THE LOST SPEAR

*his mind that parnellite criticism, then very loud in the house, could be lulled by a good subscription. Besides, he was and always had been a -whole hearted- home ruler. Mr. Rhodes,   
who bought policies as other men buy pictures, made it a condition, of course, that the nationalists should assure him that they had no intention of leaving the empire my view of the facts was different, and i believe it was the true view. Mr. Rhodes wanted the charter badly, and he did not much mind- how he got it. He did not, of course, want the charter in*

*order to make himself rich. He wanted-to extend the empire in south africa on particuar*

*lines, and these included a chartered-province under his personal-guidance. To accomplish   
this he was perfectly willing to take the help of bitter enemies of the empire and-of england, like mr. Parnell; men who wanted-to give our empire the blow at the heart. Worse than that, he was willing to give them the pecuniary help they needed in their effort to destroy england, and to risk the consequences. That was surely a case for the watch dog. Look at what the man in the fur lined-imperial cloak has got under it. To my mind what was even worse than the parnellite subscription was the way in which the chartered-company was run and the way in which its shares at par were showered- on usefull politicians at home and-in south africa. The liberal party at westminster professed to be anti imperialist and pro voer. yet i noted to my disgust that mr. Rhodes not only called himself a liberal, but that quite a number of earnest liberals were commercially interested in the charter. In this context i may recall aphrase used by a witness before a parliamentary committee at capetown, which made inquiries as to the distribution of shares at par when the selling price of chartered- stock was very high. The witness was asked on what system certain authorised but unallotted shares were distributed at par. They were, he stated, given to journalists and other persons who had to be satisfied on*

*this charter. I am not by nature a suspicious person, but, rightly or wrongly, that appeared to me to be a short cut to ruining the empire. Though personally i knew nothing about rhodes, and was inclined to like an adventurous, pushful spirit, it was clear to me that, holding the views i did as to the functions of the journalist, i had no choice but to bark my loudest. My imperialist friends. were for the most part horribry shocked-at what they carld-my gross and unjust personal prejudices against a great man. Some of them, indeed, asked mehow i could reconcile my alleged unionist and anti separatist views with opposition to the great empire builder. When i told them that it was just because i* was *an imperialist, and did not want to see the empire destroyed, that i opposed rhodes,pointed out to them that he was an arch corrupter, and insisted that corruption destroyed, not made, empires, i was told that i did not know what i* was *talking about. I was a foolish idealist who did not understand practical­ politics. Such self righteous subtleties must be ignored in the conduct of great affairs. This*

*talk, instead- of putting me off, made me feel it -was absolutely necessary, however disagreeable, to pursue my policy. In this view i soon had goodfortune to obtain the support and encouragement of lord cromer. Here, by the admission of all men, was the greatest of living imperialists. yet i found that he was in full sympathy with my determination to let the british public know* what waS *going on. As i have said, i felt very deeply about the gift to the nationalists. Later, i heard that mr. Rhodes had not only bought off, or tried-to buy off, irish opposition, but that he had actually offered- and-given a considerable sum of money to the funds of the liberal-party in order to get them to change their policy in regard to egypt. The great part of the liberal leaders and the party generally considered-that we were pledged to leave egypt. This did not suit mr. Rhodes, with his curious shilling atlas and round rulerpoint of view about a cape to cairo railway. 'What would happen if, when the railway was completed to the Egyptian frontier, the platelayers found either a hostile egypt or a foreign power in possession, and determined to prevent a junction of the rads mr. Rhodes regarded such a possibility as intolerable, and; after his manner, determined-to buy out the opposition to his great hobby. Accordingly, he upproached-mr.*

CONFIDENTIAL 2446