

it must be." He would heartily welcome a peace if possible, but in present circumstances he would rather not be there to see it made.

The Conference was then on the point of breaking up, when—

Commandant Edwards asked Sir Redvers for a definite proposition.

Sir R. Buller replied that the burghers should disperse home, leaving their artillery behind; they might take their small-arms with them. The question of the ultimate surrender of these arms would have to be settled afterwards. Sir Redvers does not want to take away their arms now, that would be a question for Lord Roberts and Mr. Kruger to settle. He, personally, had no power to make peace. He has met the deputation because he deplors the war. He has had many friends in the Transvaal, and he would like them to live happily and peacefully for the remainder of their lives.

Commandant Botha said he had the same wish, but it was impossible for him to accept or offer terms; he would be a traitor if he did.

Commandant Edwards asked whether Sir Redvers could not make definite proposals for peace.

Sir R. Buller asked whether the commandos here would authorise him to ask Lord Roberts to offer terms.

Commandant Botha agreed, on condition that they retained their independence.

Sir R. Buller replied that he was not in communication with the Government and he could not speak officially, but he had reason to believe that the present Government will not be allowed to continue, that there will be some English form of Government, and that the burghers will come in time to participate in the government of the country.

Commandant Edwards said that if the burghers knew what they are to expect, it would facilitate matters, and suggested that Sir Redvers should communicate with Lord Roberts, and ask definitely what the terms of peace are to be.

Sir R. Buller said he would telegraph to Lord Roberts and enquire as to whether he was now in a position to formulate terms of peace.

Commandant Edwards said that his government knew of this meeting, and they would inform it of Sir Redvers' proposals.

Sir R. Buller said he could not wait long, but on being told that a reply could be received in three days, he agreed to an armistice up till Tuesday evening, 5th June.

Commandant Botha said that if he entered into this agreement the English forces must remain where they are.

Sir R. Buller said he could not agree to this as he cannot stop movements now in progress, but he will not fire, nor will he advance his troops in front line beyond their present outposts.

Commandant Botha replied that all he wanted was an assurance that no forces will advance to attack his forces.

It was then agreed that Commandant-General Botha will communicate with his Government as to whether Sir Redvers' proposals should be accepted, and Sir Redvers said he would ask Lord Roberts whether he was yet in a position to formulate his terms of peace.

The meeting then ended.

PROCLAMATION.

The troops of Queen Victoria are now passing through the Transvaal. Her Majesty does not make war on individuals, but is on the contrary

anxious to spare them as far as may be possible the horrors of war. The quarrel England has is with the Government, not with the people of the Transvaal.

Provided they remain neutral no attempt will be made to interfere with persons living near the line of march, every possible protection will be given them, and any of their property that it may be necessary to take will be paid for.

But on the other hand those who are thus allowed to remain near the line of march must respect and maintain their neutrality, and the residents of any locality will be held responsible, both in their persons and their property, if any damage is done to railway or telegraph, or any violence done to any member of the British Forces in the vicinity of their homes.

From General Buller, Newcastle, to Lord Roberts, Front.

2nd June, 1900.

On the 30th May I sent to Commandant on Laing's Nek, and told him that Lord Roberts had crossed the Vaal and that further fighting was useless. This eventually produced a meeting between our outposts to-day of Assistant Commandant-General Chris. Botha and myself. He asked me what terms of peace you would offer, and I undertook to make no advance for three days while he was communicating to his Government. Can you let me know your terms of peace for individual and separate commandos? I told him that my terms were that his men should surrender all guns and return to their farms, and if they did that they could take their rifles with them, subject to the understanding that Lord Roberts will later probably order their disarmament.

I thought this would not be wrong, as they can at this moment, if they wish, run away and take both guns and rifles with them. I said that to talk about independence was nonsense, if hereafter they behave themselves they might become an independent colony, that was the only chance they had.

I think they are inclined to give in, and that I have in front of me about half the Transvaal forces now in the field.

If you think it worth while, please let me know if I may mention any terms of peace to them. I think that even if assisted from the Orange Free State it will cost me about 500 men killed and wounded to get out of Natal.

From Lord Roberts, Johannesburg, to General Buller, Newcastle.

3rd June, 1900.

Your telegram of yesterday. My terms with the Transvaal Government are unconditional surrender. With regard to troops, those who deliver up their arms and riding animals are allowed to go to their homes on signing pledge that they will not fight again during present war. The exceptions to this rule are those who have commanded portions of the Republican forces, or who have taken an active part in the policy which brought about the war, or who have been guilty of or been parties to wanton destruction of property, or guilty of acts contrary to the usages of civilised warfare. Principal Officers should remain with you on parole, until you receive instructions regarding their disposal.