

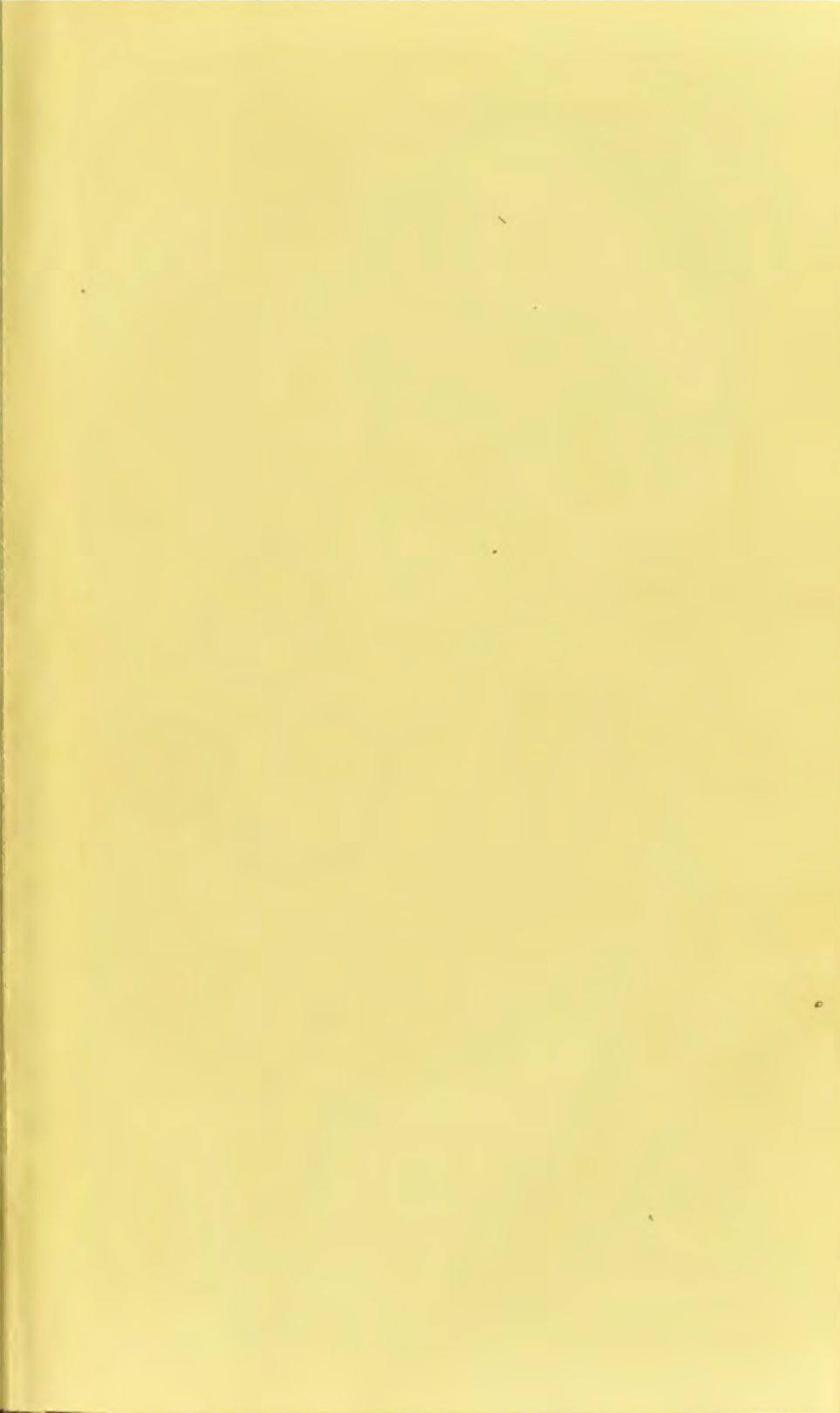
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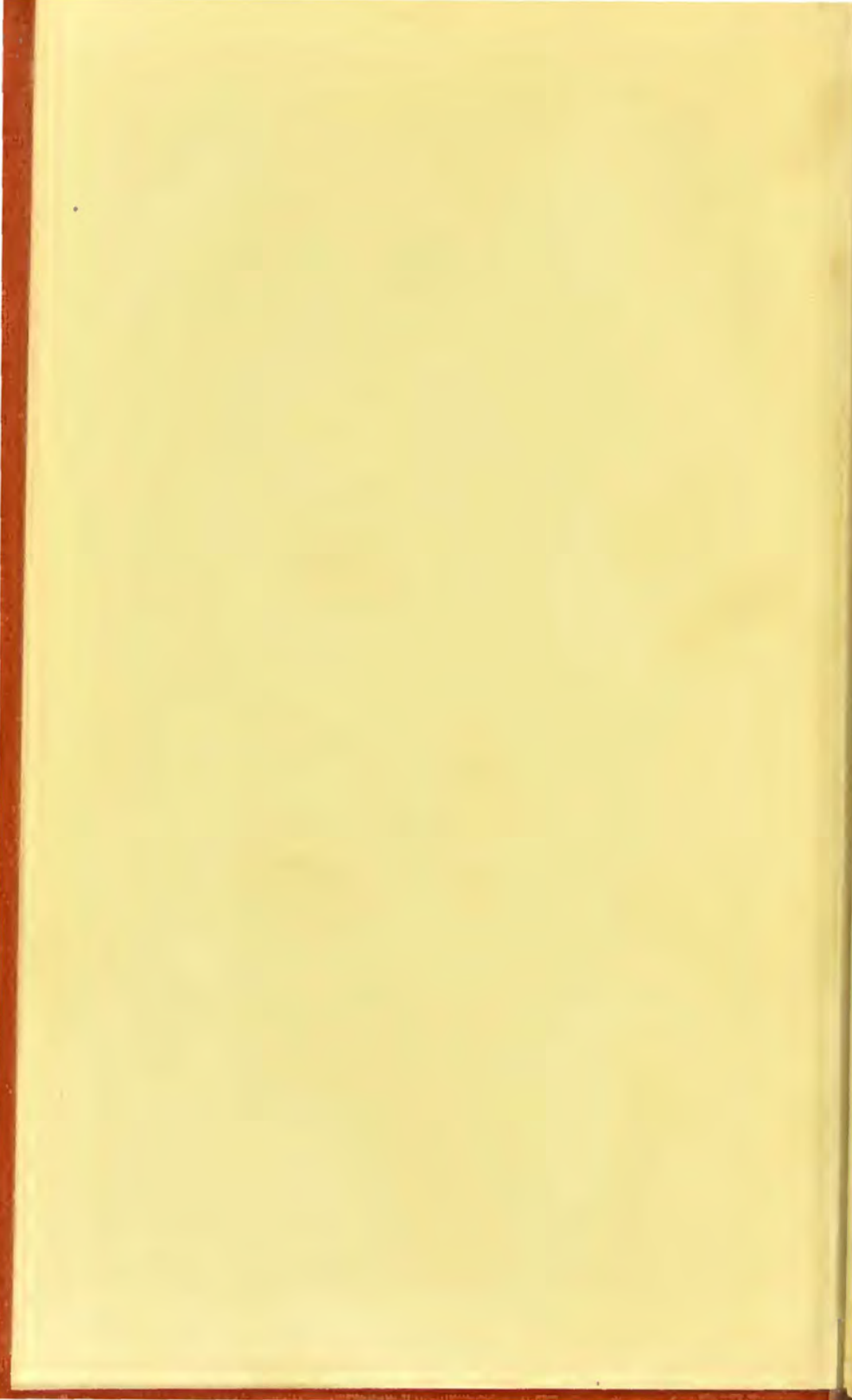
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# NOTES ON NATAL:

AN OLD COLONIST'S BOOK

FOR

NEW SETTLERS.

EDITED BY

JOHN ROBINSON, F.R.G.S.,

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ROBINSON & VAUSE, DURBAN, NATAL,

AND

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TO THE  
NATAL IMMIGRANTS' AID OFFICE

THIS LITTLE WORK IS

DEDICATED

BY ITS EDITOR:

IN THE HOPE THAT IT MAY BE SUCCESSFUL

IN FURTHERING THE OBJECTS AND

WIDENING THE USEFULNESS

OF THAT PRAISEWORTHY INSTITUTION.



# PREFACE.

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THIS little Work has been prepared for the information of distant readers, who may be anxious to learn somewhat concerning Natal and its present conditions. It is not put forth with the view of drawing people to the Colony by an overcoloured recital of its advantages. It therefore does not lay claim to the title of Guide Book. The desire of the Editor has been to place in a compact and accessible form a trustworthy description of the leading aspects and industrial developments of the Colony. It was his hope and desire to have done this in a much more complete and comprehensive fashion than circumstances have rendered possible, by inspections of the Midland and Upper Districts corresponding with those described in the Notes on the Coastlands. Not being able to carry out this part of his purpose he has had recourse to the good offices of local residents, and so far as the Districts of Klip River and Richmond are concerned the reader benefits by the change in plan. Notwithstanding the fragmentary character of this portion of the work, however, the Editor believes that enough is said to give a general, and as he trusts, a faithful representation of the entire Colony. The aim of all

the contributors to these pages has been to state facts, and to set down observations with absolute and judicial impartiality. Of those contributors he begs to specify Mr. J. SCOBLE, of Newcastle, Mr. D. TAYLOR, of Richmond, Mr. R. VAUSE, of the *Natal Mercury*, Mr. GEORGE KING, of Colenso, Dr. SEAMAN, of Pinetown, and Mr. O. S. FLINTOFF, of Durban, as having afforded him most valuable and ready assistance. For the chapters upon the Coastlands (which have appeared from time to time in the *Natal Mercury*) and for the Prefatory and Statistical Matter he is solely responsible. Should this "Handbook" be found to supply a need often said to exist, he will be amply repaid for the trouble entailed, by what is simply and actually a labour of love towards the land he has made his home.

Readers who desire to learn more concerning the early days of Natal are referred to HOLDEN'S *History of Natal*, published in 1853, while such as seek more complete information regarding the physical and social conditions of the country, cannot do better than consult Dr. MANN'S *Colony of Natal*, published in 1859, the excellent annual volumes of DAVIS' *Almanac and Register*, and the columns of the local journals.

# INDEX.

	PAGE
Preface.....	iii.
A Brief Description of Natal .....	viii.
Statistical Notes.....	

## THE NORTHERN COASTLANDS. COUNTY OF VICTORIA.

Chapter I.—Retrospect—The Umgeni—Sea Cow Lake—Umgeni Company's Estate—Umtata Estate—Labour—Yield of Sugar .....	1
Chapter II.—The Umhlanga Valley—Mr. Isabelle's—Mr. Shire's—Coolie Planters Umhlanga Company's Estates—Trenance .....	12
Chapter III.—Verulam—Umhloti Valley—Mission Station—The Grange—Redcliffe—Fenton Vaey—Oakford—Messrs. Remnant and Polkinghorne—Tongaat .....	19
Chapter IV.—The Noodsberg Road—Fine Scenery—Forbes's—Whittaker's—Riet Valley.....	28
Chapter V.—Glendale—The "Frying Pan"—Umvoti Valley—First Attempt at Settlement—Messrs. Ashwell—The Scotch Boys—Cotton .....	36
Chapter VI.—Stuekeridge—Umvoti Mission Station—Groutville—Native Sugar Mill—Nonoti Coffee Estate—New Guelderland—Chantilly—Chaka's Kraal—Umhlali—Williamstown .....	45
Chapter VII.—Mount Moreland—Mr. Blamey's—Mr. Fynney's—Muekle Neuk—Waterloo—Engeleni—Mr. Ashby's—Mr. Robertson's—Mr. Girvan's—Mr. Campbell's—Mr. Povall's—Mr. Adams' .....	51
Chapter VIII.—Blackburn—Mr. Smith's—The Fountains—Small Planters—Mr. Hussey's and Mr. Newberry's—Mr. Turton's—Mr. Turner's—Messrs. Saner and Stephenson's—Ottawa .....	63
Chapter IX.—Saccharine Hill Estate—Captain Smerdon's—Mr. Lister's—Springvale—Mr. Edmestone's—Mr. Harrison's—Mr. Logan's—Avoca—Mr. Jackson's—Eflingham—Dr. Edie's—Mr. Chick's .....	71

## THE SOUTHERN COASTLANDS.

## WARD No. 2, COUNTY OF DURBAN.

	PAGE
Chapter X.—Described 200 Years Ago—Clairmont—Coedmore — Northbank — Woodville — Merobank — Remmon — Mr. Atkinson's—Isipingo—Statistics of the Ward .....	85
Chapter XI.—Isipongondwe—A Sea-Bathing Establishment— The Umlasi Location—Amanzimtote Mission Station— Illovo—Coolie Farms—The Umkomanzi—Umgibaba Sugar Estate—Umnini's and College Reserves .....	96

## DIVISION OF ALEXANDRA.

Chapter XII.—Craigie Burn: Mr. McKenzie, its Founder— Canonby—South Barrow and its Prospects—Amahlongwa and Umpambinyoni .....	102
Chapter XIII.—Umzinto—Changes—Mr. Brander's—The Church—The Mill—Umzinto Lodge—Beach—Mr. Joyner's Mr. Aiken's—Mr. Bazley's .....	111
Chapter XIV.—Nil Desperandum—Small Mills and Small Planters—Iqncefa—Beeverstowe—New Settlers—Golden Valley .....	118

## FROM DURBAN TO PINETOWN.

Chapter XV.—The Mid-Coastlands—Overport House—Syden- ham—Clare Sugar Estate—Cato Manor—Westville—New Germany—Pinetown .....	126
Chapter XVI.—Concluding Remarks .....	137
Chapter XVII.—Statistical Summary .....	141

## THE COTTON-FIELDS, UPPER UMKOMANZI.

Chapter XVIII. ....	143
Chapter XIX. ....	147

## KLIP RIVER COUNTY.

## LADISMITH DIVISION.

Chapter XX.—Population—Description of Town—Products— Crops—Cattle and Sheep Farming—Horse Breeding— Angora Goats—Pigs—Dairy Farming—Climate—Geology Scenery.....	152
---	-----

## NEWCASTLE DIVISION.

Chapter XXI.—Shape—Situation—Coal Fields—Topography and Climate—Natural Features—Health—Agriculture— Population .....	161
---	-----

## FARMING IN THE UPLANDS.

	PAGE
Chapter XXII. ....	177

## GENERAL REMARKS.

Chapter XXIII.—Conditions of Health in Natal .....	182
Chapter XXIV.—The Climate of Natal .....	185
Chapter XXV.—Hints to Emigrants.....	189

## FROM NATAL TO THE DIAMOND FIELDS.

Chapter XXVI.—A Sudden Start—To Maritzburg—Escort— Colenso — The Drakensberg — Harrismith — The Flats— Bethlehem—The Diamond Fields—Life There .....	193
From Bloemfontein to the Fields—Frost—First Impressions of Dutoitspan—Digging Described—Old Natalians, &c. ....	204
The Great Camp at Colesberg Kop ..	210

Appendices .....	213
Advertisements .....	226

[NOTE BY THE EDITOR.—The articles relating to the *Diamond Fields* were written some time ago before the depression in the Diamond Market, and the increased cost and difficulty of working claims, had materially changed the aspect of affairs at Colesberg Kopje. Of the river diggings all that is said still holds good, except in so far as the lower prices of the gems found, diminish the profits of working there. The great depth to which claims at the New Rush are now carried have rendered more extensive mechanical appliances necessary, and so changeful are the conditions of diamond digging that it is difficult to say what may be the prospects of diggers hereafter. Upon this point, therefore, the Editor leaves the current reports of the day to speak.]

