most of the Coolies who do not return to India settle in Mauritius, and do well as small tradesmen, &c., on their earnings. During my stay in Mauritius, I accepted an invitation to , run over for a week in the Governor's yacht to the neighbouring French Island of

## REUNION

—formerly Bourbon. This island is seldom visited by English. It is a very interesting place. It was taken by us, with Mauritius, in the beginning of this century, but returned to the French at the Treaty of Paris, some say by accident, in mistake for one the West India Inlands. It is certain our politicians of those days did not know much of geography and it quite possible that when a long list of places was submitted to them the " Isle of Bourbon" did not attract much attention. However, Reunion having no harbour at all, and Port Louis, Mauritius, being the only harbour in these seas, we did not lose much by the cession of Reunion. Reunion is one of the most lovely, romantic, picturesque lone islands it is possible to imagine. The mountains rise to 11,000 eleven thousand - feet high, and the *Piton de Niege* is covered with snow. There are several mineral springs in the mountains, where there are health resorts and very decent little French hotels. The country round is perfectly charming, I know of no part of Switzerland to beat it. Like all French Colonies, the Island is in a particularly ruined state. It does not pay its own expenses and costs the home Government a considerable sum every year to keep going. The French are at present spending some millions there in making a new harbour which is to extinguish Port Louis. The works are enormous, but it will be a time before they are brought to a successful issue, if ever. St. Denis, the capital, is a little Paris; it is curious to see, in this out of the way place, with the attempts to imitate Parisian life. We were there for the races, and a great ball at the French Governor's, which was very well done. The Reunion Creole ladies are noted for their good looks, and there certainly was a considerable display of dark beauty both at the races and the ball, and also at the cathedral and churches on Sundays. Altogether, a trip to these two isolated islands of , Mauritius and Reunion would as well repay a visit; as any places I know. The climate during my stay was charming, and is pleasant all the year round, excepting during the hurricane months, when it is both bad and dangerous. I found a striking change from the semi-barbarous life of South Africa to the civilization of Mauritius. I must say of Mauritius, that though not at present the most prosperous, it is certainly one of the most pleasant and civilized of all our colonies. Port Louis is one of our most important harbours and

## NAVAL STATIONS

but at present almost defenceless I am glad to see, however, by the latest news, that our Government have at last decided to put it in a proper state of defence, and that works are at once to be commenced. A glance at a map will show the importance of Mauritius as a coaling station and harbour on the main route to India and the East, should the Suez Canal ever be closed to our fleet. On returning to Mauritius from Reunion, I found H.M.S. Osprey just about

to sail for Madagascar and Zanzibar, and accepted an invitation from the captain for a cruise to those places. I was particularly tempted to accept this chance, as, passengers from merchant steamers or ships are not allowed to land at Madagascar by the French, so that a cruise in an English man-of-war is the only possible way of seeing what is going on in the country. I therefore left Mauritius at daybreak on 20th October, in H.M.S. Osprey, as a guest of Commander Dowding, the captain, having also on board Mr. Hicks Graves, H.B.M.'s Consul for Madagascar, with the intention of visiting all ports possible on the coast, and seeing what the French were about in the island. After a good run across, we commenced our visits, but, as I need not mention each port in detail, I will give you a general idea of the French campaign in

#### MADAGASCAR.

The French are now attempting, with about twelve ships, including transports, to keep up a blockade of the whole of the north-east and north-west coasts of Madagascar. With a coast-line from 800 to 1000 miles, nothing could be more futile or ineffective than this blockade. The only effect it has had at present is to utterly ruin all the trade and commerce of the ports. The port of Tamatave had a trade of from £70,000 to £80,000 a year with Mauritius alone, all in English hands. Majunga, and other ports, had also a large trade. All this is now entirely destroyed, on account of the action of the French. The blockade is very partially carried out, as the ships are being constantly withdrawn to run messages for the admiral, and to carry their mails from and to Reunion. The French have bombarded and burnt most of the Hova\* villages on the coast, having driven out the natives and left nothing but a mass of ruins. Very curiously, the Hovas do not seem to know the French flag from ours, or the French men-of-war from ours. This latter is specially curious, as our ships on this station are white, while the French are black. In the only towns the French have made a landing and occupied, Tamatave, Majunga, and Tessandaba Bay, they are literally besieged by the Hovas in their own camp. I never was more astonished than, on landing at Majunga, to find the French hemmed in on a malarious sandbank by a stockade not two hundred yards from the seabeech, by the Hovas. We were not to show our noses outside the stockade, except armed and in parties of three. The French sentries were being constantly killed by the Hovas. Their soldiers were dying fast, hospitals full, and invalids being sent to Reunion. Altogether they are in a most miserable and depressing condition, both at Majunga and Tamatave, and much more in the condition of besieged than besiegers. We visited some ports on the coast where the Hovas had not been driven away, but where they were daily expecting the French. In these places they received us in the old-fashioned way, with a guard of honour and a welcome from the Governor, in the name of the Queen of Madagascar, with firing salutes, &c. The uniforms and general appearance of

