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Winston Spencer Churchill

In the strict sense of the phrase, a soldier of fortune is a man who for pay, or for the love of adventure, fights under the flag of any country.

In the bigger sense he is the kind of man who in any walk of life makes his own fortune, who, when he sees it coming, leaps to meet it, and turns it to his advantage.

Than Winston Spencer Churchill today there are few young men--and he is a very young man--who have met more varying fortunes, and none who has more frequently bent them to his own advancement. To him it has been indifferent whether, at the moment, the fortune seemed good or evil, in the end always it was good.

As a boy officer, when other subalterns were playing polo, and at the Gaiety Theatre attending night school, he ran away to Cuba and fought with the Spaniards. For such a breach of military discipline, any other officer would have been court-martialed. Even his friends feared that by his foolishness his career in the army was at an end. Instead, his escapade was made a question in the House of Commons, and the fact brought him such publicity that the *Daily Graphic* paid him handsomely to write on the Cuban Revolution, and the Spanish government rewarded him with the Order of Military Merit.

At the very outbreak of the Boer war he was taken prisoner. It seemed a climax of misfortune. With his brother officers he had hoped in that campaign to acquit himself with credit, and that he should lie inactive in Pretoria appeared a terrible calamity. To the others who, through many heart-breaking months, suffered imprisonment, it continued to be a calamity. But within six weeks of his capture Churchill escaped, and, after many adventures, rejoined his own army to find that the calamity had made him a hero.

When after the battle of Omdurman, in his book on "The River War," he attacked Lord Kitchener, those who did not like him, and they were many, said: "That's the end of Winston in the army. He'll never get another chance to criticize K. of K."

But only two years later the chance came, when, no longer a subaltern, but as a member of the House of Commons, he patronized Kitchener by defending him from the attacks of others.

Later, when his assaults upon the leaders of his own party closed to him, even in his own constituency, the Conservative debating clubs, again his ill-wishers said: "This *is* the end. He has ridiculed those who sit in high places. He has offended his cousin and patron, the Duke of Marlborough. Without political friends, without the influence and money of the Marlborough family he is a political nonentity." That was eighteen months ago. Today, at the age of thirty-two, he is one of the leaders of the government party, Under-Secretary for the Colonies, and with the Liberals the most popular young man in public life.

Only last Christmas, at a banquet, Sir Edward Grey, the new Foreign Secretary, said of him: "Mr. Winston Churchill has achieved distinction in at least five different careers--as a soldier, a war correspondent, a lecturer, an author, and last, but not least, as a politician. I have

understated it even now, for he has achieved two careers as a politician--one on each side of the House. His first career on the Government side was a really distinguished career. I trust the second will be even more distinguished--and more prolonged. The remarkable thing is that he has done all this when, unless appearances very much belie him, he has not reached the age of sixty-four, which is the minimum age at which the politician ceases to be young."

Winston Leonard Spencer Churchill was born thirty-two years ago, in November, 1874. By birth he is half-American. His father was Lord Randolph Churchill, and his mother was Jennie Jerome, of New York. On the father's side he is the grandchild of the seventh Duke of Marlborough, on the distaff side, of Leonard Jerome.

To a student of heredity it would be interesting to try and discover from which of these ancestors Churchill drew those qualities which in him are most prominent, and which have led to his success.

What he owes to his father and mother it is difficult to overestimate, almost as difficult as to overestimate what he has accomplished by his own efforts.

He was not a child born a full-grown genius of commonplace parents. Rather his fate threatened that he should always be known as the son of his father. And certainly it was asking much of a boy that he should live up to a father who was one of the most conspicuous, clever, and erratic statesmen of the later Victorian era, and a mother who is as brilliant as she is beautiful.

For at no time was the American wife content to be merely ornamental. Throughout the political career of her husband she was his helpmate, and as an officer of the Primrose League, as an editor of the *Anglo-Saxon Review*, as, for many hot, weary months in Durban Harbor, the head of the hospital ship *Maine*, she has shown an acute mind and real executive power. At the polls many votes that would not respond to the arguments of the husband, and later of the son, were gained over to the cause by the charm and wit of the American woman.

In his earlier days, if one can have days any earlier than those he now enjoys, Churchill was entirely influenced by two things: the tremendous admiration he felt for his father, which filled him with ambition to follow in his orbit, and the camaraderie of his mother, who treated him less like a mother than a sister and companion.

Indeed, Churchill was always so precocious that I cannot recall the time when he was young enough to be Lady Randolph's son; certainly, I cannot recall the time when she was old enough to be his mother.

When first I knew him he had passed through Harrow and Sandhurst and was a second lieutenant in the Queen's Own Hussars. He was just of age, but appeared much younger.