## A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF NATAL.

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“*Where is Natal?*” is a question commonly put by people who do not live, or who have not lived, in that colony. The delightful vagueness which distinguishes British knowledge of colonial geography, applies to South Africa as well as to other better known portions of the Empire. One person asks:—“Is it near Sierra Leone?” Another wishes to know—if it is in India? Another, better informed, confidently answers that the South American settlement at “Cape Natal” is referred to. Others frankly plead utter ignorance.

It is with the view of answering this question concisely and clearly as may be, that these brief introductory notes have been penned. Many years have elapsed since a locally prepared “Guide Book” appeared. Dr. Mann’s compilation was issued in 1859; Mr. Robinson’s “Practical Guide Book” appeared in 1862. Both are largely obsolete, if not out of print. The first, however, may be consulted with much advantage by any person who desires to obtain fuller information concerning the historical, social, and physical conditions of Natal, than the following pages pretend to supply.

Natal, or rather the port bearing that name, was discovered on Christmas Day, A.D. 1497, by Vasco di Gama, who had rounded the Cape for the first time, about a month before. It occupies the same parallel of latitude as Algeria, Queensland, Louisiana, Chili, and other countries similarly situated as regards fertility of soil and variety of resources. It is thirty degrees east of Greenwich, and thirty degrees south

of the line, and has at present a seaboard of about 150 miles, overlooking the Indian Ocean at a point of the African continent, about 800 miles north-eastward of the Cape. Being 390 miles south of the tropics, it is free from those protracted seasons of intense heat that are incidental to torrid latitudes, while it also suffers very partially from extremes of cold. The climate of Natal is, on the whole, worthy of its reputation. Mild and congenial, it is neither too severe, nor too relaxing for the European system. The thermometer indicates a range of temperature from 38 to 96 degrees. The monthly mean during the winter season, from May to August, inclusive, would range according to locality, from 60 to 67 degrees. This period of the year is characterised by a clear bright sky, by an absence of rain, by a keen bracing temperature before sunrise and after sunset, and by moderate warmth during the day. The summer, or the "rainy season," may be said to last from October to March. At this time, especially in the month of February, the heat is much greater. Occasionally the thermometer will rise to 100 degrees in the shade, and very rarely indeed falls below 60, while it often ranges between 80 and 90. As a rule, the district near the shore, is more continuously warm than the uplands, although the dry midday heat often felt in the latter region, is more scorching though less enervating than the humid warmth of the lowlands. The average mean temperature of the six hot and wet months for six years has been computed at 69·1, and of the six cold and dry months for the same period at 60·7. The average highest reading for that time ranged from 87·8 to 91·5. Periods of extreme heat are not of long duration. Along the shore a sea breeze generally springs up towards noontime, and renders the air pleasant.



*The Climate of Natal* is undoubtedly healthy. Disease is generally the consequence of special conditions—of undue exposure, of sanitary recklessness, of ill chosen locality, or of intemperance. Natal is so uniformly a hilly country that tracts of marsh land are neither large nor many. Here and there, however, swampy spots are met with, and if left undrained and uncultivated, they will prove to dwellers by them, the breeding ground of fever. A certain modified type of low fever, generally traceable to some specific cause, is the only serious disease of an epidemic character known in Natal. Diarrhæa and dysentery are common, but they are in most cases attributable to change of climate, impure water, or personal carelessness. Influenza breaks out occasionally when seasons happen to change suddenly, or cold is severe. For the rest we refer our readers to an able article from the pen of an experienced practitioner on a subsequent page; as also to another article, written by a non-professional but most intelligent observer, who, after a year's residence, gives his impressions of our coast climate.

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*The area of Natal* may be set down at about 15,000 square miles, or about 10 million aeres. This is roughly divided into the following Counties:—

Coast Counties—	Square Miles.
Durban . . . . .	298
Alexandra . . . . .	1600
Alfred . . . . .	1500
Victoria . . . . .	1482
Midland—	
Pietermaritzburg . . . . .	2797
Umvoti . . . . .	1200

## Upland—

Weenen . . . . .	1860
Klip River . . . . .	} 3720
Newcastle . . . . .	

The popular computation, which may or may not be accurate, sets the area down at 18,000 square miles or 12 million acres.

---

A rapid glance at the *Map of Natal* will suffice to give the reader a general idea of the geographical distribution of its surface.

DURBAN occupies about the centre of the coast line, and stands on the northern shore of an almost landlocked bay, within which vessels of moderate tonnage find a perfectly secure anchorage. Works are in progress for the improvement of the entrance by the scouring away of the bar. From five to twelve vessels are generally in port. A railway two miles in length leads from the landing place and port—called “the Point”—up to the town. Three long and straight streets are crossed at right angles by other streets.

There are several substantial stores built of brick, as are most of the buildings, but they present the diversity of aspect common to most colonial towns. There are a good number of two-storey edifices, but single storeys predominate. There are 870 houses in the borough, occupied by 3324 whites, 1771 kafirs, and 656 coolies, forming a population altogether of 5751 souls. Sidewalks run down the sandy streets, and the centre of the roadway is being hardened. 2082 of the residents live in the suburbs, and the wooded range of the Berea is covered in

parts with the houses, cottages, and gardens of the townspeople. There are fifteen churches and places of worship, representing all denominations (Roman Catholic included) within the limits of the borough lands. In the centre of the town is a large enclosure laid out as a public promenade, and flanked by a handsome pile of public offices. At the foot of the Berea spreads the Botanic Gardens, fifty acres in extent, which have been established twenty-one years. A bathing stage; public wells and pumps; a spacious gaol; tramways down the cross-streets; street lamps; masonic halls; and a bowling alley, are among the other adjuncts of the town.

Leaving Durban, the main road of the colony passes westward over a hilly and wooded country until it reaches the scattered village of PINETOWN, 13 miles distant. From thence the country traversed is bare, and almost tenantless, until the city of Pietermaritzburg is neared, when farmsteads become more numerous. Six roadside hostelries provide for the wants of travellers, and the county of Durban is left behind about the "Halfway House," situated amongst high hills and deep gorges—portion of a belt of rugged and broken country intersecting Natal from north to south at a distance of from fifteen to twenty miles off the sea.

MARITZBURG—the "Pieter" being dropped for convenience—lies in a basin, with lofty hills rising abruptly beyond it. The town covers more ground than Durban, and contains more buildings, the general appearance of the streets, laid out at right angles, being much the same. Red-tiled roofs, however, and the tall forms of gum trees here form marked features in the landscape. The non-publication of municipal statis-

ties prevents our stating the exact number of houses, but the population consists of 3632 whites, 2984 natives, and 176 coolies, or 6792 altogether. There are thirteen churches in the city—including three “Cathedrals.” An imposing pile of public offices has recently been erected. Fort Napier, where a garrison of about 450 of H.M. troops is stationed, overlooks the town from a slight rise at its southern extremity. Side walks and streams of running water, skirt the streets on either hand, and are often overshadowed by trees. The Little Bushman’s River surrounds the town to the eastward, and beyond it stretches the Alexandra Park, a beautifully situated and tastefully laid out tract of 300 acres, where the band plays, and the citizens drive, ride, or walk. Government House, near Fort Napier, has lately been rebuilt, and not far from it stand the massive walls of the Gaol. The hills around are being rapidly clothed with suburban residences, and large groves of trees already darken the slopes of what, fifteen years ago, was barren ground.

RICHMOND is a small township twenty-five miles south of Maritzburg, and GREYTOWN is another about fifty miles to the north of that city. These are scattered groups of houses, with a store or two and post office. Each is the residence of a divisional magistrate, and the latter is the centre of the county of Umvoti. Here and onward we are in what are known as the “up-country districts,” where tropical agriculture is not carried on, but where cattle, sheep, and corn-farming are the chief industries.

Around Maritzburg farmsteads are more numerous, but elsewhere they are scattered at wide distances apart, except here and there where settlers have been more thickly planted, as at New Leeds, Byrne, York,

and the Upper Umkomanzi. The character of the country continues to be hilly and bare, with now and then patches of Yellowwood forest, or Mimosa thorn bush. The former generally crowns the brows of heights, while the latter is dotted over the low-lying vallies.

The main road beyond Maritzburg still holds to the westward, and sixteen miles on reaches a cluster of homesteads known as HOWICK, where the Umgeni plunges at one bound over a precipice 300 feet high. Thence the road ascends the Karkloof and Mooi River heights, until it reaches an altitude of 5000 feet above the sea.

The magnificent range of the Drakensberg mountains, our inland frontier, some peaks of which are ten and twelve thousand feet high, stretches parallel with the road at a considerable distance, and presents an impenetrable front eastward. The vast basin of the Upper Tugela succeeds. Here are situated the small villages of ESTCOURT, WEENEN, and COLENZO, all of which are in the triangular-shaped county of Weenen. Beyond, to the north-westward, spreads Klip River county and Newcastle, the township of LADISMITH lying near the southern border of the former division. An exhaustive chapter descriptive of these districts will be found elsewhere.

Such are the chief divisions and centres of the colony. The coastlands, which are more fully described in the following pages, represent only about one-tenth of the entire area of Natal, but as will be seen the measure of industrial production is out of all proportion with breadth of territory. 10,000 tons of sugar, 1000 tons of coffee, and 800 bales of cotton, with smaller crops of tobacco, arrowroot, corn, fruit, and pepper represent the industry of this littoral region.

Fully 2,000,000 acres of Natal are taken up by *Native Locations*, a chain of which almost divides the upper from the coast districts. These are mostly situated in broken and bushy country, which the kafir seems to prefer to more open ground. The available waste lands lie chiefly at some distance from the present centres of population, the bulk of them being in the district south of the Umkomanzi, where very few white settlers reside. There are at least thirty-seven native mission stations belonging to the American Board of Missions, the Anglican, Lutheran, Roman Catholic, Wesleyan, Hanoverian, and Norwegian churches. So far the amount of conversion effected is not in proportion to the labour bestowed upon the work. European settlers in the country districts are occasionally visited by ministers of different churches, and divine service is regularly held in each of the townships we have named.

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In the midland counties *Cereal Crops* are largely grown—maize and oats more particularly. The latter is chiefly cultivated for “forage,” being cut down green and sold without thrashing in the markets of Maritzburg and Durban. Maize is grown by both Europeans and natives, but of late years the supply has been so much in excess of the demand, and the cost of transport has been so great in proportion, that the market prices have been quite unremunerative. For a long period maize was selling at from three to six shillings per sack of three bushels. Cotton is also grown in these districts, and is capable of cultivation, in certain localities, throughout the entire colony. Full descriptions of cotton-planting—both on the coast and in the midlands—will be found further on.

*Sheep-farming* succeeds moderately well in the middle and upper districts, but Natal does not present equal advantages with the interior republic of the Free State for the depasturage of flocks on a large scale. Small, compact flocks, well bred, and well cared for, have done well—but there are certain local diseases and dangers which are not encountered on the vast plains of the interior. Although *Horse-breeding* is menaced by the periodical “sickness,” the pursuit would and might be carried on much more extensively than it is were there a better market for horseflesh. Of late years these animals have been falling in price, until now not more than from five to ten or twelve guineas can be got for an ordinary cob. On the Coast, plantation horses and mules are now being so largely employed that there will be an increased demand for these animals.

*Cattle-breeding*, from the earliest ages, has been pursued in Natal. So far back as 1689 it was described by certain shipwrecked mariners as being full of “cattle.” Along the coast a hardy breed of small size, known as the Zulu, is found to suit the country best. In the upper districts, “Fatherland” cattle of large dimensions are bred. In 1855-6 the lung-sickness, or pleuropneumonia, first broke out, and swept off the herds—causing the farmers to turn their attention to sheep-farming. Of late years, however, as experience, familiarity, and inoculation lessened the dangers and abated the ravages of the disease, cattle have again become cheap and plentiful, although every year sees a considerable per centage carried off by the scourge. During the winter of 1871 a new disease broke out upon the coast with great virulence, and caused serious losses. From its most apparent peculiarity it

is called "milt disease," and bears a striking similarity to the "red water" sickness of Farmers' Cylopædias. Its ravages are as yet confined to certain coast districts, where the scarcity of pasturage caused by the spread of cultivation, and the want of water arising from drought, may, it is surmised, have brought into play specific action of a disease-creating kind. Hitherto, cattle have been left to feed themselves on the wild pastures of the soil. It may be that, under the changed order of things, this primitive and savage system will be found incompatible with the maintenance of health in cattle.

Among the natives cattle-breeding—which is still, as of old, their favourite pursuit—is supplemented by goat-keeping. The ease with which these animals are bred points to the probability that Natal will be found well-fitted for the growth of angoras and alpacas. The former are already reared with success to a small extent.

In a country where corn is so abundant—where sheep and cattle are bred so largely—where poultry is largely reared by the natives, who are not themselves fowl-eaters—and where vegetables are grown all the year round with the greatest ease—*Food* cannot fail to be both cheap and plentiful. Considering that Natal is not bigger than Scotland, it is wonderfully self-contained. Sugar, coffee, flour, meal, cheese, milk and butter; beef, mutton, pork and poultry; fruit of all kinds, from the familiar apple to the tropical mango; vegetables in equally wide variety; rum, beer and cordials; preserves, pickles, and condiments of every kind are the common products of the soil. Tea will grow, but needs cultivating; and it is hard to say what necessary of life or luxury of the table is not capable of production.



With such an unlimited capacity for food production, it may well be asked why the European population of Natal has remained so small—why, while other colonies less variously endowed have attracted their thousands and tens of thousands, Natal can only count her new settlers by tens? This brings us to the great want of the colony, and to the chief cause of its backwardness. It has no efficient means of TRANSPORT. It has neither navigable rivers nor railways. Its roads are not macadamized, and its only means of conveyance for merchandise is transport in the cumbrous and slow-paced ox-wagon, drawn by teams of fourteen or twenty oxen at the rate of about fifteen miles a day. Beyond a certain distance, it makes the transport of all but certain kinds of produce a bar to extended production. It does not pay farmers to send corn by such means a distance of a hundred miles, when, at the end, they may only get 2s. a bushel for it. For draught oxen are apt to die, especially when traversing roads that may have been used, and grazing on pastures that may have been eaten down, by infected cattle. So far, throughout the midland and upper districts no staple except cereals has been fairly established. Efforts are now being made to grow cotton, and it is believed that hill-rice, fibres, silk, and other products might be cultivated to advantage. Want of transport and want of population caused thereby, have effectually checked expansion.

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*Railways* have long been recognised by the larger portion of the community as an absolute condition of colonial progress. During the past nine years various schemes have been proposed, and several have been brought before the Legislature. During the last

session of the Legislative Council, however, a certain project submitted three years ago was finally and unanimously adopted, and a law was passed making provision for the same. Mr. WELBORNE, to whose energy and perseverance as promoter of the accepted system, this movement is due, seeks to secure to the country the full measure of advantage derivable from a comprehensive rather than a partial system—one that shall connect the interior states and the Coal fields of Newcastle with the seaport, as well as afford immediate relief to existing traffic. A system which seeks to construct railways, to colonise our waste lands, and to develop our coal mines, is felt to fulfil the colonial requirements of a young country.