#### THE HOVA OFFICIALS,

and soldiers are most droll. The whole thing reminded me more of some Christy Minstrel performance than of anything else. They are particularly fond of old Naval uniforms, cocked hats and gold lace are very much in request. The soldiers are armed with all sorts of guns and rifles, some more dangerous to themselves than to the enemy. Notwithstanding all this the French do not advance a yard. They could do no good without an expedition to Antananarivo the capital —which would be a tremendous expedition. There is an old saying—

and true one—that the Queen of Madagascar has two generals who would always beat the French. These two are General 'Forest' and General 'Fever.' Certainly an expedition to the capital, through the marshes and the woods of the interior, would decimate a French army. I should say at the Hova ports, where we did land, the natives were only restrained from bolting into the interior by some Mauritius Creoles, who lived amongst them, assuring them that it was an English ship and not French, and that they would not be disturbed. In some places we landed we found only a few old people, the rest having all bolted at the very first sight of us. Tamatave is the French head quarters, where they have several fine ships, much superior to anything we have on this station, under Admiral Miot, a very civil old gentleman. Here they are not quite so badly off as they are in the other places, although even here they are closely hemmed in by the Hova lines on a miserable malarious sandbank. Altogether the French are in a poor way in Madagascar. *\*I would explain that the Hovas are the Governing and civilised class in Madagascar, the Sakalaras being Hovas.* We also visited the French Colonies

#### IN THE MOSAMBIQUE CHANNEL

of Rossi Bek, and St. Mary's Island, off Madagascar. They are both very pretty little places, with French Governors and establishments; both very deadly to the health of Europeans, and in an exceedingly poor way, principally kept going by French money from home. These colonies started many years before the present war. I may mention that the Colony of Reunion sends three members to the French Chambers, and the colonies in the Mosambique Channel send one. Altogether, if French colonisation is not to be more successful in the future than it has been to now, we need not grudge the French a few more of such colonies that I have described to you. Hotbeds of fever, jobbery, and corruption, and a heavy burden upon the French taxpayer at home even to keep going at all. Such is the present condition of Madagascar and the French Colonies round the coast. It can only be explained by the fact that the French are waiting until their hands are not quite so full. That they are also actuated by an idea of crippling our trade and colonisation is without a doubt. I should mention that there are some very fine harbours in Northern Madagascar, that of British Sound especially being one of the finest in world. This, in the hands of the French, will be a very important strategic point. The French soldiers alone look very miserable and dejected. There was a Court Martial the other day on an officer, who, after eight months inaction on a wretched sandbank, said he had "been sent out to fight the Hovas, and not to plant cabbages." This latter is about all the French are doing in Madagascar at present. After setting down our Consul at Tamatave, we left Madagascar, touching at a few more coast ports, and had a capital run on to

#### ZAVZIBAR.

I think you will find the following account of my sport there, and of our slave cruising, interesting; Zanzibar is a moderately large island, 25 miles from the mainland of the East African coast, about latitude six degrees, along with the islands of Pemba and Mafia, etc., and a long range of the adjoining coast belong absolutely to the Sultan of Zanzibar, an old ally of ours, and of Muscat Arab birth. Zanzibar has long had an unenviable notoriety as the head quarters of the East African slave trade, and, as such, is pretty well-known by name. The town itself presents an imposing appearance from the sea, owing to the sea front being composed of a large, fine, square, European looking houses, several palaces and harems of the Sultan,

and a fine outlook tower put up for signalling ships by the Sultan. Inside is like all Arab towns, a succession of dirty, winding, Arab streets. The bazaars are not good, but there are a few European shops where all kinds of stores can be easily and cheaply purchased. The Sultan is an absolute autocrat. His word is law. He has a small and now well-drilled and armed army, under General Matthews, ex-naval officer from H.M.S. London. For the last fifteen years we have kept a large man-of-war—H.M.S. London stationary at Zanzibar, with steam cutters, cruising boats, and everything complete for the suppression of the slave trade, and certainly the work was done very thoroughly. You will, doubtless, remember the heroic death of Captain Brownrigg, Captain of the London, in a fierce combat with Arab slave dealers some two years since. Recently, however, either under the impression that