He was below medium height, a slight, delicate-looking boy; although, as a matter of fact, extremely strong, with blue eyes, many freckles, and hair which threatened to be a decided red, but which now has lost its fierceness. When he spoke it was with a lisp, which also has changed, and which now appears to be merely an intentional hesitation.

His manner of speaking was nervous, eager, explosive. He used many gestures, some of which were strongly reminiscent of his father, of whom he, unlike most English lads, who shy at mentioning a distinguished parent, constantly spoke.

He even copied his father in his little tricks of manner. Standing with hands shoved under the frock-coat and one resting on each hip as though squeezing in the waist line; when seated, resting the elbows on the arms of the chair and nervously locking and unclasping fingers, are tricks common to both.

He then had and still has a most embarrassing habit of asking many questions; embarrassing, sometimes, because the questions are so frank, and sometimes because they lay bare the wide expanse of one's own ignorance.

At that time, although in his twenty-first year, this lad twice had been made a question in the House of Commons.

That in itself had rendered him conspicuous. When you consider out of Great Britain's four hundred million subjects how many live, die, and are buried without at any age having drawn down upon themselves the anger of the House of Commons, to have done so twice, before one has passed his twenty-first year, seems to promise a lurid future.

The first time Churchill disturbed the august assemblage in which so soon he was to become a leader was when he "ragged" a brother subaltern named Bruce and cut up his saddle and accoutrements. The second time was when he ran away to Cuba to fight with the Spaniards.

After this campaign, on the first night of his arrival in London, he made his maiden speech. He delivered it in a place of less dignity than the House of Commons, but one, throughout Great Britain and her colonies, as widely known and as well supported. This was the Empire Music Hall.

At the time Mrs. Ormiston Chant had raised objections to the presence in the Music Hall of certain young women, and had threatened, unless they ceased to frequent its promenade, to have the license of the Music Hall revoked. As a compromise, the management ceased selling liquor, and on the night Churchill visited the place the bar in the promenade was barricaded with scantling and linen sheets. With the thirst of tropical Cuba still upon him, Churchill asked for a drink, which was denied him, and the crusade, which in his absence had been progressing fiercely, was explained. Any one else would have taken no for his answer, and have sought elsewhere for his drink. Not so Churchill. What he did is interesting, because it was so extremely characteristic. Now he would not do it; then he was twenty-one.

He scrambled to the velvet-covered top of the railing which divides the auditorium from the promenade, and made a speech. It was a plea in behalf of his "Sisters, the Ladies of the Empire Promenade."

"Where," he asked of the ladies themselves and of their escorts crowded below him in the promenade, "does the Englishman in London always find a welcome? Where does he first go when, battle-scarred and travel-worn, he reaches home? Who is always there to greet him with a smile, and join him in a drink? Who is ever faithful, ever true--the Ladies of the Empire Promenade."

The laughter and cheers that greeted this, and the tears of the ladies themselves, naturally brought the performance on the stage to a stop, and the vast audience turned in the seats and boxes.

They saw a little red-haired boy in evening clothes, balancing himself on the rail of the balcony, and around him a great crowd, cheering, shouting, and bidding him "Go on!"

Churchill turned with delight to the larger audience, and repeated his appeal. The house shook with laughter and applause.

The commissionaires and police tried to reach him and a good-tempered but very determined mob of well-dressed gentlemen and cheering girls fought them back. In triumph Churchill ended his speech by begging his hearers to give "fair play" to the women, and to follow him in a charge upon the barricades.

The charge was instantly made, the barricades were torn down, and the terrified management ordered that drink be served to its victorious patrons.

Shortly after striking this blow for the liberty of others, Churchill organized a dinner which illustrated the direction in which at that age his mind was working, and showed that his ambition was already abnormal. The dinner was given to those of his friends and acquaintances who "were under twenty-one years of age, and who in twenty years would control the destinies of the British Empire."

As one over the age limit, or because he did not consider me an empire-controlling force, on this great occasion, I was permitted to be present. But except that the number of incipient empire-builders was very great, that they were very happy, and that save the host himself none of them took his idea seriously, I would not call it an evening of historical interest. But the fact is interesting that of all the boys present, as yet, the host seems to be the only one who to any conspicuous extent is disturbing the destinies of Great Britain. However, the others can reply that ten of the twenty years have not yet passed.

When he was twenty-three Churchill obtained leave of absence from his regiment, and as there was no other way open to him to see fighting, as a correspondent he joined the Malakand Field Force in India.

It may be truthfully said that by his presence in that frontier war he made it and himself famous. His book on that campaign is his best piece of war reporting. To the civilian reader it has all the delight of one of Kipling's Indian stories, and to writers on military subjects it is a model. But it is a model very few can follow, and which Churchill himself was unable to follow, for the reason that only once is it given a man to be twenty-three years of age.