Mr. WELBORNE undertakes to construct five lines of railway—from Durban to Tongaat; from Durban to Umkomanzi (coastwise); from Durban to Maritzburg; from Maritzburg to Estcourt; from Estcourt to Olivier's Hock, and From Estcourt to Newcastle (inland—extending altogether to a length of 345 miles. These lines are to be 3 feet 6 inches guage, to have rails weighing 60 lbs. to the yard, and to run trains at a speed never less than ten miles an hour. Upon these a tariff of rates is to be imposed, amounting for the longer distances to less than half present charges.

The Legislative Council in return, guarantees to Mr. WELBORNE an aggregate subsidy of £40,000 per annum for twenty years, payable in certain definite sums proportioned to the length of line actually in operation, and only payable if those lines are opened within a given period. The line to Maritzburg is to be finished within three years from the date of approving the contract; the lines to the frontiers five years after. He is also given three million acres of Crown lands, to

be allotted in the same manner, in proportion to the work done, and strictly on condition of such lands being occupied at the rate of three adult Europeans to the 1000 acres. He is also to have the exclusive right of manufacturing iron for ten years, as well as to have the exclusive right of mining coal on all Crown lands. As that coal is useless without a railway, this concession amounts to little. It is said, however, that these monopolies may probably be relinquished.

Finally, Mr. WELBORNE is to lodge £400,000 as caution money, or guarantee, for the due fulfilment of his contract.

Memorials signed by a large majority of the European male inhabitants, strongly supporting this project, were sent to the Secretary of State at the beginning of the year, and the community is now (May, 1872) awaiting with eager anxiety the result of the pending negotiations.

---

*The History of Natal* though brief is not eventful, as events are regarded in this age of giant wars and sudden revolutions. After its discovery by the Portuguese in 1498, little was heard of Natal for three centuries, except the story of certain shipwrecked mariners out of the Dutch ship "Stavenisse," who were cast ashore here in 1689, and whose quaint description of the natural features of the country, then, correspond oddly with far later observations. In 1721 an abortive attempt was made by certain Dutch adventurers to establish a trading settlement. About a century later Lieutenant Farewell, with a few others, formed a colony on the shores of the Bay of Natal. Although the British Government declined to aid this private

enterprise, it secured a footing in the country, underwent many vicissitudes, and enlisted the sympathy of a large body of natives. At that time the great Zulu chieftain—the Attila of South Africa—Chaka, was at the height of his power, and the colonists had to conciliate his favour. After his death by violence, they had also to win the good graces of Dingaan, his fratricidal successor. This little settlement, formed originally as a trading venture, gathered around it more and more refugee natives—fugitives from the rapacity of their own rulers—and thus began that inflowing movement which has now filled so large a portion of Natal with a population of 300,000 kafirs. In 1835 the English settlers at the port had increased in number, and the township of D'Urban, thus called after the Governor of the Cape Colony, was in due course laid out. One by one the pioneer founders died or left, but still the small community held on and increased. American missionaries arrived and established stations. An English mission was attempted under the auspices of the "Patagonian martyr"—Captain Gardiner. Then in 1835-8 the immigration of Dutch farmers, self-expatriated from the Cape Colony took place. Of the treacherous massacres, bloody reprisals, and bitter struggles, which marked the early history of this exodus a volume rather than a chapter might be written. Nor were these the end of trouble to those stubborn pioneers. In 1842 they came in conflict with the British Government, which refused to recognise their independence or to acknowledge the Republic they sought to create, and the hostilities which ensued lasted until 1843, when the insurgent Boers formally agreed to the proclamation of British rule.

From that time, through a period of twenty-

eight years, peace has been maintained in Natal. In 1850-1-2 a war raged on the Cape frontier, between the kafir tribes and the British Government, but it did not extend to this colony. At several times since, the Boers of the Free State and the Transvaal Republic have been at war with the native tribes around them, and those tribes have been at war amongst themselves, but Natal has happily escaped disturbance. In 1845 Mr. MARTIN WEST assumed the reins of office as Lieut. Governor, and was succeeded in that position by Mr. PINE, Mr. SCOTT, Colonel MACLEAN, Colonel BISSETT, and Mr. KEATE respectively. The last named having just left the colony, the reins are at present held by an Acting Administrator, until the arrival of Mr. ANTHONY MUSGRAVE, Mr. KEATE's successor. In 1856 Her Majesty conferred a Charter upon the colony, establishing a Legislative Council of sixteen members, twelve of whom are elected by the colonists. Unfortunately, owing chiefly to the fact that the constitution of the Executive retained, unaltered, its purely official and irresponsible character, there has been constant collision between the legislative and administrative elements of the Government. During the year 1871, however, the Secretary of State so clearly defined, and so emphatically asserted, the constitutional powers of the Legislature, that it is hoped the Government will work more harmoniously, effectually, and vigorously than it has done.

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*Population* has not increased in Natal as it has in almost all other British colonies. After an existence of thirty years its European inhabitants are not estimated to number more than 18,000. The following table

shows how the white population of the rural districts is distributed:—

County.	Whites.		Natives.		Coolies.
	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.	
Durban . . . .	794	820 . . . .	7988	8196 . . . .	1002
Alexandra . .	218	176 . . . .	9000	9000 . . . .	564
Victoria . . .	882	736 . . . .	25,577	22,585 . . . .	564
Maritzburg . .	1274	514 . . . .	13,342	16,677 . . . .	64
Weenen . . . .	643	513 . . . .	16,066	18,453 . . . .	
Umvoti . . . .	817	670 . . . .	13,441	15,558 . . . .	
Klip River . .	650	565 . . . .	14,003	17,757 . . . .	
Newcastle . .	552	459 . . . .	4027	5301 . . . .	
Alfred . . . . .	35	14 . . . .	6639	8539 . . . .	

About 3000 of these Europeans are of Dutch extraction, descendants of the farmers who migrated in 1835 from the Cape Colony.

The lack of increase indicated by the foregoing figures must not be taken to imply any reflection upon the man-sustaining resources of the country. It is easily to be explained in other ways. During the years 1849-52, a scheme of immigration, devised and carried by Mr. J. C. Byrne, placed upon the shores of Natal, several thousands of British settlers. Badly conceived and carried out, this project resulted in no little disappointment, and produced such a reaction that the name of Natal passed under a cloud in the eyes of home-people. Then came the Australian gold discoveries, which not only diverted emigration from other lands to the antipodes, but attracted also a considerable outflow of people from Natal. Since then there has been no large or systematic emigration to this colony. For some years the Government attempted by means of assisted passages, and offers of land grants, to

induce friends of colonists and settlers of means, to come to the country, but the results were comparatively inconsiderable, and in 1870, when the finances of the colony were at a low ebb, it was deemed expedient to stop all public expenditure for this service. Grants of land can, however, still be obtained, on conditions which are set forth at length in the appendix.

Of the experiences of the British colonists of Natal during this period of twenty years, much might be written, but the facts set forth here in the following pages, will serve to indicate what the vicissitudes of the settlers have been. Colonists alone can understand how hard it is in a new land to meet early privations, to establish strange industries under unfamiliar conditions, to deal with a barbarous and undisciplined people, to learn the lessons only taught by the hard experiences of personal toil, and disappointment, to see labour spent in vain, and enterprise marred by unforeseen difficulties. These form the lot of pioneer colonists in all lands, and they have been in no diminished degree the lot of people in Natal. Happy are they who in future can come to this fair land enriched by the knowledge thus gained, and guided by the truths thus wrought out.

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*Land, Labour, and Food* are all cheap in Natal. At this moment the first of these commodities is purchasable at almost nominal rates. The fascinations of the Diamond-fields are drawing away so many farmers, that farm buildings and homesteads can be had on lease or purchase at rates so low, that they can hardly be maintained for long. Farms ranging in extent from 500 to 6000 acres, with or without buildings and

cultivated land upon them, have been sold during the past year at prices varying between £100 to £500.

Upon the coast, land is dearer; and according as it is near to or distant from the port, sells at prices varying from 5s. to £2 an acre. Tropical agriculture has succeeded so well—sugar, coffee and cotton have so rooted themselves to the soil—that the value of land along the coast can scarcely fail to rise rapidly, as cultivation extends, and railways are constructed. North of Durban there is scarcely any available Crown land left, except at Glendale—a valley well worth the attention of settlers, notwithstanding its seclusion. As the road thereto is undergoing improvement, the attractions of this district—where cotton thrives admirably—are by so much enhanced. So of Durban County, as will be shown hereafter, a great portion of the land is at present locked up from enterprise in the form of native locations that are being deserted, and native mission-stations that are very scantily turned to account. There are, however, several localities available for immigrants, where grants can be obtained. In the midlands and upper districts the chance of holdings is much wider. It may fairly be said, however, that in no part of the world can land be got more easily or cheaply than here, nor is there any country where, as regards scenery and climate, men may find with equal facility more attractive homes for themselves and their families.

Labour in Natal is supplied from several sources. Of the 300,000 natives living in Natal, but a small proportion enter service. Their herds are so numerous, their cornfields so prolific, and the burdens they have to bear so light, that the dominance over them of a civilized government has only had the effect of securing the freer and larger enjoyment of their normal



modes of life. Their women till the fields, their children tend the cattle, they—the men—are free to spend their lives in beer-drinkings, dances, and hunts, which represent their heathen ideal of enjoyment. Only when the time for paying the annual tax of 7s. per hut comes round, when corn has run short and food is scarce, or when money is wanted for the purchase of wives, do the kafirs of Natal seek work amongst their white neighbours. Large numbers of natives come in, however, from distant tribes, and the fame of the Englishman as a fair-dealing master has gone forth far and wide into the interior of Eastern Africa. Then, too, upon the coast, coolies from India are largely employed. That the work and the climate suit these people is proved by the fact that they land here lean, destitute, and miserable, and leave, at the end of their ten years' term, fat, rich, and comfortable. Financial difficulties have caused a suspension of this immigration for some years past, but measures are in progress, and funds have been voted, for its immediate resumption. Indentured coolies are paid at the rate of about 14s. a month, exclusive of the annual payment of £3 towards the cost of their introduction, but when out of their terms (of five years) they earn from 20s. to 30s. a month. Kafirs receive from 8s. to 15s. a month. In districts remote from towns the wages of the latter are yet less. There is an increasing tendency amongst kafirs in the interior to enter Natal in search of employment. Now that Coolies are again to be introduced, it is more than probable that the supply of coloured labour will be steady and plentiful, at rates averaging from 10s. to 15s. monthly. Meanwhile, and until such re-introduction takes place, more or less pressure will be felt.

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## STATISTICAL NOTES.

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### Educational Institutions.

Seventy-one schools and teachers receive aid from Government. During 1870 the total attendance at these establishments was 2450, and the average attendance 1797.

In Maritzburg and Durban there are High Schools, where a better class of education is provided at a moderate payment; public schools, open to all; and infant schools; in addition to many private institutions. There are also several excellent boarding schools in the country, both for boys and girls. Denominational schools are numerous.

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### Literary Institutions.

In Durban there is a Public Library, and a private circulating library. Neither has a large stock of books. In Maritzburg there are also a public and a private institution. At Verulam, Richmond, Pinetown and elsewhere, book clubs are established, the chief use of which is to import magazines and periodicals for the use of members.

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### Clubs.

In Durban two are established, the Durban Club, and the Athenæum Club. In Maritzburg there are also two, the Victoria Club, and the Farmers' Club. All occupy spacious buildings of their own. The Victoria and Durban Clubs provide sleeping accommodation, and duly accredited visitors can be introduced by members.

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### Agricultural Institutions.

In Durban there is a Chamber of Agriculture, and an Agricultural and Horticultural Society. With the latter rests the control of the Botanic Gardens. There

are (in addition to the Farmers' Club, before which papers are often read) in Maritzburg, Greytown, Weenen, and Ladismith, also agricultural societies, whose chief business is the organization of annual shows. In both Durban and Maritzburg, Horticultural Societies hold flower shows periodically. An Acclimatization Society exists in Maritzburg.

There is also the Natural History Association of Natal, whose head-quarters are in Durban, and which aims at the promotion of enquiry and investigation in all matters relating to the physical conditions and history of South-Eastern Africa.

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#### Commercial and Financial Institutions.

A Chamber of Commerce exists at Durban and holds frequent meetings. There are two local banks, the Natal and the Durban. Both the London and South African Bank, and the Standard Bank of British South Africa are represented by branch offices in Durban. The latter has a branch also in Maritzburg, where the former has also an agency.

The other strictly local companies are the Natal Railway Company, the Natal Permanent Building Loan and Investment Association, the Natal and Free State Transport Company, and the Waterloo Estate Company. Of companies whose head offices are in England, we have the Natal Land and Colonization Company, the Glasgow Natal Sugar Company, the Glasgow and South African Company, the South African Diamond Fields Association, the London and Limpopo Company.

Several leading Marine, Fire, and Life Insurance Companies both at the Cape and in Great Britain, are represented by local agencies.

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#### Benevolent Institutions.

There are four Masonic Lodges, two Odd-Fellows' Lodges, and one Foresters' Court Harbinger.

Benevolent Societies managed by local committees of lady residents, are in operation both in Durban and Maritzburg.

The Immigrants' Aid Office, fully described elsewhere, may also come within the category, as its objects are purely disinterested and benevolent. There is also an Immigration Board established under Government auspices, with a branch in Durban.

There are commodious hospitals for people of all races in Durban and Maritzburg, and a Lunatic Asylum in the latter city.

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#### Consulates.

The German Empire, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Portugal, Netherlands, Belgium, and the S. A. Republic are all represented by Consular Agents.

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#### Municipal Institutions.

Durban and Maritzburg are both corporate boroughs, each being managed by an elective Mayor and Town Council. In 1870 the borough revenue in Durban was £15,466, and in Maritzburg £6547. These receipts are chiefly represented by rates levied on the freehold value or rental of properties, rents of town lands, licenses, or other charges. Regular police forces are maintained in both places.

In the country districts there are no local representative organizations, but the divisional magistrates, field-cornets, and road overseers, look after public interests.

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#### Defensive Institutions.

In addition to the regular garrison, volunteer corps are established in Maritzburg, Durban, Weenen, Ladismith, Greytown, Verulam, Richmond, Alexandra, and New Germany. The nominal aggregate strength of these corps may be set down at about 450 cavalry, and 240 infantry, including an artillery corps in Durban. Rifle matches are of frequent occurrence, and the Natal Rifle Association, open to all marksmen, meets in Maritzburg.

### Judicial Institutions.

These consist of a Supreme Court of three Judges, sitting in Maritzburg; Circuit Courts held bi-monthly in Durban and Ladismith; and eleven permanent divisional courts presided over by Resident Magistrates. Eighty-three gentlemen of position in different parts of the country hold commissions as Justices of the Peace. There are on the rolls of the Supreme Court, nine advocates and attorneys, nine advocates, and twenty-one attorneys.

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### Medical Institutions.

A Medical Board in Maritzburg examines applicant-practitioners, of whom twenty held licenses. There are also thirteen licensed chemists and druggists.

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### Public Debt.

Three loans representing in all £268,000 are about to be consolidated under a new law which authorises the issue of fresh debentures, to the amount of £350,000, including those to be offered in exchange for old ones.

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### Revenue, Expenditure, and Taxation.

The actual revenue for 1871 was £125,628, and the actual expenditure £120,384. In 1861 these figures were £114,087 and £100,082 respectively.