#### THE SLAVE TRADE

was finally stamped out, or, some fit economy, the present Liberal Government paid off the London, and had her broken up on the beach at Zanzibar. The result of this will be seen from the experiences I am about to relate. On arriving in the Osprey, certain rumours were afloat that cargoes of slaves were being run from the mainland, so, after some little preparation, all our boats were got out to cruise about the islands, and intercept the Arab boats, loaded with slaves, or, called locally, 'dhows.' The Arab dhow varies in tonnage from 5 to 200 tons, and is always fitted with an immense lanteen sail. The first few days of the boat cruising not much happened; but a few small canoes were taken, both by the Osprey and by her boats, with from two to five slave children on board, generally fat and well fed. The great capture, which I will now relate, took place off Temba Island, on 28<sup>th</sup> November. One of the ship's boats, under Lieutenant Valentine, R. N., anchored under the land during the night, we heard a strange noise, as of talking of many people. They rowed up, and found a large dhow, simply crammed with slaves and passengers. They bought her ashore at daybreak, when the full horrors of this villainous traffic soon became apparent. This dhow proved to be about 40 tons; on board were 169 slaves, and 39 passengers (?) and crew. The slaves were simply crammed together like sardines in a box. They had been eight days at sea. They were all starving, the bones literally coming through the flesh, covered with horrible wounds and sores from ill-treatment and disease. They had had no food for five days, and no water for three. When the ship's boat rowed up to them, they made such a rush and fight for food and water that they nearly capsized the dhow, already loaded down to the water's edge, and leaking like a sieve. It was found necessary to land them before they could be relieved, on bringing the dhow ashore, the stench from dirt and over-crowding was so horrible that all the tough old blue-jackets who went to clean her out were turned up. Four of the poor slaves died immediately on being landed, and several more after. In fact, my firm belief is, from being there myself, is that another 24 hours would have killed off half the remainder. They were of all ages—from children at the breast to old grey-haired men and women. Such a scene of horror it has never been my fate to witness before. The captain, principal owner, and three other Arabs, unfortunately escaped in a canoe before the capture, but will, we hope, eventually be taken. Soon after capture we steamed in the Osprey, and took them all on board. We had already on board about seventy per cent, of our own taking, and taken by H.M.S. Philomel, who we were taking up to the mission station at Mombasa. This brought up our number of starving slaves, with their owners and captors, up to 250, or over. The scene on the deck of the Osprey may be more easily imagined than described. Their condition was frightful, many could hardly move, many were carried on board, some were dying and

were never landed alive; many were naked, in fact there were only a few dirty rags clothing amongst them all—with every care and sanitary arrangement the stench was horrible. Luckily we were only a day's steam from Mombasa, where we arrived the following afternoon. This is a large Arab town on the coast, with a Governor and an old Portuguese Fort. It is in the territories of the Sultan of Zanzibar. At Mombasa is Freretown, named after the late Sir Bartle Frere, the headquarters of

#### THE CHURCH MISSIONARY SOCIETY

in Equatorial Africa. We had already a previous visit arranged with the energetic head of the Mission there—the Rev. Mr. Handford—to take the 70 slaves just captured, but on arriving with another 169, we were, of course, doubtful whether such enormous number could be taken in. At this point, I may, perhaps, be allowed to add my testimony to the most admirable management of the Church Missionary Society's Station at Mombasa. It is in every way a model station, and the difference between our poor slaves and those brought up at the Mission was, indeed, striking. The Mission is in a charming spot, overlooking the fine harbour of Mombasa, with church, schools, hospitals, a large garden and area for farming and agriculture, for Bishop and Clergy, mechanics and workmen, all contained in their own enclosure. The natives make good teachers, workmen and agriculturalist, when educated. Mr. Handford immediately boarded us on arrival, and with extraordinary energy, enterprise and kindness, offered to take into the Mission the whole of our large cargo of slaves, 250 in all. The Church Missionary Society has never had such a haul before. To give you an idea of the magnitude of the undertaking, I may tell you we landed nearly 40 dying and invalids that night. The rest were all landed next day, except the slave owners, drivers, crew and passengers—so-called, but in reality slave drivers—who we took for trial to Zanzibar. Should any of your readers in Hastings be subscribers to the Church Missionary Society, I can only assure them that their money is being well spent in Equatorial Africa, and a great and good work carried out there with it, to which I am able to bear a personal testimony. I recommend anyone to subscribe to this most admirable Society. The work of its energetic Bishop, Dr. Hannington, may be seen in his letters to his nephews by anyone who reads the *Graphic*. The Bishop is shortly expected at Feretown. I am afraid your readers will be getting tired of the horrors of the slave trade, but I have a mere atrocious and tragic tale to tell you than ever before. After landing all our slaves, we left Mombasa that evening, slowly cruising, still on the lookout for more slaves, for Zanzibar. Just before day break next morning, we sighted a dhow and two canoes of a suspicious appearance, and commenced to give chase. Suddenly a great yelling and screaming arose from the perfectly calm sea, just under our bows. A cry of a 'Man overboard!' and a boat lowered, it was only a matter of a few seconds. But it was not a man overboard, instead we picked up a poor slave boy, about twelve years old, swimming about. We then at once knew what was up. The Arabs were pitching their slaves overboard, so that when captured them we should have no proof against them that they were slave dealing. Can you imagine anything more atrocious? at once we continued the chase, and soon brought all three boats to a standstill with a few shots from our Nordenfelt guns and high time, too. We arrived too late. They had chucked overboard all their slaves, and all were drowned except one boy. The Arabs in their boats sat quiet and nonchalant as if nothing had happened, and had not all the air of men who had committed half-a-dozen atrocious murders before sunrise. However, we soon had them on board and in irons. Of course, had we not picked up the one boy we should have had no evidence whatever against them, and

they would all have passed off as quiet fishermen following their calling, their boats were full of fishing tackle on purpose.