The picturesque hand-to-hand fighting, the night attacks, the charges up precipitous hills, the retreats made carrying the wounded under constant fire, which he witnessed and in which he bore his part, he never again can see with the same fresh and enthusiastic eyes. Then it was absolutely new, and the charm of the book and the value of the book are that with the intolerance of youth he attacks in the service evils that older men prefer to let lie, and that with the ingenuousness of youth he tells of things which to the veteran have become unimportant, or which through usage he is no longer even able to see.

In his three later war books, the wonder of it, the horror of it, the quick admiration for brave deeds and daring men, give place, in "The River War," to the critical point of view of the military expert, and in his two books on the Boer War to the rapid impressions of the journalist. In these latter books he tells you of battles he has seen, in the first one he made you see them.

For his services with the Malakand Field Force he received the campaign medal with clasp, and, "in despatches," Brigadier-General Jeffreys praises "the courage and resolution of Lieutenant W. L. S. Churchill, Fourth Hussars, with the force as correspondent of the *Pioneer*."

From the operations around Malakand, he at once joined Sir William Lockhart as orderly officer, and with the Tirah Expedition went through that campaign.

For this his Indian medal gained a second clasp.

This was in the early part of 1898. In spite of the time taken up as an officer and as a correspondent, he finished his book on the Malakand Expedition and then, as it was evident Kitchener would soon attack Khartum, he jumped across to Egypt and again as a correspondent took part in the advance upon that city.

Thus, in one year, he had seen service in three campaigns.

On the day of the battle his luck followed him. Kitchener had attached him to the Twenty-first Lancers, and it will be remembered the event of the battle was the charge made by that squadron. It was no canter, no easy "pig-sticking"; it was a fight to get in and a fight to get out, with frenzied followers of the Khalifa hanging to the bridle reins, hacking at the horses'

hamstrings, and slashing and firing point-blank at the troopers. Churchill was in that charge. He received the medal with clasp.

Then he returned home and wrote "The River War." This book is the last word on the campaigns up the Nile. From the death of Gordon in Khartoum to the capture of the city by Kitchener, it tells the story of the many gallant fights, the wearying failures, the many expeditions into the hot, boundless desert, the long, slow progress toward the final winning of the Sudan.

The book made a distinct sensation. It was a work that one would expect from a lieutenant-general, when, after years of service in Egypt, he laid down his sword to pen the story of his life's work. From a Second Lieutenant, who had been on the Nile hardly long enough to gain the desert tan, it was a revelation. As a contribution to military history it was so valuable that for the author it made many admirers, but on account of his criticisms of his superior officers it gained him even more enemies.

This is a specimen of the kind of thing that caused the retired army officer to sit up and choke with apoplexy:

"General Kitchener, who never spares himself, cares little for others. He treated all men like machines, from the private soldiers, whose salutes he disdained, to the superior officers, whom he rigidly controlled. The comrade who had served with him and under him for many years, in peace and peril, was flung aside as soon as he ceased to be of use. The wounded Egyptian and even the wounded British soldier did not excite his interest."

When in the service clubs they read that, the veterans asked each other their favorite question of what is the army coming to, and to their own satisfaction answered it by pointing out that when a lieutenant of twenty-four can reprimand the commanding general the army is going to the dogs.

To the newspapers, hundreds of them, over their own signatures, on the service club stationery, wrote violent, furious letters, and the newspapers themselves, besides the ordinary reviews, gave to the book editorial praise and editorial condemnation.

Equally disgusted were the younger officers of the service. They nicknamed his book "A Subaltern's Advice to Generals," and called Churchill himself a "Medal Snatcher." A medal snatcher is an officer who, whenever there is a rumor of war, leaves his men to the care of any one, and through influence in high places and for the sake of the campaign medal has himself attached to the expeditionary force. But Churchill never was a medal hunter. The routine of barrack life irked him, and in foreign parts he served his country far better than by remaining at home and inspecting awkward squads and attending guard mount. Indeed, the War Office could cover with medals the man who wrote "The Story of the Malakand Field Force" and "The River War" and still be in his debt.

In October, 1898, a month after the battle of Omdurman, Churchill made his debut as a political speaker at minor meetings in Dover and Rotherhithe. History does not record that these first speeches set fire to the Channel. During the winter he finished and published his "River War," and in the August of the following summer, 1899, at a by-election, offered himself as Member of Parliament for Oldham.

In the *Daily Telegraph* his letters from the three campaigns in India and Egypt had made his name known, and there was a general desire to hear him and to see him. In one who had attacked Kitchener of Khartoum, the men of Oldham expected to find a stalwart veteran, bearded, and with a voice of command. When they were introduced to a small red-haired boy with a lisp, they refused to take him seriously. In England youth is an unpardonable thing.

Lately, Curzon, Churchill, Edward Grey, Hugh Cecil, and others have made it less reprehensible. But, in spite of a vigorous campaign, in which Lady Randolph took an active part, Oldham decided it was not ready to accept young Churchill for a member. Later he was Oldham's only claim to fame.