These receipts are derived from customs and excise duties, harbour dues, land sales, quit-rents, transfer and auction dues, native taxes, postage, fees and fines, and a few minor charges. There are no direct taxes on the white population levied by the Government, except the stamps on legal processes, &c.

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### Imports and Exports.

In 1861 the imports were valued at £402,689, and the exports at £108,920.

In 1871 the imports were valued at £472,444, and the exports at £562,109.

The following table shows the progress under certain heads of production made in ten years:—

Exports.	1861.	1871.
Sugar . . . . .	£19,415	£180,596
Wool . . . . .	32,887	172,806
Arrowroot . . . . .	4,684	3,858
Butter . . . . .	14,582	4,719
Ostrich Feathers . . . . .	584	6,910
Bacon and Hams . . . . .	50	1,593
Fruit . . . . .	28	379
Grain . . . . .	112	4,929
Hides . . . . .	9,793	32,663
Horns . . . . .	734	1,987
Ivory . . . . .	22,825	12,140
Lard . . . . .	..	229
Meat, Salted . . . . .	..	1,483
Skins . . . . .	1,099	63,975
Spirits . . . . .	..	2,182
Cotton . . . . .	43	5,763

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### Shipping.

In 1861 97 ships arrived at, and 100 left Natal, with a tonnage of 18,192. In 1871 103 ships arrived, and 107 left, with a tonnage of 27,085.

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### The Press.

Five journals are published in Natal. Of these the *Natal Mercury* (Durban) is issued three times a week (with a cheaper weekly edition); the *Natal Colonist* (Durban) twice a week; the *Natal Witness* and the *Times of Natal* (Maritzburg) twice a week; and the *Governments Gazette* (Maritzburg) once a week.

There have at different times been periodicals of a magazine character started, but they have all ceased after a brief existence.

*Cullingworth's Natal Almanac* and *Davis's Natal Register and Almanac* are useful works. The latter contains every year a large variety of statistical information and original matter, and is indispensable to a new-comer.

A native literature, consisting of translations and original works, is fast being formed by the constant issues from the various mission presses of the colony. The publications by Bishop Colenso, Canon Callaway, and the American Mission are the most noteworthy.

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#### Ecclesiastical.

Clergymen of every Christian Church abound in Natal, and the country districts, considering the general sparseness of the scattered population, are fairly supplied with means of public worship. At least eighty ordained ministers officiate throughout the country, in connexion with either the European or native populations.

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#### Mails.

Natal communicates twice a month with Europe, *via* the Cape. A mail from the Cape Colony, Free State, Diamond Fields, and Transvaal, conveyed by post carts, arrives weekly. A single-wire telegraph connects Durban and Maritzburg. A monthly mail service with England, along the East Coast, *via* Mozambique, Zanzibar, Aden, and Suez, is likely to be established soon; and it is hoped that ere long a submarine cable may be extended to Natal from Aden. The mails in the colony are carried with great regularity by native runners. A daily post runs to and fro between Durban and Maritzburg, and to other districts mails are carried once, twice, or three a week. The charge on letters is 1d. per half-ounce; newspapers post free.

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#### Passenger Communications.

Two miles of line connecting the Point (or landing place) with Durban, and four miles connecting Durban with the Umgeni, represent the sum-total of Natal Railway enterprise. It is confidently hoped, however, that the Welborne railway system, twice adopted by the Legislature, will be carried into effect. For some years two omnibusses ran daily between Durban and Maritzburg; now one runs daily, and another runs

twice a week. A passenger cart runs once a week from Maritzburg to Harrismith in the Free State. There are no other regular horse conveyances. Schenk's ox-wagons leave periodically for the Diamond Fields.

Men principally travel on horseback or in their own traps. It is also customary for ladies to ride long distances; but where families do not possess horse vehicles, they are dependent upon the slow-paced but roomy and independent ox-wagon. The main roads are generally in good order.

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# THE NORTHERN COASTLANDS.

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## COUNTY OF VICTORIA.

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THE following chapters form the first of a series of papers written with the view of making known to persons interested in the Colony, both resident and non-resident, the natural industrial and social conditions of the several districts of Natal. They are the truthful record of personal observation, and personal impressions, and the leading aim of the writer has been to present as faithful a picture as possible of the present state of the country.

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### CHAPTER I.

RETROSPECT.—THE UMGENI.—SEA COW LAKE.—UMGENI COMPANY'S ESTATE.—UMTATA ESTATE.—LABOUR.—YIELD OF SUGAR.

Twenty years ago the industrial history of Natal may be said to have had its beginning. Before the year 1850 agriculture in this colony was confined to the growth of a little wheat by the Boers, and of a fair quantity of maize by the natives. Cotton culture, it is true, had been attempted at New Germany, but had only succeeded in proving that the soil of the country was suitable to the staple, without at the same time proving that its production would be remunerative. Cattle yet grazed, fat and sleek, upon our pasture lands as they had done for centuries past, but sheep had yet to be acclimatised, and horsebreeding as an enterprise was wholly in embryo. A few coffee

bushes were bearing berries in the garden of a private householder of Durban, and a small patch of sugar cane was being planted by Mr. Morewood, at Compensation. Several thousands of British immigrants were in course of transmigration to these shores, and it is the final results of their toil, their energies, their enterprise, and their perseverance, which I have now to describe.

At that time Victoria county—the region north of the Umgeni—was less known to the colonists at large than Queensland is now. The district had so far no name, nor any territorial identity. The “cotton lands” allotted, or set apart for “Byrne’s immigrants,” were in this direction, and under that vague and generic name we understood the locality which I am now traversing. A region of wild and trackless bushland; of unbridged rivers, and unscarped hills; of forests thronged by wild beasts, and of grasslands dotted over with kafir kraals,—such was the county of Victoria twenty years ago.

Bearing this picture of the past in our minds, let us proceed to view the realities of the present.

The traveller northward naturally turns his horse's head as much due north as possible. Over the windy and sand-swept “flat”—a hideous synonym for the English word “plain,”—we follow the track of the locomotive as far as the Umgeni. Slight change—save in the iron road—does that “flat” show during the last ten years. One or two new cottages skirting the road side; one or two old cottages gone to ruin; a thicker sprinkling of houses on the circumjacent Berean hillslopes; fewer oxen grazing amidst the thick marsh grass of the “vley;” no improvement in the texture of the road one has laboriously to traverse—these are one's passing observations. Beyond the river we see near the sea the green heave of the sugar fields belonging to the estate of the late Mr. Greig; and higher up the hill other homesteads, with patches of bananas, arrowroot, and capsicum. Two years ago the now disused road which turns to the eastward was a

favourite point of access to the neighbouring county, —now the ford is all but deserted, and the occupation of the ferryman is gone. The reason we find, in the level rails beside us, and in the cheap but serviceable bridge which spans the river in place of the handsome structure swept away by the flood of 1868.

Were these notes not intended to be strictly descriptive I should pause to point out how strongly the experience of this Umgeni railway testifies to the practicability, on financial grounds, of a line to Verulam. Slack though the season is in a productive sense there are signs of activity about the iron-shed mis-called a station, while the long chain of trucks laden with stone for the Harbour Works from the adjacent quarry looks progressive and business-like.

At this time of the year, when the river is low, and the sands of its bed are but lightly covered with the clearest of water, the charge of 3d. at the toll-gate opposite is apt to seem unusually annoying. And yet no money, all things considered, should be paid more cheerfully. Not on account of the money wasted through engineering carelessness on the destroyed bridge, but because this modest edifice is a standing proof that it is possible under the pressure of a great emergency, to bridge a wide and troublesome river with great rapidity and at a small cost.

Mr. Allen's temperance hostility, lacks the cheerful aspect it wore, ere the useless provisions of a silly law compelled its owner to strip the bottles from his shelves and to put in their place the rows of harmless ginger pop that figure there. With the irrepressible enterprise of a stirring man, however, mine host has filled his stables with mules, wherewith he now runs three times a week a 'bus to Verulam.

A pleasant bit of road is that which skirts the northern shore of the Umgeni. We have Mr. Buttery's arrowroot grounds, and Mr. Bishop's sugar plantation with his modest mill behind us. Up the valley where the main road meanders the black flue of Mr. Chick's little mill shows itself. Further on M. Phillippe's distillery is passed, and the sluggish river takes a great

turn northward, enclosing the Springfield "flat," in its sweep. Cane and maize still prevail throughout this alluvial plain—one of the earliest homes but least successful scenes of sugar-planting. This tract of ground has undergone as many vicissitudes as a Natal colonist. It has grown forage, potatoes, maize, and sugar, by turns. The old mill-house, which was at one time so famous a feature of our coastlands, the only one of its kind, except Mr. Jeffels', in the colony, looks deserted and in a rather low way, but on the hills beyond we see the coffee plantations at Tyrrell's Tor, and the Berea, notably among the latter being Mr. Hartley's estate of Everton, whose residence from this distance looks of imposing proportions, and wears an almost baronial aspect.

Between the Umgeni bridge and the Umgeni sugar-mills the river flows sleepily on one side, and on the other the hill side skirts the winding road, now breaking off into little woody vallies, and now rising up in ferny walls of rock. Soon the road reaches the plain again and you ride briskly between fields of China cane, whose thin, tall, reedy stems, seem thicker and higher than usual. There are not many flat pieces of ground upon our coastlands, and the value of those that there are is diminished considerably by their liability to frost. Still, the rarity of any large breadths of deep alluvial soil renders these exceptional localities in great request. Mr. A. B. Kennedy to whose unremitting energy and unabated persistency, the success of this estate is attributable, has placed under cane all the available flat land on this side of the river. These plantations he has intersected by broad roads, wide enough to present an effectual barrier against the advances of fire. As the road nears the mill it passes below a small village of coolie houses where coolies are still making merry. The work-bell sounds as we pass and the labourers troop forth again to their afternoon labour.

At the proprietor's house, which crowns a hill overlooking the estate and the river, the distant hills and the sea, we are hospitably received by Mr. Oliver Tootal. This gentleman acts under Mr. R. S. North,

who, during Mr. Kennedy's absence, is responsible for the efficient working of the estate. Mr. North happens to be in town to-day, but under Mr. T.'s guidance let us proceed to make a tour of inspection round this—the largest, and in some respects most interesting—estate in the colony.

But first let us explain, for the benefit of distant readers, that the Sea Cow Lake estate takes its name from the small sheet of water, called by courtesy a lake, which, reed-grown, rests in the shadow of the bushy hills around. This little mere derives its title from no figure of speech, as to this day a family of seacows have their home in its still waters. There have been occasional raids made against these creatures, but they still remain to give a flavour of savageism to the most highly cultivated district of the colony. The estate has been a gradually formed one, having absorbed neighbouring properties. Mr. A. B. Kennedy, its original creator and proprietor, had, like the rest of our pioneer-planters, uphill work for many years. In 1865, however, he went home and formed there the small company now known as the Umgeni Sugar Company, to which the property now belongs. Mr. Kennedy still retained the management, and after his return the result of enlarged capital was soon apparent in the vigorous extension of operations.

There are now on this estate 1050 acres under cane and 150 acres under coffee; 300 acres of the former are planted for the first time. The latter, however, is but a subsidiary enterprise, sugar-planting being the main stay of the undertaking. There are employed on the estate about 242 coolies and about 300 kafirs. This is a smaller gang than has been employed in times past, as many as 800 and 900 having at one time been employed, when the ground which is now covered with rustling cane, and the roads which now traverse the steep and winding declivities of the estate, were under the picks and spades of labourers. The old mill, whose opening we recorded at the time in these columns, is near the house, and has been considerably improved of late years—a vacuum pan,

among other alterations, having been added. When I say, however, that the cultivated portion of the estate is six miles long from end to end, it will be seen that this mill, being almost at one extremity, is too far for convenience or economy from the remoter fields. A new, second mill, is therefore to be erected higher up the river, and Mr. Kennedy is now superintending at home the arrangement of the machinery, which will include every improvement devised by modern science, and recent experience. The changes likely to be effected by the halving of the sugar duties are sure not to be lost sight of in the preparation thereof.

Of the 1050 acres now under cane there will probably be from four to five hundred to crush this year, and it is hoped—if frost should not interfere—that a crop of 700 tons may be obtained. The canes so far look large and well, and the prospect for the winter seems excellent. Last year, owing to the ravages of flood and frost—as severe as can well be experienced—the estate only produced about 270 tons of sugar, against 506 tons the year before. A few figures as to the cost of labour on this estate may be useful. The wages of the kafirs will average 9s. for thirty days; and the wages for coolies will average 13s. per month; but this will be reduced in a short time, as the free coolies now get only 12s. per month; and as soon as the time of the assigned coolies has expired, there will be very few above 12s. The coolies are paid once in two months; the kafirs once a month. The former are found to be very handy at the mill, to be good cane cutters, and very useful in making drains and roads; but the kafirs are found best for ordinary field work. The food of both kafirs and coolies amounts to somewhere about the same as their wages.

In looking at the large number of kafirs employed, it must be borne in mind that the greater number of them have been, and are, employed in clearing and preparing new land for future cultivation.

Let us now begin our ride round the estate. It lies picturesquely along the river, and like most Natal



surfaces is boldly undulating. Steep, however, as are some of the hills, their slopes are all cultivated, even where the angle of ascent seems so sharp as to make me wonder what kind of being found foothold strong enough to use the hoe. The whole estate is cultivated by hand. No ploughs are used. Hoeing here, as in many other localities, is found preferable. As we advance the valley closes in, the hills on the other side increase in height, and the roads get steeper and more tortuous. Our Colonial Engineer might take a lesson in roadmaking from Mr. North's performances on this estate. There are more than *eighty* miles of *made* road here. Most of these roads are escarpments cut out of the sides of the hills, and in some cases hard rock has had to be moved by blasting. At one point the road winds round a cool and shady gorge. Dark mossgrown rocks rise overhead; no sunlight ever enters here, and this sweet spot, therefore, opening to the river flowing pleasantly below, is the favoured haunt of picnics. Soon after we rise, and skirt the edge of a precipice, 300 feet high, with the river at our feet. Again we traverse a causeway, thrown over a ravine, of solid hewn stone, by which the two estates are, in point of fact, connected. The amount of skill and labour, economically yet efficiently expended in road-making, is quite astonishing, and shows clearly enough that the managers believes in the Roman principle of subduing and of holding countries.

At this point the group of houses connected with what is known as the "new estate" is seen. "Plenty of superintendence," I was told, is one of the leading principles of management. There are five or six intelligent white overseers who are responsible for the taskwork of the coloured labourers. Although our presence was unexpected, all were found cheerfully and hard at work. Comfortable quarters are provided for the European employés, and in the mill an English engineer is in charge. As we proceed all traces of cultivation on the other side of the river are left behind. The scenery becomes very picturesque. On the other side a hill-flank clothed with bush, untrodden by man,

rises abruptly to a height of five or six hundred feet. Now the wooded barrier is broken by a gorge guarded by white precipices, gleaming though their russet garb of tree and shrub. Now the hills on our side rise to a yet higher altitude, and we can trace out through the bush that covers them the straight line that marks the inland boundary of the estate. A broad road cut through the bush traverses the estate to its end, where the river turns again, coming towards us over a rapidly falling bed of rocks, among which the stream foams confusedly. The evening shadows are falling over the near Inanda hills, and adding a new charm to the varied tints around. Agriculture amongst such scenery becomes almost romantic, and its toils must surely to an intelligent eye be less oppressive when spent amidst these rocks and woods, these deep valleys and shaggy hills. As we wend our way back by a less definite road the varieties of colour in the scenery grow very remarkable. Here for the first time in Natal I notice true autumnal tints. Some of the native trees in this valley wear this season warm and ruddy hues, which contrast beautifully with the darker foliage of the prevailing bush, and the brighter green of the cane-fields.