(To be continued)

## Letter 6

*Hastings and St Leonards Observer - Saturday 28 February 1885.*

MR. J. H. B. WARNERS TRAVELS. The following continuation of the letter from Mr. J. H. Warner which appeared in our last issue:

Enquiries were soon set on foot, and it transpired that the skipper of the three boats had eight slaves on board. One boy had hidden himself, and became an important witness, the other seven were all thrown overboard, only our one boy being picked up; one woman and child and three others were thus drowned. It was six miles from shore, so there could be no possible hope of their ever landing. Our boy was a fat, strong, and very intelligent and a good-looking boy, and a capital swimmer. He made for the ship, or he would have also been drowned; he must have been in the water nearly an hour, as the slaves were thrown over when the Osprey was first sighted. I shall never forget when the Arab skipper and murderer was confronted with our boy, snatched from the jaws of death, and whom he thought was drowned for a certainty; then, of course, he gave up the game of trying to pass off as a fisherman, and the real truth came out. The next day these murderers were tried in Zanzibar, and convicted by Sir John Rink, our popular agent there. Unfortunately, they were obliged to be handed over to the Sultan's officers for punishment. I should myself have much liked to have seen speedy justice overtake them in the shape of a file of marines on the beach, or a rope from the yard-arm of the ship. We left too soon to hear of their fate, but they will probably be put into the prison—a sink of impurity and horror from which few return alive under any circumstances, and, perhaps, strangled there. This short narrative of facts will give you an idea of the present position and horrors of the slave trade. Before seeing these things myself, I imagined all this sort of business was an affair of the last century; instead of that, even now in full swing. The Osprey and boats were only a fortnight cruising altogether, in which time four or five days were wasted. In that time we captured nearly 190 slaves, large and small, and about twelve boats. Such a capture, I believe, has not been made for 20 years at least. The fact is that slavery is inherent in the Arab character, and as long as slavery is allowed in Zanzibar a supply of slaves from the mainland will find its way there. We should prohibit the trade, and establish a protectorate over the Sultan's dominions, thus keeping in our own hands the principal trade routes into Central Equatorial Africa, and the Great Lake District. If we do not adopt some course of this sort the Germans will. They are at the present moment on the lookout for a port on the Eastern Coast of Africa, they have taken Angra Pequina on the West. This is the only way of stopping the slave trade; if we adopt other and half-hearted measures we shall only be turning more millions away after those already spent in the suppression of this traffic, with what results you now see. We had one or two very tragic and serious coincidences on board. Amongst the slaves captured by H.M.S. Philomel, from the German Gulf, was a woman and child. Of the 169 slaves being brought on board the Osprey from our captured dhow this woman recognised, amongst these poor

skeletons, two of her own children and her own brother. Considering she was captured at least 2,000 miles from where our dhow was taken, this is at least curious, as showing the wide-spread area of this villainous traffic, I will now leave the slave trade and turn to a more pleasant subject, and give you some account of the sporting expeditions I made to the main land during my stay in Zanzibar. After making all enquiries, I hired and provisioned an Arab dhow, with one of the officers of the Osprey, Lieut. Douglas Hamilton, and we made our way across from Zanzibar to the Wami River on the African coast, which we heard was a good place for

#### SPORT.

We left one morning and the next we found ourselves well up the river. Our skipper and crew were all Swahili, and our dhow was very nasty and dirty, but we made the best of it, it was partially decked over, and we made with some difficulty sleeping places board. We anchored our dhow and started rowing up the river in our small boat in search of hippopotami. We had not gone more than two miles up, when, on rounding a sand bank, a sight met my eyes such as I had never seen before, and shall probably never see again. In a quiet spot in a curve of the river was a herd of about sixty splendid hippo's (I will use hippo's for short) disporting themselves in the river, shouting and roaring, and blowing the water from their nostrils in great clouds of spray. We immediately landed and got round through a mangrove swamp on to a high bank overlooking the river with our rifles. We now commenced our shooting, which I must describe to you. The only vulnerable part in the hippo' is a space about three inches, certainly not larger than a very small band put round, and behind the eye. From any other part of the skull an express rifle bullet will glance off harmlessly on account of its immense thickness. The herd was from 60 to 100 yards from us sporting in the water. They only put their heads up for a few seconds and at a time to blow and to take breath. They rarely leave the water during the day, but feed on the plains at night. The shooting, therefore, is very quick work. I had a capital express rifle, with expansive bullets, of Cogswell and Harrison's make, which made short work of them when hit just in the right place. When one was mortally wounded, the frightful roaring and groaning, fearful dashing and splashing, of one of these enormous animals in his death agony in the water was a thing never to be forgotten. Of course, we could not have shot them out of a small boat, as they would have gone for it and upset us, as described by Dr. Livingstone in this country; but our bank was too steep for them, and they could not get up at us. As it was, one of them went for our dhow, but she was too large and substantial to be anything but shaken. Another day one of them attacked my small boat with the men in her. They luckily got away, as the boat, being very rotten, would have been knocked to pieces at once. Never expecting much sport, I had come provided with only a small number of cartridges. When they were finished, we perforce had to stop. The dead hippopotamus sinks to the bottom, and does not rise generally till from two to four hours. The result of this morning's shooting was about 18— eighteen—of these enormous animals. We dragged eleven on to a sandbank that evening with very great labour, four floated down before we could get them, and at least three were found later quite dead. Each of these animals must have weighed from 1,000 lbs. to 3,000 lbs. Such a bag in weight is not often made in a couple of hours. In the evening the

tide went down, leaving our dead hippo's high and dry on a sandbank. We went for our dhow, and having lit enormous fires to keep off

