ECHOES OF THE BOER WAR.*

HESE two books have much in common. They are so nearly of the same size and appearance as to be companions. Both relate to the late war in South Africa. Each is by a hero of the conflict, one civil, the other military. The only inequality is in the price. With almost exactly the same number of pages, and with the advantage in respect of illustrations, if any, with the De Wet, we see no reason why \$3.50 should be the price of one when only \$2.50 is the price of the other. Each volume has a frontispiece portrait, and the De Wet four plans and a map. Both volumes are thoroughly indexed, wellprinted and substantially bound, and may well take their places side by side on the shelf of contemporary history and biography.

Oom Paul.

A very characteristic narrative is that of old Oom Paul, stout and stolid, with his slouching shoulders and his gray fringed face, his set mouth, and dogged, imperturbable expression. The substance of it was dictated to two secretaries, whose notes were revised and somewhat enlarged by an editor, and then translated for English and American editions from a parallel German text collated line for line with Mr. Kruger's original Dutch. From this curious and rather intricate literary process the redoubtable and indomitable President of the late Dutch Republic in South Africa emerges in the first person proper and singular, with his individuality unimpaired, his rugged style unspoiled, his faith in his own cause unshaken, and his repudiation of the English unqualified; and with many of the attributes of true and striking autobiography and not a few of the elements of important history.

The author begins with his boyhood on Vaalbank Farm in the Colesberg district in Cape Colony at the second quarter of the last century, and follows his steps up through the brave and reckless period of youth. Then the future President and statesman was a mighty Nimrod, shot his lions, ele-

phants and horned and scaly beasts of the rivers by the score, and laid the foundations of the resolution, pluck and courage which served him to such good purpose in after times. His public career began in the military service of his country, in which he rose rapidly to responsibility and command, winning in civil and native wars the confidence of his people and the experience on which he had later so heavily to draw. Each of his four terms as President has a chapter, and the story ends with the merest outline of the last war, the point where De Wet's really begins. Practically then the two volumes now before us are Volumes I. and II. in a consecutive history, related by different but associated parties, and relating to the course of events leading up to the war and the war itself. Mr. Kruger's is eminently biographical, personal, picturesque, and for the most part readable, having in it elements of romance, adventure, exploit, daring, and achievement which are certain to evoke the reader's sympathy, whatever his view of the merits of the conflict in which Kruger was so conspicuous and influential a figure.

De Wet.

General De Wet's book was also first written in Dutch, and has been translated into English for the present publication. There is nothing whatever in it of the author's early life, of which Kruger's book is full. It begins abruptly with the first summons issued in September 19, 1899, to every burgher of the Orange Free State between the ages of sixteen and sixty to be prepared to fight for his country at any moment when called for. To this end he must provide himself with a riding-horse, saddle and bridle, a rifle and thirty cartridges, or if unable to procure a rifle, thirty bullets, thirty caps, and half a pound of powder; with rations for eight days. Men thus enrolled and mustered constituted a "commando," of which so much was heard during the war. Thus "commandeered" De Wet, as a private burgher, entered on the campaign; and with him went his three sons, Kootie, Isaac, and Christiaan. So rose the burghers of South Africa in their multitude and might to defend what they conceived to be the rights of their country.

From this point on the author retraces his steps along his gory path with circumstantial detail, with a rough fidelity which bears the impress of truth, and with a vivid realism which lights up the lurid landscape until it throbs again with the wild life of the camp, the march, and the battle. Not all of the war is to be seen in such pages, but its reflections multiply its effects, and what the reader loses in breadth and comprehensiveness he gains in concentration and intensity.

One strong point made by the author is his denial of the charge that the Dutch waged a "guerilla warfare."

We have had the English side of the

bloody picture; it is well to have as we have here the other. One cannot peruse this story without renewed admiration for the brave and self-sacrificing men who accepted the test of war, and staked all they held dear upon its issues.

Appendices contain a mass of documents essential to a right understanding of facts, and the work as a whole is one that military students cannot pass by, while it has its interest for all lovers of moral and physical courage and its accomplishments.

^{*}The Memoirs of Paul Kruger. Told by Himself. The Century Co. \$3.50.

^{*}Three Years' War. By Christiaan Rudolph de Wet. Charles Scribner's Sons. \$2.50.