Two tons an acre have often been obtained from China cane on this estate. Inoculation is rigorously enforced, and every measure is taken to prevent contamination, by fences and regulations. Snakes are very common and mischievous: but since the last fatal accident, every overseer is armed with the necessary remedies. Altogether, a visit to the Sea Cow Lake estate well repays a visitor, and gives him a better idea of the sugar-producing capabilities of the colony. It is most satisfactory to be able to add, finally, that as much as 22 per cent. has been returned on capital expended, in one favourable year, and that even on last year's operations, when flood and frost did their worst, a dividend will, it is hoped, remain for the shareholders. Here, therefore, we have a visible example of what energy and enterprise can accomplish, when backed by adequate capital.

The road onward passes through an interesting estate known as Tor Vale, formerly the property of Mr. S. Crowder, jun., but now in the hands of the Natal Land and Colonisation Company, and under able management. It was very interesting to see growing here, in flourishing condition, side by side, China grass, coffee, and cotton. The latter was bearing, and the bolls looked numerous and well filled. Regretting my inability to make an inspection of so pleasing a property, I rode on to the well-known Umtata Estate, whose spreading canefields almost abut on those of the Umgeni Company. This estate was formed some twelve years ago by our townsman, Mr. John Millar, who disposed of it to Mr. P. Ferreira, of Maritzburg. It has from that time been under the able management of Mr. Aling Osborn. The property is now in the hands of the Natal Plantations Company, represented in this colony by Mr. Traill Christie; and as adequate capital will at last be forthcoming, Mr. Osborn will be able to give full effect to the results of his long practical experience, and great natural intelligence.

The Umtata Estate faces, so to speak, to the northward. It is famous for the depth and richness of its soil, in many places, where the constant cropping of well-yielding cane testifies to the excellence of the land. By the end of this year there will be 600 acres under cane. From the house the eye ranges over nothing but cane in the immediate foreground, and a ride along the broad roads abounding everywhere discloses many patches of remarkable fineness. The outlines of the land are much less bold than those of the Umgeni Estate, and bush is less prominent in the landscape. Mr. Osborn has obtained the altogether exceptional yield of one lb. and ten ounces of sugar from a gallon of juice; one lb. five ounces being the average. Some planters can scarcely believe this. Mr. Osborn attributes it to generous liming and high boiling. In sugar-making there is room, of course, for a wide diversity of treatment, and each planter will, necessarily, have his peculiar theories and his favourite

hobbies. Experience and observation have convinced Mr. Osborne that in these two principles rests much of what may be secret in the success of sugar-making. We remember to have heard the same remark made many years ago by several planters in Mauritius.

An estate that has been worked for eleven years must obviously begin to show signs of exhaustion. The wonder is, looking at the heaviness of the crop, that so much land should have borne successive cropping so well as is the case on many plantations. Mr. Osborn, however, does not oppress his land. He leaves large fields to fallow, under dholl, chiefly. As an instance of the richness of the soil hereabout may be named the fact that from certain patches four tons an acre have been obtained. From one field of five acres 21 tons of sugar were got one season. Trash is burnt, and not ploughed in, Mr. Osborn having found that the only apparent result of doing this, was to spoil the yield. Formerly canes were planted seven feet apart; now they are planted five feet; although on this point no absolute rule can be laid down. About 200 to 250 hands are employed at the Umtata; Mr. Osborn prefers Natal kafirs to Basutos and coolies; especially as the latter, since they became free of assignment, are much more insolent than they used to be. It is admitted everywhere that the coolies have not improved in their manners by coming here, though how the tendency is to be met one cannot see. Basutos, though strong and muscular, are lazy and less trustworthy than our natives. Their honesty is less than questionable, and their disposition to leave suddenly in a body without reason given, is prejudicial to the interests of their employers.

The mill at the Umtata is the same that was erected ten years ago by Mr. Millar. It was made by Abernethys, of Aberdeen, and still works well. The chimney has lately been added to considerably. Close by is a large enclosed reservoir or tank, where the head waters of the little Umtata stream, are collected and sheltered from impurity. This arrangement is of more importance than may appear at first sight. Not

only is an abundant supply of water secured at all times, but the health, and consequently the working power, of the labourers, are improved thereby. The boiler is also fed with pure water. On many estates the pool from which the water used is taken is rendered impure by the megass, and other refuse, allowed to rot in it. The acids thus created have a most injurious effect on the iron plates, eating them away, and making accidents probable.

Mr. Osborn has found it answer better on the whole to make a low, rather than a high class of sugar, and the reasons he gives for this preference seem very sound and conclusive; you can get more out of the cane for one thing. Apropos of this we may mention a rather amusing mistake lately made by a journalist when describing the process of sugar-making on an estate near Durban, where he said he found a dirty looking compound, looking more like guano than anything else. Now in the first place guano is a light-coloured, not a dark substance, and, therefore, the comparison fails, but the writer of the article in question failed yet more egregiously in the display of superior knowledge. The dark-looking substance, instead of being overboiled sugar as he took it to be, was really fifth sugar, the last residuum of the tanks, and it said much for the sugar planter's patience and energy that he should have succeeded in turning out a marketable article out of what many planters would reject. I remember seeing in Mauritius once, a quantity of vile-looking skinmings, not fit apparently for hog-wash, but the proprietor said he should yet convert it into a low class sugar. Let nothing be lost—that should be the maxim of a sugar planter. Let all that is extractible be got out of the cane to the last ounce. Fifth sugars must necessarily be dark and forbidding in look though none the less saleable for certain purposes. Doubtless with a reduction of duties a change in modes of manufacture will become expedient, and the sugar planter will henceforward be able to compete more successfully with the refiner.

In leaving Mr. Osborn's hospitable roof I am glad

to bear testimony to the practical energy of that gentleman, who will probably under the new regime succeed in working his estate as it deserves to be. The abundance of broad roads, some planted with trees, was an especially noticeable feature. These are not only a great safeguard against fire, but much facilitate agricultural operations.

The Inanda hills close in the view to the westward of this estate, and in front stretches northward the long, cane-clad sweep of the Umhlanga valley.

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## CHAPTER II.

THE UMHLANGA VALLEY. — MR. ISABELLE'S. — MR. SHIRE'S. — COOLIE PLANTERS. — UMHLANGA COMPANY'S ESTATES. — TRENANCE.

THE valley of the Umhlanga is little known even to many persons who live in its immediate neighbourhood. It lies off the main road. Travellers from the Umgeni to Verulam catch only glimpses here and there of the plantations which clothe this basin. No conception of the state of agriculture there can be formed by persons who do not diverge from the beaten track. Let me confess that ten years had elapsed since I had last visited this particular corner of Victoria county, and the changed aspect of the land struck me at every turn.

The Great Umhlanga, as that modest stream is pretentiously called, has less to do with this basin than the Little Umhlanga, which is a tributary of the Umgeni, and the feeder of Sea Cow Lake. This stream, so insignificant in dry weather, so fast and turbulent after a storm, drains a large extent of country for its size, and its waters are getting more and more polluted by the refuse of the plantations along its banks. The traveller must be prepared to cross its bed frequently, as it winds about most crookedly and crosses your path constantly.

As we ride eastward again through the Umtata

cane-fields several startled duikers bound along the road. These animals find comfortable cover in the plantations, but are less destructive than the monkies, which at one estate I visited show a fondness for cane and a capacity to steal it, which suggest the idea that development is still going on in that species, and that the ranks of our race may yet be reinforced by further accessions of ape-life. Mr. Osborn's fields at one point touch those belonging to the estate of the late M. Isabelle, whose property we are now traversing. The last time I was here there was no cane save Mr. Shire's visible in this locality, and where now are ranged the coolie houses stood the house occupied by the Rev. A. W. L. Rivett. Now Mrs. Isabelle's residence embedded in trees, crowns the top of a rise near the mill, which is planted below in a wide free space with plenty of breathing room around it. M. Collard, the highly intelligent manager, has been only two years in the colony, but he brought with him from Mauritius a lifetime of experience in the art of sugar making. There are about 400 acres under cane on this estate—the whole of its area in fact—and the manager's chief complaint is that he has not new fields to cultivate. The men he employs are mostly coolies, with whose management he is necessarily most familiar, but he detects many important differences in the mode of treatment adopted respectively at the Mauritius and here.

The millhouse is one of the very few in Natal where one can see the whole operation of cane-crushing and sugar-making carried on under one roof. M. Collard has pulled down all partitions, and standing in front of the engine—a beautiful machine by the way—the eye takes in at a glance, battery, coolers, wetzels, centrifugals, and drying house. In Mauritius this plan is preferred on most of the best estates. The mill could probably do more work than the present requirements of the estate necessitate, and is fully equal to turning out three tons a day. M. Collard goes in for producing a high class sugar by means of the wetzels, and does not despair of turning out by

Dr. Icery's process an article equal to that now made in Mauritius. He showed us some samples from that island of extraordinary purity and brilliancy of grain. Not far from the mill is the distillery, where an excellent spirit is made. Many people consider a still to be the necessary complement of sugar making, and we believe there is no doubt as to its being a remunerative form of enterprise.

Close to this estate is Mr. T. Duff's store and plantation. This is one of the earliest settlements in this locality. Mr. D.'s father will be remembered with great respect by many of my readers. His son now has a snug little plantation of 25 acres, which he crushes at Mrs. Isabelle's mill. Mr. Mullins, another neighbour, has also 25 acres, which he also crushes at Mrs. Isabelle's or Mr. Shire's mills. These instances of independent cultivation are valuable, as serving to show that sugar cane can be grown to pay by small growers, crushing at other men's mills. A yet more interesting fact is written upon the face of a bushy hill over the river, where several patches of cane and coffee are now being cultivated by coolie lessees, who are themselves at work on the neighbouring estates.

A few minutes' ride over a bit of open ground—the only non-cultivated batch I shall traverse between the Umgeni and Kahts's Kop—brings us to a veteran establishment. The steep pitch of its roof is familiar of old. Heavy-laden orange and other fruit trees bury the house in a leafy environment. This is the late Mr. Shire's estate, now being managed by the energetic son of that pioneer colonist. The house stands in the centre of the plantation. All round spread the canefields. This estate has not passed scathless through its many years of existence. In the valley below both frost and fire have devastated the fields, and caused terrible loss to the owner. These serious calamities, however, have not interfered with the progress of the enterprise, or the perseverance of the proprietor. The frost-bitten land is still in many parts covered with cane, though new land is being planted on all sides. Already there are 470 acres under cane. Before the



year is out another 150 acres, much of which is already turned up, will be planted.

The reason Mr. Shire is re-planting the flat despite its liability to frost is because he prefers the less positive risk to the more certain peril of drought which is felt less in the hollows, where the ground is moist, than on the drier hill sides. Drainage does something to diminish the probability of frost, but no means of irrigation exist to benefit the hills. This valley is comparatively free from bush, as compared with many other localities, and drought is severely experienced at times. Mr. Shire is doing his best to supplement nature by planting trees everywhere about the estates. Already the dark lines of trees skirting the cane-fields show pleasantly in contrast. I forgot how many thousand trees, principally the *bois noir*, Mr. Shire said had been planted out. There is reason to believe that these trees will be of value as a means of attracting rain, and of nourishing moisture in the soil. They are also a safeguard against fire, and a source of fuel for future years. This question of tree-planting is one well deserving the attention of all planters.

The mill on this estate was erected under the superintendence of Mr. Albert Robinson, to whom the colony owes the steam tug and the Point railway. It was the scene of an unfortunate explosion the other day, caused by a defect in the planning of the furnaces. As much as  $2\frac{1}{2}$  tons of sugar have been made per day at it. A new battery, formed of the old fashioned circular pans, is being erected in place of a square arrangement originally provided. The square pans are found to diffuse the heat much less equably than the round ones. Mr. Shire employs about 200 kafirs, and has no difficulty about labour. He prefers Natal kafirs as workmen, but thinks a mixture is preferable. All the food required for these people, or most of it, is grown on the estate. This year 1200 muids of sweet potatoes and 450 muids of maize have been grown for the use of the labourers. The experience of this estate goes to show that one ton per acre is a fair average production, and if a crop of 200 to 250

tons is obtained this year, the proprietors will be satisfied.

Lungsickness has proved very mischievous in this neighbourhood, and severe losses have been recently experienced from this cause. Mr. Shire inclines to the belief that inoculation only serves to propagate the disease, and that a strong combination and severe measures might succeed in stamping out the scourge, as it has been stamped out in European countries.

Not far from Mr. Shire's may be seen a compact little estate belonging to Mr. Watson, who has 50 acres under cane, and is erecting an ox-power mill. This is another instance of what industry can effect without much aid from capital. The more one sees and hears of agriculture in this colony the more convincing becomes the evidence that capital, though essential to large operations, is not the primary requirement in enterprises of a less extensive character. Perseverance and practical aptitude will go far where a man is content with small beginnings and with gradual improvement, to make up for the want of money.

This estate enjoys a greater extent of spare land for pasturage than most of its neighbours. Little could its venerable proprietor foresee, when he acquired the farm 20 years ago, that by the time his son attained to years of manhood it would form so enviable a property. Some of the new land that is being broken up lies as far from the sea probably as any sugar plantation on the coast, except, perhaps, Mr. Forbes'. Behind the hills that close in the prospect westward and at their feet, spreads the Inanda locatiou—a vast depression, walled in by precipices hundreds of feet high, and water-worn into innumerable hills and gullies, the bed of the Umgeni being its central vein. But I shall have more to say of these singular localities hereafter. From certain points the iron roof of the Inanda Mission Station may be seen. Here the Rev. D. Lindley, father of the American Mission, has lived and laboured among the natives around for nearly thirty years past. His station presents a thriving aspect. The houses of the natives are comfortable and substantial : the church

is a commodious edifice; the large building used as a seminary for the higher instruction of native students, is a large gabled structure. It would not be right to pass by a settlement which was in existence before a sod was turned in the county.

Near Mr. Shire's house, on a commanding rise, is a little church, and near it a graveyard, where several handsome monuments testify to the regard with which the residents cherish their dead. From this point we look round and see nothing but sugar cane. There in the distance, are the fields near Mr. Smerdon's mill which we shall have to visit on our return, together with the yet further plantations of the "Saccharine" Estate. In both cases the canes look splendid. We now ride continuously along roads skirted by cane plantations. The "Phoenix" is the first estate and not far from it are those belonging to the Umhlanga Valley Company. The first is the one formed by to our late fellow-colonist, Mr. Wilson. The plantations here are fenced in, and the appearance of the country is so completely saccharine, that one is forcibly reminded of the Mauritius. Down below on the left near the Umhlanga, are Mr. Binns' house and mill "Sunderland." That gentleman was absent from the colony when we passed, but the estate was being ably managed, in his absence, by Mr. Johnson. Large breadths of freshly-ploughed land are noticeable. This mill is especially interesting, as having the only concreter, so far, at work in the colony; but I reserve further comment upon these properties in order to do more justice to the enterprise and achievements of the energetic co-proprietor and manager.