#### THE MOSQUITOES

which, by the way, are something too frightful for words, set our men to work at the business of decapitation. We got the eleven heads off that night, and tremendous work it was. Some of the tusks are magnificent. Next morning the river was invaded with a tribe of hippo' eaters, just the same as Dr. Livingstone describes in his *Zambesi* " (page 25) but their spears were very inferior weapons to those described by Livingstone. Indeed, killing an hippo armed as they were appeared almost an impossibility. There was a fearful famine raging in the country, and these people had come down to kill and eat hippo's. Our shooting was, therefore, a perfect God's send to them. They encamped on the river's bank for weeks, cutting up and partially cooking the flesh. When the flesh was thus prepared, they made it into long packages, and returned up country with it for the rest of their tribe. They are a peculiar people, and do not inter-marry or live with the other natives. None of my party, being Mahoinedans, would think of eating a hippo. After this big shoot, we pursued our way up the river, where we had some excellent sport. We found antelope, deer, wild boar, zebra, giraffe, buffalos; heard lions and hyenas at night; we got jungle fowl, partridges, guinea fowl, quail, snipe, curlieus, in fact all sorts game. Unfortunately, we had to return to the river's mouth to meet the Osprey. On my second trip I found the plains flooded, and much of the game gone, but we had several more good days at the hippo's. The worst of these trips is the horrible deadly and malarious character of the country. Fever is a certainty, and all suffered from it more or less, of course we were there in the middle of the summer, and the heat of an Equatorial African summer is something to be remembered, especially amongst the putrid and stinking swamps of a river's mouth. I would not recommend anyone to choose this country for sport, notwithstanding the wonderful amount of game, unless very strong and thoroughly inured to the climate. That it is an extraordinary country for game, the tracks of wild animals of all sorts literally covering the plains abundantly show. I was glad to get back to Zanzibar, and eventually away from Equatorial Africa altogether, as the heat was intense, and we had many men down with sickness and fever. In fact, this very day the worth of our river party are down with fever except myself. We finally quitted Zanzibar early December for the Seychelle Inlands, a British colony some of your readers may not have heard of, and a dependency of Mauritius, where we expect now to arrive in a day or two. At the Seychelles we boat and go on to Colombo. From Colombo I take the mail to Hong Kong, where I stop with Sir George Bowen, the Governor, and where I hope to see something of the French war with China. I will send you an account of my further travels interesting to your readers. I will post this by French mail at the Seychelles. It should reach you on 19th January. I hope to return to England in May. Believe me, yours truly,

J. H. B. WARNER.

#### Letter 7

*Hastings and St Leonards Observer - Saturday 06 June 1885*

Mr. J. H. B. Warner Abroad.

## HIS RETURN HOME.

The following letter addressed to us from "Marseilles, France, 1st June 1885" containing the concluding portions of the account of Mr Warner's travels, will, we are sure, be read with great interest by many persons in this borough : —

My Dear Sir. —My last letter to you, describing my African travels, and written from H.M.S. Osprey, was, I believe, posted to you a short time before Christmas last, from the Seychelles Inlands, on my arrival there. The Islands are a very little known colony of Great Britain, and a dependency of Mauritius. We have a Commissioner there, who administers the Government of the group. The Archipelago consists of over 70 islands and islets, the whole of which are most beautiful and picturesque, and contain some very curious and unique vegetation. The inlands were originally settled by the French, but were taken by us during the wars of the last century. The land is most fertile but has at present been made but little use of. I cannot help thinking that some of our planters from Ceylon and elsewhere would do well in taking cultivating land in the Seychelles. We are at Port Victoria, the capital of the Islands, a most picturesque and romantic village, about a week, owing to the serious illness of the Captain of the Osprey from the fever contracted on the African Coast, on our slaving exhibition already described. This delay gave me the opportunity of visiting one of the islands called Traslin where is found the celebrated Coco-de Mer. double cocoa nut. This is the only place in the world where this most extraordinary tree is produced. At the present time a curious interest attaches to this tree and island, as General Gordon, of Khartoum, resided here for some time, and wrote a most ingenious treatise upon this subject, claiming for the Seychelles the distinction of being