A week after he was defeated he sailed for South Africa, where war with the Boers was imminent. He had resigned from his regiment and went south as war correspondent for the *Morning Post*.

Later in the war he held a commission as lieutenant in the South African Light Horse, a regiment of irregular cavalry, and on the staffs of different generals acted as galloper and aide-de-camp. To this combination of duties, which was in direct violation of a rule of the War Office, his brother officers and his fellow correspondents objected; but, as in each of his other campaigns he had played this dual role, the press censors considered it a traditional privilege, and winked at it. As a matter of record, Churchill's soldiering never seemed to interfere with his writing, nor, in a fight, did his duty to his paper ever prevent him from mixing in as a belligerent.

War was declared October 9th, and only a month later, while scouting in the armored train along the railroad line between Pietermaritzburg and Colenso, the cars were derailed and Churchill was taken prisoner.

The train was made up of three flat cars, two armored cars, and between them the engine, with three cars coupled to the cow-catcher and two to the tender.

On the outward trip the Boers did not show themselves, but as soon as the English passed Frere station they rolled a rock on the track at a point where it was hidden by a curve. On the return trip, as the English approached this curve the Boers opened fire with artillery and pompoms. The engineer, in his eagerness to escape, rounded the curve at full speed, and, as the Boers had expected, hit the rock. The three forward cars were derailed, and one of them was thrown across the track, thus preventing the escape of the engine and the two rear cars. From these Captain Haldane, who was in command, with a detachment of the Dublins, kept up a steady fire on the enemy, while Churchill worked to clear the track. To assist him he had a company of Natal volunteers, and those who had not run away of the train hands and break-down crew.

"We were not long left in the comparative safety of a railroad accident," Churchill writes to his paper. "The Boers' guns, swiftly changing their position, reopened fire from a distance of thirteen hundred yards before any one had got out of the stage of exclamations. The tapping rifle-fire spread along the hills, until it encircled the wreckage on three sides, and from some high ground on the opposite side of the line a third field-gun came into action."

For Boer marksmen with Mausers and pompoms, a wrecked railroad train at thirteen hundred yards was as easy a bull's-eye as the hands of the first baseman to the pitcher, and while the engine butted and snorted and the men with their bare bands tore at the massive beams of the freight-car, the bullets and shells beat about them.

"I have had in the last four years many strange and varied experiences," continues young Churchill, "but nothing was so thrilling as this; to wait and struggle among these clanging, rending iron boxes, with the repeated explosions of the shells, the noise of the projectiles striking the cars, the hiss as they passed in the air, the grunting and puffing of the engine--poor, tortured thing, hammered by at least a dozen shells, any one of which, by penetrating the boiler, might have made an end of all--the expectation of destruction as a matter of course, the realization of powerlessness--all this for seventy minutes by the clock, with only four inches of twisted iron between danger, captivity, and shame on one side--and freedom on the other."

The "protected" train had proved a deathtrap, and by the time the line was clear every fourth man was killed or wounded. Only the engine, with the more severely wounded heaped in the cab and clinging to its cow-catcher and foot-rails, made good its escape. Among those left behind, a Tommy, without authority, raised a handkerchief on his rifle, and the Boers instantly ceased firing and came galloping forward to accept surrender. There was a general stampede to escape. Seeing that Lieutenant Franklin was gallantly trying to hold his men, Churchill, who was safe on the engine, jumped from it and ran to his assistance. Of what followed, this is his own account:

"Scarcely had the locomotive left me than I found myself alone in a shallow cutting, and none of our soldiers, who had all surrendered, to be seen. Then suddenly there appeared on the line at the end of the cutting two men not in uniform. 'Plate-layers,' I said to myself, and then, with a surge of realization, 'Boers.' My mind retains a momentary impression of these tall figures, full of animated movement, clad in dark flapping clothes, with slouch, storm-driven hats, posing their rifles hardly a hundred yards away. I turned and ran between the rails of the track, and the only thought I achieved was this: 'Boer marksmanship.'

"Two bullets passed, both within a foot, one on either side. I flung myself against the banks of the cutting. But they gave no cover. Another glance at the figures; one was now kneeling to aim. Again I darted forward. Again two soft kisses sucked in the air, but nothing struck me. I must get out of the cutting--that damnable corridor. I scrambled up the bank. The earth sprang up beside me, and a bullet touched my hand, but outside the cutting was a tiny depression. I crouched in this, struggling to get my wind. On the other side of the railway a horseman galloped up, shouting to me and waving his hand. He was scarcely forty yards off. With a rifle I could have killed him easily. I knew nothing of the white flag, and the bullets had made me savage. I reached down for my Mauser pistol I had left it in the cab of the engine. Between me and the horseman there was a wire fence. Should I continue to fly? The idea of another shot at such a short range decided me. Death stood before me, grim and sullen; Death without his light-hearted companion, Chance. So I held up my hand, and like Mr. Jorrocks's foxes, cried 'Captive!' Then I was herded with the other prisoners in a miserable group, and about the same time I noticed that my hand was bleeding, and it began to pour with rain.