Trenance all but joins Sunderland. From a hill between, one gets the best view obtainable of the Umhlanga Valley, and of the plantations that cover it. In no other part of the colony has man so completely transformed nature, and to so wide an extent turned the wilderness into wealth-bearing land. In this valley alone, taking the main road as boundary, there must be not less than 4000 acres under cane, excluding the Umgeni Sugar Company's acreage.

The estate we are now traversing may fairly be considered one of our older plantations. From the first it has continued under the same management—that of Mr. Richard Acutt and his two energetic sons. There are 400 acres under cane, and if present appearances are realised, there may be a crop of 300 tons. But with regard to the estimates of yield, it is impossible to speak with any degree of certainty. Such calculations are liable to modification by so many causes that they are comparatively untrustworthy. Although some of the soil about here appears inferior to the rich chocolate loam met with in some other places, it nevertheless bears well—as much as two tons an acre having been often obtained,—and the remark is often made that old theories about the fitness of particular soils and localities for particular kinds of cultivation, have been quite upset by later experience.

The mill at Trenance occupies a roomy fabric, and was in first-rate order, paint and cleansing having done their work everywhere. A disc pan is in operation as well as wetzels, and is found to work well. The engine is a perpendicular one of considerable power, and gives great satisfaction. Mixed labour is employed, and though no difficulty has yet been experienced, the possibility of pressure is apprehended. *Syringa* trees are plentifully planted along the roads, and already show out well. I was glad to find an estate that has weathered some vicissitudes, giving such excellent promise, and reflecting so much credit upon the family management. Mr. Acutt is fortunate in having the co-operation of his two eldest sons, Messrs. Leonard and Courtenay Acutt, who are notable proofs that Natal can produce good sugarplanters as well as good sugar.

We shall have to return to this district again. Meanwhile let us ride on to Verulam, ere darkness closes in. The view of this basin is charming in the evening lights, which rest upon the bushy brows of the hills around Ottawa, while the valley below in its brighter garb is wrapt in shade. On our way we pass Mr. Jee's plantation and mill, which stands higher

in the world than mills usually do. Mr. Jee was one of the earliest planters who proved that cane will ripen as well on the hill tops as in the hollows, and all his cane, or the best part of it, grows at some elevation. It is pleasant to find another pioneer, and so worthy a one, still in possession. Long may he continue so.

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### CHAPTER III.

VERULAM.—UMHLOTI VALLEY.—MISSION STATION.—THE GRANGE.—REDCLIFFE.—FENTON VACY.—OAKFORD.—MESSRS. REMNANT AND POLKINGHORNE.—TONGAAT.

KAHTS'S Kop—worthily named after one of our Natalian fathers—is one of the most conspicuous features of our coastlands. Not that this hill can boast any pre-eminence in point of height, as the altitude of its conical crest is exceedingly modest. It stands by itself, however, and is a notable landmark in the prospect. A semaphore placed on its summit could communicate by signal with Reit Valley on the one hand, and the Bluff on the other, while Cowie's hill and the high lands above Piñctown may be seen in another direction.

A fair expanse of view is that which meets the eye from this point at sunrise on any fine morning. Immediately below stretch the cane-fields of Mr. Barr's plantation, covering the ground as far as the river, near which the dark chimney may be seen emerging from the mist which veils the course of the Umhloti. In the foreground, on the left, is the rounded hill at the entrance of the village, laid out most tastefully as a cemetery, with winding walks, and rows of young trees, the sweetest resting place of the departed in the colony. Just beyond are the houses of the village, above which rise the pointed gables of the Wesleyan Church, whose architectural merits are sadly marred by the substitution of a meaningless fleur de lis for the appropriate cross, upon the four corners of its lofty roof. The broad sluggish river winds below, towards the sea, a dazzling glimpse of which is seen where the hills recede at its

mouth. On the left appear steep spurs of hills, once all clothed with bush and tangle; now, with scarcely a break, lined and squared with coffee and sugar plantations. There are people who prefer the unkempt luxuriance of the wilderness to the more regular charms of cultivated vegetation. I hardly think, however, that the most ardent lover of the picturesque would deny that the scenery of these coastlands has not been immensely improved by the brighter tints, and the straighter lines, of European agriculture. Coffee and sugar fields, indeed, when seen side by side, as they are here, present a delightful contrast, while the effect is enhanced by the necessity which compels coffee planters to intersect their plantations with frequent rows of different kinds of trees—bananas, acacias, or mulberries mostly—as break-winds.

Verulam, the chief township of Victoria county, is as yet little more than a village, although it is gradually approaching the limits of population when it may claim to be formed into a municipality, and to exercise the correspondent right of taxation. There is at all times a calm, contented air about the main street of this village, as though the inhabitants were busy about their own concerns, and did not trouble themselves about their neighbours. It can boast a library, four stores, a steam mill, two bakers, two butchers, two chemists, three inns, two blacksmiths, two saddlers, a shoemaker, two bakers, and a tailor. It is the residence of the magistrate, the county member, the doctor, and the lawyer. It has a minister of the Church of England, who is also schoolmaster; and is the most flourishing centre of Wesleyanism in the colony. Its original settlers, many of whom still abide and flourish here, all belonged to that vigorous community, and have so tenaciously adhered to the rules of their sect in regard to worldly matters, that the place is called facetiously the "city of the saints." If frugality, industry, and persistent toil can make a people prosper, then we need not wonder that the settlers of Verulam are as well-to-do as they are. Time was twelve years ago when the places of these substantial well-built stores and houses were filled by homely wattle and daub

structures; when the hills and vallies all round only disclosed here and there amongst the prevailing bush, a few scattered cottages and patches of garden ground. Now the eye finds it difficult to rest on a hill slope that is not cultivated.

Verulam is the centre of business for the surrounding country. Planters come here for their supplies, and many of the residents have little ventures of their own in an agricultural way. On the hill hardbye a native edition of the village will be found, minus its stores and other public institutions, but presided over by a church and missionary. The comfortable houses and wagons of these people show that their acceptance of Christianity has not marred their worldly prospects. Around and below their station is a considerable breadth of sugar cane, about 100 acres altogether, to crush which the growers are anxious to see a central mill erected by some enterprising capitalist. In the same direction a small coffee plantation is being formed by a mechanic in Durban, whose son lives there and superintends the labour of five or six Basutos. No capital is expended here except what the lessee of the ground manages to save from his weekly wages; but he hopes in time to form a little estate, for the independent support of his family during life's declining years. This intelligent man assured me that if any one would erect such a mill, he would put all his laud—about 90 acres—at once under cane, and that he had neighbours circumstanced like himself who would do the same. Where is the man in search of an investment who will enquire into the prospects of such a venture?

Just behind Verulam, to the westward, we come to The Grange, Mr. Charles Manning's well-known property. This is one of the best worked estates in Natal. The proprietor is a man of system, and has probably succeeded in getting a better return from his land than most of his fellow colonists. Tobacco, from the first, has been a speciality of Mr. Manning's enterprise. He has produced this plant in every form—in compact fragrant cakes of cavendish; in cut facsimiles of bird's eye; in cigars; and in leaf. As this year he has from seventy to eighty acres of tobacco, we

may fairly presume that he finds its growth profitable. His fields present a very handsome appearance, and though the plants have been well stripped, they still bear a goodly crop of large silvery leaves. Enter the drying shed, a large airy structure at least 100 feet long. It is filled up to the roof with the leaf, suspended on rails placed one above another. A long narrow passage traverses the centre, and the sensation as you pass down this leafy corridor, is that of being in a laundry where snuffy handkerchiefs without number are hanging up to dry. The day being rather muggy, the leaves are soft and kidlike—were the weather dry and hot, they would be erumpled and brittle. In another more substantial stone store, we see the leaf piled up ready for further manipulation. The greater part will be twisted up into rope-like coils for use up-country, where Mr. Manning's best market lies. Tobacco is an exhausting crop, and cannot be taken off the ground many seasons successively. The ground, however, refreshes itself under other crops.

Cotton is another product with which Mr. Manning's name is honourably associated. Long before our midland friends thought of growing cotton instead of maize, considerable crops had been taken off this estate. The first year of trial, Mr. Manning's plantations yielded £400 worth of produce. For three years running he had a crop of 15,000 lbs. of clean cotton. Before he had been on the farm fourteen months, he realised £270 alone from cotton, and he had no particular reason for giving up the staple, except that prices at that time were low, and other articles seemed to promise better. There are about thirty acres of Coffee on the estate, but the returns have not so far been satisfactory, owing probably to the bad exposure of the fields, which catch the cold southerly winds. Mr. Manning's Indian experience naturally inclines him to coolie labour, but he employs kafirs too, and has not, so far, reason to complain of scarcity. His people are well cared for, and a crop of maize is usually grown for their consumption.

A mile or two beyond The Grange we come to Redcliffe, having first traversed a road winding round a woody hill, and crossed a brawling stream which gives



water power to the mill. This estate occupies a basin, shut in by hills whose dark sides rise amphitheatre-wise above the plantations. Here the evidences of Mr. T. Milner's love of order and organisation are manifest everywhere—in the cleanliness of the mill, where not only is sugar crushed and manufactured, but corn is ground—in the substantial workmanship of the buildings and tanks—and in the arrangement of the coolie houses. Mr. H. V. Francis has managed the estate in Mr. Milner's absence. Mr. Le Mesurier, who has taken part in the management of the estate for some years, has recently returned to Redcliffe, and is now resident there. The appearance of the plantation reflects great credit on all concerned. I regret being unable, through want of time, to visit this and the two neighbouring estates—Fenton Vacy and Oakford—which are now being worked under the vigorous superintendence of Mr. A. F. Woodcock, assisted by Mr. W. M. Pierce, for the proprietors. They are well worth visiting, the scenery around being particularly pleasant, and the sight of 1200 acres under cane between the two, very satisfactory. On Redcliffe there are 900 acres under cultivation, so that on these three estates alone, there are more than 2000 acres in a productive state.

Not far from the Grange, and close to Verulam, is Mr. J. Maclaurin's plantation—Glenaray. The proprietor has been resident here for about five years, and appears to cultivate coffee as ably as he once dispensed justice on the Scottish bench, as Recorder of Argyllshire. Of the 127 acres which form his Estate, about 65 are planted with coffee. Of these only a small portion is in full bearing—a portion being young and in partial bearing, and another not yet bearing. About six tons altogether will be picked this year. Next year a crop of from 12 to 15 tons is expected. Mr. Maclaurin has sold three tons, and delivered the same in Durban, at £65 10s. per ton, payable in one month. He has three acres of tobacco, and ten of maize, and means this year to sow a considerable quantity of hill rice. The crops growing in the rich black loam of this plantation bear beautifully. The whole of the land is surrounded with a Mauritius thorn fence, quite im-

penetrable by cattle. In the pulping house one of Mr. Gavin's pulpers is employed, and there was a large store of cherry ready for manipulation when I had the pleasure of inspecting the estate. Mr. Maclaurin dries his parchment coffee in trays, and not in barbecues, a simple and economical arrangement.

Over the Umhloti the road passes by means of a weir—a most successful example of that kind of structure. Stone is plentiful close by, and at a low cost this river has been made fordable at all times by this simple expedient. From the hill on the other side a pretty view of the village is obtained, the river at its foot being skirted by high cliffs of red soil. We are now on an elevated table land, quite different in character from the vallies below. Clumps of bush are scattered about, and line the beds of little streams. On the right, but not visible, is Mount Moreland. It will be well, however, to reserve all the estates on that side of the road until our return.

About three miles from Verulam we reach Mr. Remnant's coffee plantation, which stretches along a low hill not far from the road. There are ninety acres of coffee berry divided by break-winds of banana trees into square fields. The yield this year has been much more encouraging than heretofore, eleven tons having been picked instead of seven. Immediately behind, and only separated by a road, is Mr. Polkinghorne's plantation, which covers the western side of the hill. Here there are 80 acres under coffee, the trees being well advanced, although on both estates we notice here and there those yellow shrubs, which show that the cut-worm is at work below. The same thing is noticeable on all the plantations, more or less, but the mischief done by the insect so far, though annoying, is not extensive. As soon as the tree has been picked, it is usual to cut it down and kill the worm, which takes refuge in the root, there to deposit its eggs against the next season. Mr. Polkinghorne leaves the estate mostly in charge of his eldest son, who is quite up to the work,—40 additional acres are already being turned up, to plant in the spring; so that the extent of the plantation altogether will be 120 acres. The crop

this year has been about 11 tons, or one ton more than the estimate. To cultivate this acreage—and I can bear testimony to the great cleanliness of the plantation—10 coolies and 15 kafirs are employed, whose labour forms the chief, in fact almost the only, outlay on the estate, except such expenditure as is needful for appliances and sheds. As much as 6000 lbs. of berry has been picked in a day, and as much as 30,000 lbs in a week. Five lbs. of coffee have been obtained from one tree. In addition to the coffee picked, 300 muids of maize were gathered this year, from the crop planted between the young trees, which for two years are all the better for the shade and shelter thus afforded. Mr. Polkinghorne, jun., is a great believer in good cultivation, and thinks it much better to expend money and labour in attending to the fields than in erecting costly buildings and machinery before they are actually wanted. For a crop of ten or twenty tons comparatively simple and inexpensive appliances, are sufficient,—one of Mr. Gavin's £10 pulpers being the first requirement. I shall speak more fully hereafter of the processes by which coffee is prepared for the market; and generally of the condition of coffee planting in Natal.

As I leave this intelligent young Natalian, who was only a few months old when he arrived in this colony, and ride back through the clean and trim coffee gardens it is his business to keep in order, the peculiar attractions which coffee planting presents to the eye of a beginner are more than usually apparent. It is a fancy pursuit to begin with. A plantation of coffee shrubs, all growing in rows, of the same height, and the same distance apart, divided into sections at regular intervals by lines of some graceful fruit-bearing tree, which gives shelter from the tempest, presents, in itself, a highly ornamental scene. Nor is there aught displeasing to a refined taste, in the processes of pulping, drying, hulling, and sizing. Then the amount of permanent labour required, as we have seen on this estate, is so small, and the annual outlay so moderate, that the man of small means is tempted into a belief that an enterprise so attractive is nevertheless within the com-

pass of his resources. Unfortunately the ultimate returns in Natal have not, in most cases, been equal to the amount of capital and time expended. But of this more anon.

These are not the only coffee plantations visible. On the opposite hill Mr. Josiah Harvey has 80 acres under coffee, and Mr. James 35 acres. There are other small patches about. In spite of adverse influences and tardy returns, the acreage of this enterprise year by year advances. That the soil is pretty good Mr. Remnant's special pick of half a ton from one acre, testifies. No general conclusion can be formed, however, from such incidental yields, as we shall have occasion more fully to remark.

Verulam is, I think, misplaced where it is. It should have been laid out either here on these breezy flats, or near the Great Umhlanga. Its present situation is low, wet, and not as healthy as it might be. The true conditions of a locality, however, are only found out by experience.

To any one fond of a good gallop, what more charming ride can there be than that between Mr. Remnant's and the village of Victoria. The road is good and tolerably level; the ground is level and free from ruts. Grassy undulations, sprinkled with bush, and closed in here and there by distant forest, with outlooks over more broken districts at a greater distance, form the landscape. There has always seemed to me to be, just here, a greater buoyancy in the atmosphere than you meet with elsewhere on the coast. Most of the land is held by absentee proprietors—hence the absence of houses or cultivation along these few miles of country. But the road at last descends. A small plain is reached. Houses are seen scattered about. This is the township of Victoria.