## THE GARDEDN OF EDEN,

and for the Coco-de-Mer that of being the forbidden fruit. I have no time here to enter into any discussion in to the subject, but I must say that both the lamented Gordon's pamphlet and clever illustrations which I have seen are most interesting, and I am in hopes of seeing them shortly given to the public in print. After a most pleasant week at the Seychelles, where we were treated with great hospitality we set sail for Colombo, in Ceylon. We passed on our way all through the Maldivian Islands, which are some of the most characteristic coral "atolls" in the world, just above the sea level by the coral insect, and covered with cocoanuts. They are all something in the shape of a circle or horseshoe, with the smooth lagoon of the water inside, and most picturesque. We arrived at Colombo, in Ceylon, on New Year's Day, and found H.M.S. Euryalus, with the Admiral Sir W. Hewitt on board, giving a ball that afternoon, which we were just in time for. Here I met several old friends, and decided to stop a fortnight in the island before going on to Hong Kong, although I had already visited and seen it thoroughly on previous occasions. While there I made an expedition to Kandy and to Newera Elyia, passing through some of the best coffee country and estates on the island. The coffee has suffered immensely from the leaf disease, and I found most of the estates planting the cincona tree for quinine amongst their coffee, and also substituting the tea plant for the coffee. By these means avoiding the great mistake made by Mauritius relying solely on one industry—sugar. The mountain country round Kandy, and through the centre of the island, is very beautiful, as is also the road to Newer Elyia which is

## A SANATARIUM

in the mountains, passing for miles through Coffee, tea, and limona estates, winding round the mountains, and crossing gullies and waterfalls. I found railways extended and roads much improved, also large irrigation works in progress, during the last few years in Ceylon, and with good seasons, I think the island has a chance of doing well, notwithstanding the injury indicted on the planting interests by the failure of the coffee crops owing to the leaf disease, and the present shortness of money in the Colonial Treasury. The town of Kandy itself is most picturesque and beautifully situated, embowered in wooded hills on the edge of a lovely lake. Certainly the well-kept tracks and drives round through the tropical forests are not to be beaten in any part of the world. The Government Gardens of Peradeniya are very well worth a visit. I had intended to have gone into the interior for some elephant shooting, as the Ceylon elephants have now been preserved for some years, and are consequently very plentiful, but time would not permit of the expedition. I therefore returned to Colombo, and went in the Poo steamer, bound to Hong Kong, to pay a visit to my old friend. Sir George Bowen, the governor of that island. At Colombo I parted from friends, the officers of H.M.S. Osprey after having received the greatest hospitality, and having had a most pleasant and instructive trip of some months on board. We touched at Tinary and Singapore for a short time on the voyage—all old ground to me, as I spent some time in the Straits Settlements with the Governor, Sir F. Weld, on my way home in 1883 also on several other occasions, so I will not detain you with describing these places, but merely refer to them on another subject later on. After a prosperous voyage we arrived in Hong Kong. About forty-two years since, a small midshipman, with an ordinary boat's crew, landed from an English man of-war on a perfectly desolate, rocky, tree less island in the China seas, far away from everything. The island was inhabited by no one but a few poor fishermen, but was infected, as the other islands around, by robbers and gangs of inveterate pirates, and was a sort of rendezvous and meeting-place for all the rascals and freebooters in the China teas. That midshipman is the present Admiral Sir William Dowell, in command of our China station, and that island of pirates forty two years ago is at present the fourth port of entry of the whole British Empire—

## HONG KONG,

the key of the eastern seas, and headquarters of the China trade. I know no more marvellous feat than this in the history of British colonisation and civilisation. One fact of this sort should be sufficient answer to those who favour the abandonment of our colonies and disintegration of our empire, and to all anti-annexationists. I will not weary you with statistics of Hong Kong. You will see for yourselves how marvellous its growth under British rule must have been, and how extraordinary must be the civilising influence exerted by such settlements in remote quarters the world. Hong Kong now contains, I believe, about 400,000 inhabitants, peaceful and contented under British rule, and the amount of ships of all nations in the harbour of Victoria is beyond belief. It is not an unusual thing to see thirty men-of-war of different nationalities laying in harbour together, and I am informed on very good authority, that no less than £80,000 worth of powder is annually fired off in the harbour in salutes alone. The harbour is a very good one, and capable of containing any amount of fleets. The town of Victoria most picturesquely situated on the slopes the hill sides, culminating in Victoria Park. The roads and paths are chiefly planted, and very pretty with fine views of town and

harbour stretched out below, and in the distance the barren hills of the mainland of China. Government House is charmingly situated with fine terraced gardens and grand views. It is a fine house, well suited for a hot climate. The first thing that strikes a stranger on landing in Hong Kong is the mode of conveyance. There are few carriages, and almost everyone is carried in chairs by China coolies. These chairs are light bamboo armchairs, slung on poles, and are very comfortable. With coolies one can ride easily up to the top of the Peak, over 1,700 feet high, without the coolies showing much fatigue. They get along at a very quick march, and the motion is altogether very pleasant. Since I was there last, the Japanese "jinrikska" —a small cart on wheels pulled by a man—has been introduced, but this, although good for the town, is useless for hilly country. I arrived in Hong Kong in January, and found the climate very pleasant and cold at the beginning of March, in fact, all through the winter the climate is delightful. In summer it is hot, but all the principal residents now have villas on Victoria Peak, 1,700 feet high, which is always cool and airy. There is also a Governor's summer residence there. While in Hong Kong, amongst other things, I made two most interesting trips, one was to