"Two days before I had written to an officer at home: 'There has been a great deal too much surrendering in this war, and I hope people who do so will not be encouraged.'"

With other officers, Churchill was imprisoned in the State Model Schools, situated in the heart of Pretoria. It was distinctly characteristic that on the very day of his arrival he began to plan to escape.

Toward this end his first step was to lose his campaign hat, which he recognized was too obviously the hat of an English officer. The burgher to whom he gave money to purchase him another innocently brought him a Boer sombrero.

Before his chance to escape came a month elapsed, and the opportunity that then offered was less an opportunity to escape than to get himself shot.

The State Model Schools were surrounded by the children's playgrounds, penned in by a high wall, and at night, while they were used as a prison, brilliantly lighted by electric lights. After many nights of observation, Churchill discovered that while the sentries were pacing their beats there was a moment when to them a certain portion of the wall was in darkness. This was due to cross-shadows cast by the electric lights. On the other side of this wall there was a private house set in a garden filled with bushes. Beyond this was the open street.

To scale the wall was not difficult; the real danger lay in the fact that at no time were the sentries farther away than fifteen yards, and the chance of being shot by one or both of them was excellent. To a brother officer Churchill confided his purpose, and together they agreed that some night when the sentries had turned from the dark spot on the wall they would scale it and drop among the bushes in the garden. After they reached the garden, should they reach it alive, what they were to do they did not know. How they were to proceed through the streets and out of the city, how they were to pass unchallenged under its many electric lights and before the illuminated shop windows, how to dodge patrols, and how to find their way through two hundred and eighty miles of a South African wilderness, through an utterly unfamiliar, unfriendly, and sparsely settled country into Portuguese territory and the coast, they left to chance. But with luck they hoped to cover the distance in a fortnight, begging corn at the Kaffir kraals, sleeping by day, and marching under cover of the darkness.

They agreed to make the attempt on the 11th of December, but on that night the sentries did not move from the only part of the wall that was in shadow. On the night following, at the last moment, something delayed Churchill's companion, and he essayed the adventure alone. He writes:

"Tuesday, the 12th! Anything was better than further suspense. Again night came. Again the dinner bell sounded. Choosing my opportunity, I strolled across the quadrangle and secreted myself in one of the offices. Through a chink I watched the sentries. For half an hour they remained stolid and obstructive. Then suddenly one turned and walked up to his comrade and they began to talk. Their backs were turned.

"I darted out of my hiding-place and ran to the wall, seized the top with my hands and drew myself up. Twice I let myself down again in sickly hesitation, and then with a third resolve scrambled up. The top was flat. Lying on it, I had one parting glimpse of the sentries, still talking, still with their backs turned, but, I repeat, still fifteen yards away. Then I lowered myself into the adjoining garden and crouched among the shrubs. I was free. The first step had been taken, and it was irrevocable."

Churchill discovered that the house into the garden of which he had so unceremoniously introduced himself was brilliantly lighted, and that the owner was giving a party. At one time two of the guests walked into the garden and stood, smoking and chatting, in the path within a few yards of him.

Thinking his companion might yet join him, for an hour he crouched in the bushes, until from the other side of the wall he heard the voices of his friend and of another officer.

"It's all up!" his friend whispered. Churchill coughed tentatively. The two voices drew nearer. To confuse the sentries, should they be listening, the one officer talked nonsense, laughed loudly, and quoted Latin phrases, while the other, in a low and distinct voice, said: "I cannot get out. The sentry suspects. It's all up. Can you get back again?"

To go back was impossible. Churchill now felt that in any case he was sure to be recaptured, and decided he would, as he expresses it, at least have a run for his money.

"I shall go on alone," he whispered.

He heard the footsteps of his two friends move away from him across the play yard. At the same moment he stepped boldly out into the garden and, passing the open windows of the house, walked down the gravel path to the street. Not five yards from the gate stood a sentry. Most of those guarding the school-house knew him by sight, but Churchill did not turn his head, and whether the sentry recognized him or not, he could not tell.

For a hundred feet he walked as though on ice, inwardly shrinking as he waited for the sharp challenge, and the rattle of the Mauser thrown to the "Ready." His nerves were leaping, his heart in his throat, his spine of water. And then, as he continued to advance, and still no tumult pursued him, he quickened his pace and turned into one of the main streets of Pretoria. The sidewalks were crowded with burghers, but no one noticed him. This was due probably to the fact that the Boers wore no distinctive uniform, and that with them in their commandoes were many English Colonials who wore khaki riding breeches, and many Americans, French, Germans, and Russians, in every fashion of semi-uniform.