What things of the future these colonial villages are in their youngest days? In Europe villages have long ago taken their exact rank in the map. If little Pedlington has no extraordinary discovery to drag it into importance, or if its situation possesses no particular advantage over others, it will remain little to the end of time. But here where our future is all to make one

can predicate nothing positively of such localities. Victoria has not, it is true, made much progress for ten or twelve years past. I see no new houses. Evidences of enterprise are as scant as ever. And yet the day must come when the place will thrive and expand. It is almost in the centre of the county. It is at the turning of the road over the Noodsberg into the interior. Its position is admirably chosen. Quiet hamlet though it now is, with its two inns, and store or two, the day will come when Victoria may be to Victoria county, what York is to Yorkshire.

A mile beyond Victoria we come to the estate which may be regarded as the manor of the neighbourhood. Mr. J. R. Saunders is the lord of that manor. For fifteen years he has managed the Tongaat estate, whose broad acres we are now traversing, and whose plantations now skirt the road. Still as of yore the house crowns the euphorbia-clad cliffs, and overlooks the river below rushing down its stony bed. The plain on one side is again, as of old, covered with cane, and the hill beyond bears the traces of cultivated fields. Frost has visited this flat badly, but not so severely as to justify its continued abandonment. The China cane now growing there looks thick and healthy, and gives promise of a good crop. It was so dense in places as to be scarcely passable. There are 500 acres altogether under cultivation here, 430 of which are under cane. Should a crop of 300 tons be obtained it will not be for the first time in the history of this estate. Mr. Saunders employs both coolies and kafirs and is partial to the former. This valley has, for some reason or other, the repute of being colder than other coast vallies, though one scarcely sees why it should be so.

There are one or two little engineering works here which may be noticed as showing what may be done with limited resources. At the foot of the tall cliff on which the house is built, a road to the further cane-fields has been carved out of the hard sandstone rock. A dam has also been constructed. Over the river below the mill a bridge has just been thrown at a comparatively insignificant cost. Between the mill and the house stands the "Malakoff"—so well-known a fea-

ture to travellers along this road. This red, frowning tower is in reality a storehouse; but its square loopholed walls, resemble at a little distance the fortified hold of some border chieftain.

Mr. Saunders is forming by degrees a coffee plantation on another farm a few miles off. There are also one or two other settlers in this district engaged in coffee-planting. The neighbourhood, however, is less settled than most parts of the country lying so near the main road. This is to be regretted, as fine land abounds all round, and the country is very pleasant. The residence is a very suitable one for the county member, which post Mr. Saunders held so honourably for so many years, as he will do again, we trust, in time. The Tongaat is a central point, and free from connexion with any other locality. It forms a very good boundary between the Inanda and the Tugela divisions of the county. The first has for thirteen years been under the magistrateship of Dr. Blaine; the second has for a still longer period been the scene of Mr. C. H. Williams' magistracy.

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## CHAPTER IV.

THE NOODSBERG ROAD.—FINE SCENERY.—FORBES'S.—WHITTAKER'S.—RIET VALLEY.

Under the kindly guidance of a genial companion we cross the Tongaat, and turn abruptly round westward. This is for a short distance the Noodsberg road. It leads over the mountain pass of that name, and connects the upper districts with Victoria county. In the future it will probably be more used than now when the number of Umvoti and Mooi River farmers bringing their produce coastward is not as great as one could wish.

Mr. Marcus, a very old resident in this district, has built his house in curiously close proximity to a marsh, near which is a piece of ground admirably adapted by nature for a race-course, with a small hill at one end, from which a fine view of the sport could be obtained. We soon leave the beaten track for what used to be the original road, now hardly visible beneath its garb of grass and weeds. The path ascends, the ground gets higher, and vegetation changes its character somewhat. Dwarf palms grow loftier and the strelitzia gets more common. Charming glades disclose themselves. One exquisite spot especially tempts one to linger. The hills slope softly towards a bush-swathed valley, down which all hidden from the eye purls a sparkling stream. Under the cool shade of the overarching trees, and around their mossy roots, the graceful fronds of innumerable ferns cluster thickly; the wild banana waves its fan-like leaves above the darker foliage; the bush advances and recedes, leaving bright stretches of waving pasture. Wooded bluffs project into the foreground, and leave belts of shadow. Birds—the toucan and the hawk—fly lazily through the dreamy azure. It is altogether one of those paradisaic scenes, so unimprovable by man, which has caused enthusiastic pens to write of our Natalian coastlands in words that have been styled extravagant. There could be no extravagance, however, in depicting the charms of such a vale. Its agricultural qualities may possibly be more doubtful. It may be that what nature has made so beautiful, man could not make fruitful. That is no reason why we should refrain from doing justice to that which must surely please the most prosaic eye, even should it disappoint the utilitarian's judgment.

Near this spot we pass close to Mr. Forbes's sugar plantation. This is probably the furthest estate of this kind from the coast. It may be said, indeed, to occupy a distinctly higher plateau, and the successful growth of cane here suggests the possibility of a wider limit for its cultivation than theory has so far

assigned. Rising still we reach, by a scarcely visible track, a ridge from whence a magnificent view of the county and the sea on one hand, and of the Noodsberg table lands on the other, is obtained. A mile or two further brings us suddenly to Spitzkop, after a ride of three hours and a half from the Tongaat.

This farm is the property of Lord Strathallan and his brother, the Hon. F. Drummond, and is being capitally managed by Mr. D. Whittaker, whose hospitable welcome we are soon receiving. The commodious house crowns a hill, every side of which is cultivated. As I had heard but little of the place, it was a pleasant surprise to find myself so far from the coast in such good company, and in view of so many evidences and tokens of industry and enterprise. Capital has been laid out here to the best purpose. There are 80 acres of coffee in, what seemed to me, first-rate and very clean condition, as well as 10 of mealies. A crop of five tons is being taken off this year. A long walk down an avenue of acacias brought us to the pulping house at the bottom, where a splendid water-power stream runs. At present no such power is erected, but it is to be hoped such facilities will soon be turned to account. Only thirty hands are employed, 22 coolies and 8 kafirs, over whom there is established thorough control. Mr. Whittaker has had to deal with soil which, regarded in the light of favourite theories, is not so well adapted for coffee as other kinds. Still the appearance of the trees and the yield of coffee are not inferior to the average results on other estates. Mr. Whittaker is a firm believer in deep planting and in trenching round the roots, so as to cut away the small roots branching out from the collar of the tree. A singular instance of the truth of this theory is afforded by a tree which sunk half buried into an ant-hole formed under it. This bush is now the finest in the whole plantation. Several bushes have almost killed themselves with overbearing, and will be cut down, as the best way to restore vitality. In the first two years of bearing, Mr. Whittaker allows no tertiaries, which are ruthlessly



cut off during pruning time. He is also, like most planters, a believer in good cultivation as being the best road to success.

I was much interested in a small field of tea, which grows well and to an inexperienced eye looks healthy. The leaves are regularly picked and simply dried in a baking pot. The family wants are thus supplied, and the flavour of the beverage produced differs little from that of imported tea, although, owing probably to want of proper curing, the strength is less. A large field of dholl was growing vigorously in the valley.

Leaving with regret this hospitable abode, I ride by a good road down a valley, over a stream, and then up a long hill with charming scenery on either hand. Here may be seen wooded glades flanked by precipices, and hills crowned by forests, a not very common circumstance on the coast. The slant rays of the afternoon sun cast many tracts into shadow and on others bring out new beauties into prominence. The white stems of some trees; the rich green foliage of others; the pale gleam of white rocks; the babble of purling water somewhere near; the far loom of the sea beyond the rolling hills spreading coastward; the fragrance of the mimosa bushes round; fill one's senses with delight. Presently the road passes along the sharp ridge of a spur of hills round which the river winds, and descends steeply into a gorge which is now wrapt in shade and gloom. A great silence seems to prevail down here, amongst the spreading trees under whose dense leafage the dark river flows murmuringly. On the brow of the tall cliffs around the yellow light is still resting, but here all is dim and restful. If it had not been for the escarpment made by the Cotton Company the Umhlali would not have been passable at this point, nor for a mile or two on either side, so deep and precipitous is the gorge. As it is wagons and carriages can pass easily along the made road. From hence we are not long in reaching Reit Valley, whose plantations may be seen some distance off.

We have now arrived at the largest coffee estate in the colony, and one upon which the largest amount of

capital has been expended. I had long wished to see a plantation about which so much has been said, nor was I in any way disappointed. Reit Valley belonged to the late Cotton Company, whose many estates in this colony are shortly to come to the hammer. All around we see the evidences of a generous expenditure of capital. Operations generally are conducted on the scale one reads of in Ceylon and Java. The plantations are large; the buildings are substantial; the machinery is of the best description.

Let us first make the acquaintance of the present manager, Mr. Brown, under whose skilful superintendence the well known plantation Springvale, near Avoca, was laid out, and who, for three years, has been at the head of affairs here. Mr. Brown brings to bear the experience of a Scotch horticulturist, and is an illustration that practical knowledge when combined with energy and intelligence can adapt itself to very altered circumstances and can cope with different physical conditions. There can be little doubt that had Mr. Brown, since he came to this colony nine years ago, had to deal with sugar cane, or tobacco, or cotton, he would have been as successful as he has been with coffee.

The conformation of the plantation itself is unique in its way. Several spur-like hills, spreading out something like the fingers of a hand, but all lying compactly near each other, have been cleared and planted. I counted twenty distinct slopes, all of which were under coffee. There are 300 acres of well advanced bushes; from which a crop of about 30 tons is picked this year. About 20 tons were already picked in May last. Excellent roads, bordered by mulberry and other trees, traverse the estate in every direction, and one has here again another proof that it does not require engineering experience to produce a good road-maker. Considering the extent of the fields, and the great dryness of the past season the trees themselves look in excellent condition. There are few bare spots amongst them, and not more yellow shrubs than one sees elsewhere. The cut-worm and maggot-borer have to be thanked

for these exceptions, and as soon as these little pests show their presence the tree is cut down and the enemy destroyed ere it has time to propagate itself. Overcropping too here, as at Spitzkop, leads to the decay of trees. Every kind of aspect is afforded by the hilly contour of the place; but breakwinds are liberally provided, and belts of bush are sometimes left. Bucks prove troublesome at times, and exhibit an acquired fondness for the leaves of young trees. Mr. Brown is another believer in deep planting. The maize crop this year was comparatively a failure, owing to the drought. It is a most remarkable circumstance that while throughout the rest of the colony rain has fallen so plentifully, only a few light and late showers have been experienced in this neighbourhood, and in the Umvoti valley. Here there has been as much lamentation over the want of rain as there has been rejoicing over abundance of it, in other districts. Old residents say that the locality is a drier one than other parts of the colony; and hence comes its fitness for coffee and cotton, neither of which require much moisture, or at any rate not so much as do cereal crops.

As the coffee crop in Natal ripens slowly and lasts many months, the question of labour is rather complicated. On this estate, however, no difficulty is experienced. 99 coolies are now employed, although as few as 80 have been at work. There are no kafirs in regular employment. But for purposes of picking there is what is yet better—an unfailing supply of kafir women from the kraals of the location, which is only a few miles distant. Mr. Brown has had as many as 150 teasing him for work in one day. As they take payment in corn, their labour costs only about 4d. a day. As pickers they do very well; but for pruning, the nimbler fingers and more ready brains of the coolie are preferable. Mr. Brown pronounces a north exposure to be bad,—on this estate at least, where now and then hot winds are felt; neither does he allow tertiaries to bear, as he considers the tree is weakened by such a burden of wood. He, too, observes the curious way in which particular patches of trees,

or even particular trees, bear exceptionally well, owing, undoubtedly, to the presence in the soil of some peculiar element, such as bone or shells. The cotton tried here suffered from the fly, like the cotton at Chaka's kraal, eight miles off; but if Mr. Manning's theory as to the insect having been imported with the seed, be correct, the fact is at once accounted for.

The buildings are situated near the coolie location, at the bottom and in the centre of the basin into which the radiating hills run. My readers must understand that when the "cherry" is brought in by the pickers, it is put into the pulper, which removes the fleshy wrapping and ejects the then shelled berry into a tank, from whence it goes to the barbecues. These are large cemented floors where the berries are exposed to the sun, and constantly moved by the feet of coolies passing up and down. After the process of drying is thus completed, the berries pass through the huller, which removes the hull, and leaves the beans ready for the peeler which removes the silver skin. A further, and very important operation—only now coming into vogue here—is that of sizing, or putting the beans through sieves of different meshes, thereby securing a uniformity of size, which is appreciated in the home market. These several operations are carried on in commodious buildings. The pulper is one of Brown's Patent Double ones—a very elaborate machine, with rotatory trays, and self-acting buckets, and with a large capacity for work. The water-power employed acts through a turbine of 10-horse power, having thirty feet fall. This arrangement is found to work capitally, and the speed that might be commanded by this little hidden wheel in its iron box is far in excess of the requirements. There is also a corn mill with siloes to hold 300 sacks. All the work is done on the estate by mechanics employed for the purpose, and a great economy is thereby effected.

The manager's residence is beautifully placed on a kind of saddle, some little distance from the mill. Here, too, the proofs of individual aptitude and method meet one everywhere. On one side, overlooking the

house, a winding path leads to the top of a flat hill, from which a splendid prospect of the whole country is obtained. A comfortable summer-house, open at the sides, has been erected here, and the visitor can enjoy the magnificence of the landscape at his leisure. Looking first at the plantation below, in itself an evidence of what the soil and climate are capable, and then beyond, on all sides, over endless breadths of grassy hill and bushy valley, far away northward to where the blue hills of Zululand melt into the hazy distance, or away westward to where the level pasture lands of Umvoti, broken at intervals by the steep rifts of seaward-flowing rivers, close with sharp lines the inland prospect, and seeing naught but the nakedness of nature unclothed by the industry of man, one feels more than ever impressed by the necessity of immigration. Compare such a lifeless prospect with a like view over any district of Europe, where every inch is cultivated, where even the twigs by the riverside are carefully tended and made an article of commerce, where man's presence and man's toil are written in every lineament of the landscape! And yet there are people who would not lift a finger or say a word to bring industrious people to these man-seeking shores!

But we must leave this estate, and part with regret from the kind attentions of Mr. and Mrs. Brown, to both of whom I am indebted for much pleasant hospitality and frankly-rendered information. A very interesting settlement lies ahead, and in order to see as much of it as possible without losing time, it is necessary to start at sunrise. There are so many fine roads about Reit Valley, that one is apt to go astray, and as I am sure to take the wrong road, should two diverge,—being gifted with a melancholy aptitude for going wrong in this respect,—it is not surprising that I did so on this occasion. Selecting the best of the two tracks which branch off, and ambling in serene contentment along it for some distance, admiring the beauties of the scenery, and indulging in such moral reflections as are compatible with sunrise, I found myself landed at last in a bog. Scrambling through that,

I yet further distinguished myself—sharing the distinction with the pony—by climbing up a fearful hill, from the top of which Pisgah I certainly got a charming prospect, but found no outlet. Patience and philosophy, however, triumphed over the difficulties of the position, and brought me at last into the right road, from which, strange to say, I did not diverge until the next turning presented itself. I was then cantering pleasantly no one knows whither, until an enquiry prudently made of a house by the way, apprised me that I was going in a direction right away from what I intended.

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## CHAPTER V.

GLENDALE.—THE “FRYING PAN.”—UMVOTI VALLEY.—  
FIRST ATTEMPT AT SETTLEMENT.—MESSRS. ASH-  
WELL.—THE SCOTCH BOYS.—COTTON.