#### THE PORTUGESE SETTLEMENT

OF Macau, on the Arma coast, some forty miles off. If anything could convince some of our anti colonials of the advantages of English colonization it would be to contrast between these two colonics —Hong Kong and Macau. Macau was started a century or two before Hong Kong, under far more favourable circumstances, by the Portuguese. It is now a desolate deserted village with neither trade or commerce. It principally exists from revenues derived from its gaming tables. It is an exceedingly pretty and quaint place, reminding one exactly of a half-deserted little Mediterranean village. I went over to what was called the carnival, and were hospitably entertained there by Colonel da Rosa, the Portuguese Governor. As far as the Carnival itself went there was not much to be seen, but the whole week was kept as a general holiday, it was, moreover, the China New Year, which is the great *fete* of the year amongst the Chinese. Besides the usual gambling establishments, where the game of fantana is played, in the gaming houses, the whole of the streets were filled with amateur gamblers, each with his own small table ready to be picked up and carried off at a moment's notice. It is the custom for the Governor to go the round of the gaming houses on New Year's Day, and to encourage the proceedings playing little himself. This he accordingly did, accompanied by the Governor Hong Kong and party, and a most amusing evening we all had. I cannot say any of us came off winners, so we all lost what little we staked. This question of

#### LEGALISING GAMBLING

China is a very important one, and with a nation of inveterate gamblers like the Chinse, the legalisation of gaming and its supervision by Government seems the only sensible course to pursue. I hear that gambling has recently Legalized in Canton. If this is the case it will tend enormously to decrease the revenue of Macau, as previously no gambling was allowed in either Hong Kong or Canton, consequently thousands of Chinamen came over from places to play in Macau. From Hong Kong I also paid another visit to Canton, which is situated about 70 miles up the Pearl River from its mouth. Capital river steamers now connect the two towns, and the journey can be done each way easily in a day. The Chinese have been very hard at work since the war with France improving and arming their forts on the Canton River, and

have at the present some formidable defences there, consisting of new forts and guns, torpedoes, and booms, &c. We steamed up through the middle of the torpedoes, and the forts certainly appeared very formidable. An expedition to Canton now would be a very different undertaking to what it was 20 years ago, and would require a good army and fleet. The only way in which the French could inflict any serious damage on China would be an expedition to Pekin, an undertaking which would now require an expedition of from 50,000 to 60,000 men. As a matter of fact, the French have at present really done nothing against the Chinese, the blockade of Formosa being a farce, and very like the blockade of Madagascar I wrote you about, but I will not dilate upon this subject, as I am in hope that when you receive this letter that the more than useless and stupid conflict between France and China will be at an end. I may mention that during the Franco-Chinese War

#### OUR POSITION AS NEUTRALS

in Hong Kong has been a very delicate one, and that the difficulties of the Governor and Council have been greatly increased by the vacillating policy an continual countermanaging of orders our changeable Government at home, which, even in such a simple matter of neutrality, never seems to know its own mind for five minutes together. I had visited Canton about ten years since, and with the exception of forts, guns, and torpedoes, found not the least difference in the city, in fact, I do not suppose it has changed much in the same number of centuries. The portion of the town inhabited by the Europeans is fenced and walled off by a canal, &c from the native town, and is called the Sha-men. It is a very little settlement, nicely laid-out and planted with trees, and is most strange and striking contrast to the crowded native town, where the streets are only a few feet wide, and where it is impossible to walk for the dense crowds always filling the streets. I took up my quarters with a merchant in the Sha-men—there are no hotels in Canton—and after getting an order from the Governor, was allowed to visit the native town. As the war was raging, and all Europeans regarded with great suspicion by the Chinese, no Europeans had been in the native town for some time and it was not considered particularly safe. I took a covered chair, which almost entirely concealed me, and a guide, was carried through the streets until I arrived at shops or places I wished to visit. I was never actually interfered with, but was a good deal hooted at, when I showed myself, with cries of

#### "FOREIGN DEVIL"

and "Kill him." but nothing happened except a good deal of noise, and I did all I wanted to in Canton. I had previously seen all the sights, and went this time principally to purchase works of art, &c., of which I got a great many very good and cheap, in consequence of there being no other buyers about on account of the war, and also of its being New Year, when a Chinaman squares all his accounts, and consequently is generally in want of ready money. I will not, therefore, weary you with any further description of Canton. Several engagements between the French and Chinese took place when I was in Hong Kong, but, although I had several offers of trips on our men of war, I was not lucky enough to see any of them. I returned to Hong Kong for the races, which is the great carnival of the community for the year. The race course, called the Happy Valley, is most charming and picturesque, and the racing is all run by Chinese ponies, which are small and ugly, but which still do a wonderful pace, judging from their appearance. The Hong Kong people are most hospitable, and the

race week was a succession of balls, dinners, luncheons, &c., and everything done in a very nice English fashion. From Hong Kong I made up my mind to take a run round Australia in as short a time as possible, purely to visit my cattle and sheep stations and estates in South Australia, and look after my business in the Colonies. I therefore left my old friend the Governor on the 5<sup>th</sup> March, and embarked via Singapore again, and Malay, Archipelago, to