If observed, Churchill was mistaken for one of these, and the very openness of his movements saved him from suspicion.

Straight through the town he walked until he reached the suburbs, the open veldt, and a railroad track. As he had no map or compass he knew this must be his only guide, but he knew also that two railroads left Pretoria, the one along which he had been captured, to Pietermaritzburg, and the other, the one leading to the coast and freedom. Which of the two this one was he had no idea, but he took his chance, and a hundred yards beyond a station waited for the first outgoing train. About midnight, a freight stopped at the station, and after it had left it and before it had again gathered headway, Churchill swung himself up upon it, and stretched out upon a pile of coal. Throughout the night the train continued steadily toward the east, and so told him that it was the one he wanted, and that he was on his way to the neutral territory of Portugal.

Fearing the daylight, just before the sun rose, as the train was pulling up a steep grade, he leaped off into some bushes. All that day he lay hidden, and the next night he walked. He made but little headway. As all stations and bridges were guarded, he had to make long detours, and the tropical moonlight prevented him from crossing in the open. In this way, sleeping by day, walking by night, begging food from the Kaffirs, five days passed.

Meanwhile, his absence had been at once discovered, and, by the Boers, every effort was being made to retake him. Telegrams giving his description were sent along both railways, three thousand photographs of him were distributed, each car of every train was searched, and in different parts of the Transvaal men who resembled him were being arrested. It was said he had escaped dressed as a woman; in the uniform of a Transvaal policeman whom he had bribed; that he had never left Pretoria, and that in the disguise of a waiter he was concealed in the house of a British sympathizer. On the strength of this rumor the houses of all suspected persons were searched.

In the Volksstem it was pointed out as a significant fact that a week before his escape Churchill had drawn from the library Mill's "Essay on Liberty."

In England and over all British South Africa the escape created as much interest as it did in Pretoria. Because the attempt showed pluck, and because he had outwitted the enemy, Churchill for the time became a sort of popular hero, and to his countrymen his escape gave as much pleasure as it was a cause of chagrin to the Boers.

But as days passed and nothing was heard of him, it was feared he had lost himself in the Machadodorp Mountains, or had succumbed to starvation, or, in the jungle toward the coast, to fever, and congratulations gave way to anxiety.

The anxiety was justified, for at this time Churchill was in a very bad way. During the month in prison he had obtained but little exercise. The lack of food and of water, the cold by night and the terrific heat by day, the long stumbling marches in the darkness, the mental effect upon an extremely nervous, high-strung organization of being hunted, and of having to hide from his fellow men, had worn him down to a condition almost of collapse.

Even though it were neutral soil, in so exhausted a state he dared not venture into the swamps and waste places of the Portuguese territory; and, sick at heart as well as sick in body, he saw no choice left him save to give himself up.

But before doing so he carefully prepared a tale which, although most improbable, he hoped might still conceal his identity and aid him to escape by train across the border.

One night after days of wandering he found himself on the outskirts of a little village near the boundary line of the Transvaal and Portuguese territory. Utterly unable to proceed further, he crawled to the nearest zinc-roofed shack, and, fully prepared to surrender, knocked at the door. It was opened by a rough-looking, bearded giant, the first white man to whom in many days Churchill had dared address himself.

To him, without hope, he feebly stammered forth the speech he had rehearsed. The man listened with every outward mark of disbelief. At Churchill himself he stared with open suspicion. Suddenly he seized the boy by the shoulder, drew him inside the hut, and barred the door.

"You needn't lie to me," he said. "You are Winston Churchill, and I--am the only Englishman in this village."

The rest of the adventure was comparatively easy. The next night his friend in need, an engineer named Howard, smuggled Churchill into a freight-car, and hid him under sacks of some soft merchandise.

At Komatie-Poort, the station on the border, for eighteen hours the car in which Churchill lay concealed was left in the sun on a siding, and before it again started it was searched, but the man who was conducting the search lifted only the top layer of sacks, and a few minutes later Churchill heard the hollow roar of the car as it passed over the bridge, and knew that he was across the border.

Even then he took no chances, and for two days more lay hidden at the bottom of the car.

When at last he arrived in Lorenzo Marques he at once sought out the English Consul, who, after first mistaking him for a stoker from one of the ships in the harbor, gave him a drink, a bath, and a dinner.

As good luck would have it, the *Induna* was leaving that night for Durban, and, escorted by a body-guard of English residents armed with revolvers, and who were taking no chances of his recapture by the Boer agents, he was placed safely on board. Two days later he arrived at Durban, where he was received by the mayor, the populace, and a brass band playing: "Britons Never, Never, Never shall be Slaves!"

