



# With the Flag to Pretoria

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The chief point of interest in the South African war, apart from its political aspect, will always be that it was the first great struggle fought out under the new conditions which smokeless powder has introduced. No invention has made a greater change in the art of war than this; the revolution is so profound that it can only be compared with that brought about by the general adoption of firearms four hundred years or more ago. So late as the Spanish-American war of 1898 a large part of the United States army was equipped with the Springfield rifle, firing smoke-producing powder, so that in that war, in spite of the fact that the Spanish Army was supplied with the Mauser, the full consequences of the revolution could not be observed and ascertained. The British Army, when it took the field in October, 1899, was face to face with factors the precise effect of which could only be conjectured. Magazine, or, to give them their older name, "repeating," rifles had been employed as far back as the American Civil War of 1861-5, though they were in every way vastly inferior to our modern Mausers and Lee-Metfords. But smokeless powder was a distinctly novel element.



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