#### NORTH AUSTRALIA

and Queensland. I may here mention that one of my objects in undertaking this journey was also to endeavour to initiate local branches of the Imperial Federation League, lately started in London, upon which I feel very strongly, and in which I have taken a great interest most of your readers know the object of the League, I will not enter upon any discussion here of its objects, but may merely say that I have been most extraordinarily successful in getting branch societies initiated in nearly all the colonies I have visited. I succeeded in starting branches in Hong Kong, Straits Settlements, Mauritius, and in putting it into good hands in Ceylon, New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia, and in Tasmania. I feel convinced that it is a matter of Imperial Federation, with some form of ultimate representation at home, or of the actual and speedy disintegration of the British Empire, I naturally feel pleased at the enthusiasm with which the scheme of Confederation has been received in most of our colonies. From my extensive experience all our colonies and most of their prominent politicians, I have no hesitation in saying that it simply comes to—as the *Pall Mall Gazette* expressed it—a question as to whether we shall "federate or perish." This Federation Scheme is a matter of vital importance to the existence of the Empire, quite apart from party politics, I hope to be able to take some active part in it on my return England, arriving again at Singapore, we received the disquieting news of the chances of a rupture with Russia. As far as our possessions in far East are concerned there never could have been a better time for the Russians to fight us. It will probably appear incredible to your readers that our most important far Eastern settlement and port, commanding the only highway to the far East, the seat of an immense trade and great accumulated wealth, and large population, should have been left practically defenceless. But so it is with

#### SINGAPORE.

The Government have done nothing; the neglect of Imperial interests is simply appalling. The very day we were in Singapore the Russian Admiral Crown was there with two corvettes hoisting his flag on the new magnificent Russian Ironclad, the Vladimir Monomach. In case of war, the place would absolutely be at the mercy of the first comer, as we have hardly a new gun in the forts, or a new earthwork since the Indian Mutiny, and not a harbour defence ship in the port. The position of affairs is too lamentable. I am sorry to say our other Eastern stations are not much better. At Hong Kong they have woken up, and, I am glad to say, now hard at work over forts and defences. Besides, they have some good harbour defence ships, torpedo boats, &c. It is also the headquarters of our China fleet. At Tinary *there is absolutely nothing*. It is entirely at the mercy of the first comer. Port Louis, Mauritius, is almost defenceless. With the exception of a couple of 7-inch guns, they have nothing. Aden is now being placed in a proper state of defence, and none too soon. Bombay, Trincomalee, and Colombo are also to be looked at. Let us hope it will not be too late. The defenceless state of Singapore and Tinary in particular is nothing less than a most disgraceful scandal to our

empire. After leaving Singapore we had a very quiet and favourable voyage, through lovely scenery, through the Malay Islands to Port Darwin, the northern port of Australia, at present a new and rather struggling settlement, governed from Adelaide. I will not detain you long on Australian matters in this letter, as the subject is too large for my space, and as I may have opportunities of personally giving you some information on the subject after my return home. I may mention that I arrived all right at my place in where I had six horses, an American carriage, and two men to meet me. This enabled me to do a very good journey in a short time. Our mode of procession was this: we drove in the carriage two horses, rode one, thus leaving three to be driven bareback along the roadside. This means we had always three fresh spare horses. I did once for three days do over 70 miles a day; horses never groomed, and nothing but grass fed. This will give you an idea of what a capital grass country this is; very different to my descriptions of South Africa. I accomplished from 300 to 400 miles within a fortnight. I found Queensland and New South Wales suffering from a very

#### SEVERE DROUGHT,

having had hardly any rain for three years, but my estates being on the coast, and in a wet country, we have not been affected. The burning question in Queensland is still the labour question, which as far from being solved as ever. I am afraid tropical agriculture is doomed unless some system of the importation of cheap coloured labour can be arrived at. In New South Wales, the great excitement had just been over the dispatch of the Australian contingent to Suakim. Whatever else may be thought about this offer of troops of the New South Wales Government, and about its acceptance by the Home Government, no doubt can be entertained but that it has immensely tended to knit together the Empire and her Colonies, and that it will have a very distinct tendency towards ultimate Federation. has also been a grand advertisement for all the Australian Colonies. After again visiting Brisbane, Sydney, Melbourne and Adelaide, I embarked on the 27th April, on the French mail for Marseilles, where we arrived, after a wonderful passage, yesterday. On our way we again touched Maritime, Reunion, Seychelles, Aden, Suez and Port Said, where I found many old friends. We were perfectly in the dark as to war news, for nearly a month, until arriving at Aden; there being no telegraph at Mauritius, great excitement prevailed, and bets were freely given on war with Russia. From previous experience of the Grand Old Man's proceedings, I won my money, thinking it likely he would

#### CAVE IN

to the Russian demands, we found the case. I post this to you from Marseilles, where I arrived yesterday, after a prosperous and interesting travel of nearly eighteen months through many varied scenes and countries. With regard to the effects that these travels, previous have upon my political opinions, I need only say, to quote Mr. Howard Vincent, that return home "absolutely aghast at the deliberate neglect of British interests in every quarter of the globe during the last five years, and with a firm conviction that a continuance of such policy must lead to the early overthrow of the unity and prosperity of the British Empire." I hope to arrive in few days, to have the pleasure again of seeing you in Hastings.

I have the honour to be,

Yours faithfully,

J. H. B. Warner