For the next month Churchill was bombarded by letters and telegrams from every part of the globe, some invited him to command filibustering expeditions, others sent him woollen comforters, some forwarded photographs of himself to be signed, others photographs of themselves, possibly to be admired, others sent poems, and some bottles of whiskey.

One admirer wrote: "My congratulations on your wonderful and glorious deeds, which will send such a thrill of pride and enthusiasm through Great Britain and the United States of America, that the Anglo-Saxon race will be irresistible."

Lest so large an order as making the Anglo-Saxon race irresistible might turn the head of a subaltern, an antiseptic cablegram was also sent him, from London, reading:

"Best friends here hope you won't go making further ass of yourself.

"McNEILL."

One day in camp we counted up the price per word of this cablegram, and Churchill was delighted to find that it must have cost the man who sent it five pounds.

On the day of his arrival in Durban, with the cheers still in the air, Churchill took the first train to "the front," then at Colenso. Another man might have lingered. After a month's imprisonment and the hardships of the escape, he might have been excused for delaying twenty-four hours to taste the sweets of popularity and the flesh-pots of the Queen Hotel. But if the reader has followed this brief biography he will know that to have done so would have been out of the part. This characteristic of Churchill's to get on to the next thing explains his success. He has no time to waste on postmortems, he takes none to rest on his laurels.

As a war correspondent and officer he continued with Buller until the relief of Ladysmith, and with Roberts until the fall of Pretoria. He was in many actions, in all the big engagements, and came out of the war with another medal and clasps for six battles.

On his return to London he spent the summer finishing his second book on the war, and in October at the general election as a "khaki" candidate, as those were called who favored the war, again stood for Oldham. This time, with his war record to help him, he wrested from the Liberals one of Oldham's two seats. He had been defeated by thirteen hundred votes; he was elected by a majority of two hundred and twenty-seven.

The few months that intervened between his election and the opening of the new Parliament were snatched by Churchill for a lecturing tour at home, and in the United States and Canada. His subject was the war and his escape from Pretoria.

When he came to this country half of the people here were in sympathy with the Boers, and did not care to listen to what they supposed would be a strictly British version of the war. His manager, without asking permission of those whose names he advertised, organized for Churchill's first appearance in various cities, different reception committees.

Some of those whose names, without their consent, were used for these committees, wrote indignantly to the papers, saying that while for Churchill, personally, they held every respect, they objected to being used to advertise an anti-Boer demonstration.

While this was no fault of Churchill's, who, until he reached this country knew nothing of it, it was neither for him nor for the success of his tour the best kind of advance work.

During the fighting to relieve Ladysmith, with General Buller's force, Churchill and I had again been together, and later when I joined the Boer army, at the Zand River Battle, the army with which he was a correspondent had chased the army with which I was a correspondent, forty miles. I had been one of those who refused to act on his reception committee, and he had come to this country with a commission from twenty brother officers to shoot me on sight. But in his lecture he was using the photographs I had taken of the scene of his escape, and which I had sent him from Pretoria as a souvenir, and when he arrived I was at the hotel to welcome him, and that same evening three hours after midnight he came, in a blizzard, pounding at our door for food and drink. What is a little thing like a war between friends?

During his "tour," except of hotels, parlor-cars, and "Lyceums," he saw very little of this country or of its people, and they saw very little of him. On the trip, which lasted about two months, he cleared ten thousand dollars. This, to a young man almost entirely dependent for an income upon his newspaper work and the sale of his books, nearly repaid him for the two months of "one night stands." On his return to London he took his seat in the new Parliament.

It was a coincidence that he entered Parliament at the same age as did his father. With two other members, one born six days earlier than himself, he enjoyed the distinction of being among the three youngest members of the new House.

The fact did not seem to appall him. In the House it is a tradition that young and ambitious members sit "below" the gangway; the more modest and less assured are content to place themselves "above" it, at a point farthest removed from the leaders.

On the day he was sworn in there was much curiosity to see where Churchill would elect to sit. In his own mind there was apparently no doubt. After he had taken the oath, signed his name, and shaken the hand of the Speaker, without hesitation he seated himself on the bench next to the Ministry. Ten minutes later, so a newspaper of the day describes it, he had cocked his hat over his eyes, shoved his hands into his trousers pockets, and was lolling back eying the veterans of the House with critical disapproval.

