

CHAPTER XIV

*THE GREAT BOER WAR.***Looking Back.**

In common with other parts of South Africa in the years 1899—1900, Natal was the scene of the greatest war in which England has been engaged since her struggle with Napoleon.

From the year 1881, when the deplorable mistake was made of giving the Transvaal back to the Boers, **President Kruger** set himself steadfastly to the great design of throwing off the suzerainty of England, and of establishing a Dutch Dominion from Capetown to the Zambesi. The majority of the Boers, knowing nothing of the outside world or of the power of the Empire which had given them back their country, quite believed that the surrender had been due to fear, and that the hated English, their hereditary enemies, had been finally crushed and humiliated at Amajuba. Both President and people had an inborn hatred and distrust of the English, and the desire to oust them from supremacy in South Africa strengthened year by year. To accomplish this, however, an army was required, and arms and ammunition could not be procured without money. The Transvaal, between 1881 and 1886, was a poverty-stricken State fast drifting, through the incompetence of Kruger and his advisers, into the condition of bankruptcy and chaos which compelled the interference of England in 1876. But when the hidden wealth of the Rand came