

**AN ENGLISH-SOUTH
AFRICAN'S VIEW
OF THE SITUATION:
WORDS IN SEASON**

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An English-South African's View of the Situation: Words in Season by Olive Schreiner

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Miss Sally Fairclough

An English-South African's View of the Situation.

MANY views have found expression in the columns of papers during the last weeks. The working man only a few weeks or months from England has expressed his opposition to those stratagems with war for aim which would leave him without the defence he has at present from the pressure of employers. Journalists only a few years, months, or weeks from Europe, have written, not perhaps expressing a desire for war, but implying it might be well the wave swept across South Africa, and especially if across that portion which is richest in mineral wealth, and, therefore, more to be

desired. South Africans and men from Europe alike have written deprecating war, because of the vast suffering and loss it would occasion to individuals.

Dutch and English South Africans have written proving the injustice that would be inflicted on the people of Africa, the violation of treaties and trust. But, amid all this chorus of opinion, there is one voice which, though heard, has not yet been heard with that distinctness and fulness which its authority demands—it is the voice of the African-born Englishman who loves England, the man who, born in South Africa, and loving it as all men, who are men, love their birth-land, is yet an Englishman, bound to England not only by ties of blood, but that much more intense passion which springs from personal contact alone. Our position is unique, and it would seem that we are marked out, at the present juncture of South African affairs, for an especial function, which imposes on us at whatever cost to our-

selves the duty of making our voices heard and taking our share in the life of our two nations at their

Most Critical Juncture.

For let us consider what exactly our position is.

Born in South Africa, our eyes first opened on these African hills and plains; around us, of other parentage, but born with us in the land, our birth-fellows, were men of another white race, and we grew up side by side with them. Is it strange that, like all men living who have the hearts of men, we learnt to love this land in which we first saw light? In after years, when we left it, and lived months or years across the seas, is it strange we carried it with us in our hearts?—when we stood on the Alps and looked down on the lakes and forests of Switzerland, we have said, “This is fair, but South Africa to us is fairer”? that when on the top of Milan Cathedral, and we have looked out across the wide plains of Lombardy, we have said, “This is noble; but

nobler to us are the broad plains of Africa, with their brown kopjes shimmering in the translucent sunshine"? Is it strange that when, after long years of absence, years it may be of success and the joy which springs from human fellowship and youth, our ship has cast its anchor in sight of Table Bay, and the great front of Table Mountain has reared up before us, a cry of passionate joy has welled up within us; and when we saw the black men with their shining skins unloading in the docks, and the rugged faces of South Africans browned with our African sun, we put our foot on the dear old earth again, and our hearts have cried: "We are South Africans! We have come back again to our land and to our people"? Is it strange that when we are in other lands, and we fear that death approaches us, we say: "Take us back! We may live away from her, but when we are dead we must lie on her breast. Bury us among the kopjes where we played when we were children, and let the iron stones and red