His maiden speech was delivered in May, 1901, in reply to David Lloyd George, who had attacked the conduct of British soldiers in South Africa. Churchill defended them, and in a manner that from all sides gained him honest admiration. In the course of the debate he produced and read a strangely apropos letter which, fifteen years before, had been written by his father to Lord Salisbury. His adroit use of this filled H. W. Massingham, the editor of the *Daily News*, with enthusiasm. Nothing in parliamentary tactics, he declared, since Mr. Gladstone died, had been so clever. He proclaimed that Churchill would be Premier. John Dillon, the Nationalist leader, said he never before had seen a young man, by means of his maiden effort, spring into the front rank of parliamentary speakers. He promised that the Irish members would ungrudgingly testify to his ability and honesty of purpose. Among others to at once recognize the rising star was T. P. O'Connor, himself for many years of the parliamentary firmament one of the brightest stars. In *M. A. P.* he wrote: "I am inclined to think that the dash of American blood which he has from his mother has been an improvement on the original stock, and that Mr. Winston Churchill may turn out to be a stronger and abler politician than his father."

It was all a part of Churchill's "luck" that when he entered Parliament the subject in debate was the conduct of the war.

Even in those first days of his career in the House, in debates where angels feared to tread, he did not hesitate to rush in, but this subject was one on which he spoke with knowledge. Over the older men who were forced to quote from hearsay or from what they had read, Churchill had the tremendous advantage of being able to protest: "You only read of that. I was there. I saw it."

In the House he became at once one of the conspicuous and picturesque figures, one dear to the heart of the caricaturist, and one from the strangers' gallery most frequently pointed out. He was called "the spoiled child of the House," and there were several distinguished gentlemen who regretted they were forced to spare the rod. Broderick, the Secretary for War, was one of these. Of him and of his recruits in South Africa, Churchill spoke with the awful frankness of the *enfant terrible*. And although he addressed them more with sorrow than with anger, to Balfour and Chamberlain he daily administered advice and reproof, while mere generals and field-m Marshals, like Kitchener and Roberts, blushing under new titles, were held up for public reproof and briefly but severely chastened. Nor, when he saw Lord Salisbury going astray, did he hesitate in his duty to the country, but took the Prime Minister by the hand and gently instructed him in the way he should go.

This did not tend to make him popular, but in spite of his unpopularity, in his speeches against national extravagancies he made so good a fight that he forced the Government, unwillingly, to appoint a committee to investigate the need of economy. For a beginner this was a distinct triumph.

With Lord Hugh Cecil, Lord Percy, Ian Malcolm, and other clever young men, he formed inside the Conservative Party a little group that in its obstructive and independent methods was not unlike the Fourth Party of his father. From its leader and its filibustering, guerilla-like tactics the men who composed it were nicknamed the "Hughligans." The Hughligans were the most active critics of the Ministry and of all in their own party, and as members of the Free Food League they bitterly attacked the fiscal proposals of Mr. Chamberlain. When Balfour made Chamberlain's fight for fair trade, or for what virtually was protection, a measure of the Conservatives, the lines of party began to break, and men were no longer Conservatives or Liberals, but Protectionists or Free Traders.

Against this Churchill daily protested, against Chamberlain, against his plan, against that plan being adopted by the Tory Party. By tradition, by inheritance, by instinct, Churchill was a Tory.

"I am a Tory," he said, "and I have as much right in the party as has anybody else, certainly as much as certain people from Birmingham. They can't turn us out, and we, the Tory Free Traders, have as much right to dictate the policy of the Conservative Party as have any reactionary Fair Traders." In 1904 the Conservative Party already recognized Churchill as one working outside the breastworks. Just before the Easter vacation of that year, when he rose to speak a remarkable demonstration was made against him by his Unionist colleagues, all of them rising and leaving the House.

To the Liberals who remained to hear him he stated that if to his constituents his opinions were obnoxious, he was ready to resign his seat. It then was evident he would go over to the Liberal Party. Some thought he foresaw which way the tidal wave was coming, and to being slapped down on the beach and buried in the sand, he preferred to be swept forward on its crest. Others believed he left the Conservatives because he could not honestly stomach the taxed food offered by Mr. Chamberlain.

In any event, if he were to be blamed for changing from one party to the other, he was only following the distinguished example set him by Gladstone, Disraeli, Harcourt, and his own father.

It was at the time of this change that he was called "the best hated man in England," but the Liberals welcomed him gladly, and the National Liberal Club paid him the rare compliment of giving in his honor a banquet. There were present two hundred members. Up to that time this dinner was the most marked testimony to his importance in the political world. It was about then, a year since, that he prophesied: "Within nine months there will come such a tide and deluge as will sweep through England and Scotland, and completely wash out and effect a much-needed spring cleaning in Downing Street."

When the deluge came, at Manchester, Mr. Balfour was defeated, and Churchill was victorious, and when the new Government was formed the tidal wave landed Churchill in the office of Under-Secretary for the Colonies.

While this is being written the English papers say that within a month he again will be promoted. For this young man of thirty the only promotion remaining is a position in the Cabinet, in which august body men of fifty are considered young.

His is a picturesque career. Of any man of his few years speaking our language, his career is probably the most picturesque. And that he is half an American gives all of us an excuse to pretend we share in his successes.