Glendale is not more than five miles, as the crow flies, from Riet Valley, and there is a path through an awful gorge and up a rocky staircase, which was traversed lately under native guidance by the Governor and Colonial Secretary. Having no fondness, however, owing to the melancholy propensity I have named, for short cuts, I kept the main road—except when I left it, that is—and soon reached some high breezy table lands. Messrs. Rich, Phipson, and Cotton Acutt have all houses near the road, and there is some weedy coffee visible near the first-named house. Beyond these the ground stretches away in a cool airy flat, along which it is a treat to canter. The detour seems tremendous, but the time taken is not much more. At last, after keeping inland, the road turns round, and I suddenly found myself on the brink of an awful precipice, with the wildest of valleys stretching away northward 2000 feet below. This is the valley of the Umvoti.

The ground at your feet drops down, sheer, seven or eight hundred feet. Then it undulates away in a

constant succession of hill and dale, all densely wooded, to where the river several miles off winds through all. Steep spurs of hills strike off into the valley and native kraals and corngardens crown each of these heights. Beyond the river the mountains rise, singly, in more fantastic forms, having likewise around their flanks the same bushy undulations. The depth and breadth of this huge depression, the magnificence of the precipices that wall it in, the dark shade of the vegetation that so thickly clothes it, and the many traces of savage life one sees in the countless kraals that are dotted about, give a true air of African wildness to the locality, nor can we be surprised that the first party of English immigrants located here, when "shunted off" at the top of the precipice, and told that down there was their future home—there among the wild beasts and the wilder savages—should have taken fright, packed up their traps, and made speed back again to the Point—all which was literally the case.

The road runs dangerously near to the edge of this cliff, and one might easily imagine a tired and belated horseman riding over it in the dark. There seem here and there to be kafir paths up clefts and along spurs, by which these table lands are reached, but the clamber up is eminently suggestive of sound lungs and nimble legs, in both of which the natives are well endowed. Riding a mile or two thus, and looking vainly for the appearance of the promised settlement, I follow another turn of the road, down a slight descent and over a bouldery track until another dip discloses the new township of Glendale.

Dr. Sutherland has happily selected the site of this village, which enjoys the fine air of the high flats, without their exposure. The edge of the cliff is here scooped out, and forms a saddle-like depression, well sheltered on either side by the higher land. Behind, a ravine, wooded and watered, opens out to the westward. The houses of the settlers are built within a hundred yards of the cliff, which here is less precipitous than at other parts, and recedes, so as to render it possible to construct a sideling road to the bottom.

It happens that at this point government has, or rather had, for the ground is mostly taken up, a little unallotted Crown land, and on the arrival of a batch of settlers by the "Earl of Southesk," prepared to take up coast grants, Dr. Sutherland determined to locate them here. Here they were brought therefore with all expedition. On the way hither they were told by men, who should have known better, that they were coming to an uninhabitable hole—known as the "Frying pan" on account of its heat—and only fit for wild beasts and kafirs. We all know how sensitive and easily influenced immigrants are after they arrive, and these doleful descriptions of their future home, caused a revulsion of feeling before they saw it. On reaching the edge of the cliff they were "shunted off" by Dr. Sutherland, and told that down there in that wild and rough-looking region lay their home. He meanwhile hurried off to Maritzburg in order to get authority to construct a road by which the lower regions might be reached. The immigrants, however, lost no time in coming to a decision. It was doubtful whether any of them had ever seen any hill higher than Malvern in their lives. They were mostly fresh from the trim aspects of cities. They found themselves left helpless in a peculiarly out-of-the-way corner of the colony, and told to find their home in a region which at the first sight startles any one. They saw around no settlers but kafirs, and no evidences of vegetation but a vast area of bush which might be supposed to harbour snakes and wild beasts. So they immediately secured a wagon from a mission station near, packed up their traps again, and travelled back to the Point with all possible haste. Had there been a little more preparation and organisation on the part of the authorities, and a little less mischief-making on the part of old colonists, this unfortunate result might have been averted.

I am particular in describing this earlier attempt to colonise the locality as it contrasts very favourably with the next venture—the first fruits of which we are now to witness. About thirteen or fourteen months ago



(now June, 1870) more incoming settlers were located here, and unlike their predecessors they took root, and will I hope flourish. During the interval and subsequently Dr. Sutherland had caused a road down the cliff to be cut to the lots below, and a village was laid out here. So far there is but one street, so-called, skirted by about ten or eleven cottages, all of which belong to that wattle and daub order of architecture common to the first years of a new settlement. Each has a one or two acre allotment round it, according to the number of grantees resident therein. Mr. S. Knox, of the Umhlali, has just erected here a well-stocked wooden store, where accommodation for "man and horse" can also be had and where the post is received. At a meeting lately held a fund was formed for the erection of a church which will soon be built. Around some of the cottages gardens have been formed, and it was pleasant to see mignonette and other floral favourites blooming gaily in so secluded a spot.

Behind the village, on the hillside, is Mr. Laing's residence. This gentleman is fortunate in having the aid of three stalwart sons—the best possession a man can bring to this country. He has built here in order to have a large tract of cultivated land round his house. About a mile on the other side of the valley, just visible beyond the brow of the hill, Lieut. O'Brien has built a substantial residence of brick and iron. Mr. Laing, like most of his neighbours, has had an unfortunate start; his young coffee plants having shared the fate of the rest. He is not daunted, however, but is preparing to plant cotton on a considerable scale.

The largest house in the village is that belonging to the Messrs. Ashwell, to whom I stand indebted for much kind attention, and for information most freely offered. The operations of these gentlemen show what can be done where practical energy and intelligence are united with specific knowledge and aptitude. After spending a large portion of their lives in the Southern States of America, they were attracted to Natal by the gold reports, but on finding those stories to be mythical, they determined to apply themselves

to digging operations of another kind. Nor have they reason to complain. After a residence of about thirteen months, they find themselves the occupants of a roomy house, surrounded by two acres of ground, well cultivated with vegetables and flowers, and a plantation of about 35 acres of cotton, from which they have this season netted £7 per acre, clear profit.

Under the guidance of these energetic brothers, we prepare to descend into the depth of the valley below, and it is pleasant to find the descent very much less fatiguing than I had been led to expect. The road is cut out of the rocky hill, and the formation being decomposed granite, a splendid bottom is obtained. Funds being searee, the road is wide enough for only one wagon, and does not allow of any passing. The windings indeed are so sharp that it is difficult at some points with a full team of oxen to keep the wagon on the road; but a small additional expenditure will easily cure this. As the road at present simply leads to the settlement, I do not consider that the settlers have just cause of complaint and it seemed to me that two-wheeled carts drawn by four or six oxen would be far more fitted for its ascent than cumbersome full-sized ox wagons.

The rim of the "Frying Pan" consists of a towering precipice about 700 feet high. From the foot of this lofty cliff the country rolls away in hilly undulations to the winding river four miles off. From the top, the bottom of this valley looks almost level; but when you are in it, the surface of the ground is naught but rounded slopes, rising into hills of considerable altitude. Bush prevails everywhere, and as the soil is consequently rich, the locality is well adapted for coffee or any tropical plant requiring heat and shelter. This huge wall of rock which guards the valley to the southward is a great natural breakwind, as well as a reflector, against whose bare expanse the sun beats daily. It is most unfortunate that the first industrial essay of the settlers should have been an utter failure. Last October amongst them about 100 acres of coffee were planted. Inexperience,

however, marred the success of these plantations. The young seedlings were not planted deep enough; dry weather ensued, and the whole died. I saw the little dead twigs still cumbering the ground. Happily for themselves a few of the settlers planted a little cotton, which has been remarkably successful. Messrs. Ashwell had about 35 acres of cotton, planted since October, and bearing now. Although the description is known here as New Orleans, it would in Louisiana be called Mexican, the seed being of a bright green colour, and the cotton hanging loosely in long, free tassels from the bolls. This latter is an important peculiarity, as it enables the cotton to be picked easily. The yield has been about 300 to 350 lbs. to the acre. The rows are four feet apart, being just wide enough to allow pickers to pass. From 6000 to 6500 plants go to the acre; and the seeds are planted thickly like beans, provision being thus made against "misses." Cotton is not an exhausting crop, and the ground will bear close planting, the plants being about fifteen inches apart. Solitary trees were pointed out, standing apart, but giving no better yield. Messrs. Ashwell prefer annual planting, as the land can thus be worked better, and there is less danger of frost proving troublesome. They are sanguine that they will be able to get 400 to 500 lbs. of clean cotton per acre. The fly has not, so far, affected their fields. Want of labour is the chief thing feared; as, although the settlement forms almost part of a large and populous location, the natives around show very little disposition to work for their white neighbours. This circumstance, however, may be attributable to the undoubted jealousy with which the intrusion of Europeans into their midst has been viewed. After a time, when they see that their lands are not being unduly encroached upon, and that the settlers will not interfere with them, the natives will probably find it to their interest to work. When once this difficulty is removed it will not be strange should the settlers of Glendale be better supplied with labour during busy times than other parts of the colony, as the women and

children from neighbouring kraals could easily attend daily. One such was hard at work thrashing beans at the time of my visit.

Mr. Ashwell's plantation is the first we come to. Almost in a line with it, on the other side of the road, is the grant taken up by Mr. Laing, amounting to 400 acres in all. One or two settlers, undeterred by the bug-bear of heat, have pitched their tents in the valley so as to be near their plantations, and I was told that it was believed the heat would not be found all the year round so much greater than on the heights. Captain Douglas's house crowns a hill to the right, and in the distance, nearer the river, Lieut. Fawcett's cottage is visible. Mr. Smith's farm is a few miles off, and out of sight. Just in front evidences of cultivated ground may be seen. There are indeed many cleared patches discernible; but this particular spot has a suggestive history connected with it. It is here that the party of immigrants known as "the Scotch boys" are located. These four lads, aged from 20 to 25, came out with the rest about a year ago and took up between them a grant of 100 acres of land, being all that they were entitled to as the non-possessors of capital. They landed here with nothing to speak of in their pockets, but with the full equivalent of money in habits of industry, and a will as strong as their bodies. Having taken up their grants here, they put up a small cottage in the village, as well as another upon their allotment, where they at once proceeded to put land under cultivation, having now four acres of cotton, four of maize, one acre of garden ground round their house, and two acres of coffee. All this they did with the aid of one or two kafirs, selling their cotton, which produced a good crop, as it stood, to the Messrs. Ashwell. As soon as winter approached they branched out in search of employment, which they soon obtained. As a rule one remains at Glendale to see after the plantation. When spring arrives and the time for planting has come they will gather together again and put in more cotton, coffee, or corn, as the case may be. The money earned and saved in the interval supplies them with the means of paying for labour, and of subsisting; the latter cost being com-

paratively trifling where game is so abundant, a garden so fruitful, and corn so cheap. Thus these sturdy young Scotsmen, by sheer dint of energy, frugality, and industry, will soon form for themselves a cotton and coffee plantation which can hardly fail, in such determined hands, to yield a good maintenance. One of them gets £6 a month on a sugar plantation. They are all the sons of poor men in Scotland, and are a practical illustration of what has so often been maintained by the writer, that moral qualities of the right kind are more valuable to a new settler in Natal than capital. These lads are probably but types of thousands of others who might be planted upon our soil.

Although their first attempt to grow coffee has been so complete a failure, the settlers intend making one more effort. They admit their own inexperience, and the mistake they made in not planting deep enough; and they also are impressed by the fact that the past summer was in their district only an exceptionally dry one. The soil and situation of the locality are both eminently fitted for coffee,—and I believe if once the plants fairly got root, they would grow and yield well. Perhaps the plan adopted on one young estate I visited of covering up each young plant with twigs and straw, would be worth trying. Coffee gains by heat when the tree is in fair growth, and I cannot but think that the Umvoti valley will in time become one of the most successful coffee districts on the coast. Meanwhile, cotton offers a temporary resource which will probably be made use of by most of the colonists of Glendale.

I could write much more about this most interesting spot, which presents something like an attempt at that systematic colonisation of our waste lands, so often advocated in this journal. So far, I think, the results of the attempt give encouragement for the future. That more might have been done for the settlers, is undoubted. Their lots should have been surveyed; the road to the valley prepared; arrangements for house-building organised; and information as to agricultural operations collected, before the settlers were placed there. In private enterprise all such preliminaries would have been provided for; why not, then, in the

case of government? Still, in spite of these initiatory drawbacks, the settlement shows, I think, that similar movements might be successfully carried out on a far larger scale, and with a greater chance of success. These settlers were not picked people; they came here of their own accord. The fact that so many have manfully remained, and show so resolute a determination to make the best of circumstances, is, I think an indication that, with proper arrangements, immigration to this colony might be carried to a more successful issue than some among us imagine.

The sun was declining as I reluctantly rode away from Glendale. My last interview was with Mr. Laing, who is a notable instance of the ease with which a townsman can bend his temper and his energies to the rough work of a rural pioneer in a new land. May he and his neighbours have the success they deserve; and may it be the pleasure and the business of every older colonist to lend to these newer settlers the aid, the sympathy, and the encouragement, which, freely rendered, go so far to smooth the path of the stranger, and attach him by friendly ties and pleasant associations to the land of his adoption.

Evening shadows were drawing on as I looked once more over the steep verge of the valley. The hazy glow of our southern winter gave a blueness of complexion, and a vagueness of outline to the vast panorama of confused land in front. No wonder the natives cling fondly to these location lands of theirs. They are the true "happy hunting grounds" of the savage. They are the very Paradise of barbarism. Nature seems to have walled them in as a home for the "untutored savage," and to have shut them in, with her rocky barriers, from the approaches of civilisation. But with sure strides the genius of progress advances. Roads are made into those bushy depths; houses are erected there; plantations, where honest labour is paid for, tempt the denizens of the kraals forth from their idleness to daily toil; stores are established in the neighbourhood where latent tastes are cultivated and new wants created; industry is fostered; avarice is

excited ; the greed of possession is implanted. And thus, by a merely natural process, but in fulfilment of an invariable law, the barbarian kafir ceases to be, and the civilised African is born.

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## CHAPTER VI.

STUCKERIDGE.—UMVOTI MISSION STATION.—GROUTVILLE.  
 —NATIVE SUGAR MILL.—NONOTI COFFEE ESTATE.—  
 NEW GUELDERLAND. — CHANTILLY. — CHAKA'S  
 KRAAL.—UMHLALI.—WILLIAMSTOWN.

FROM a little hill near Riet Valley a fine view of the Bluff lighthouse is got on a clear night. I strolled up there after dark, and saw the periodical flashes of the revolving lamp in bright distinctness. As the distance must be close upon forty miles as the crow flies, it follows that additional height only is wanted to make the light visible a longer distance than it is at sea.

There is an excellent road leading direct to Chaka's kraal from Riet Valley, and running right through the other estates of the Cotton Company in this direction. That proprietary indeed possesses a continuous belt of country from the coast inland. Between Riet Valley and Umhlali is the estate Stuekeridge, where a plantation of 51 acres of coffee has been formed, and a pulping house erected. This property I am unable to visit, as my course lies more to the northward, by a cut across country. This pathless road would have been an endless one had I trusted to my own powers of exploration. Under the guidance of a nimble native, however, I found it short, picturesque, and pleasant. Nowhere else in Natal have I seen such truly tropical vegetation as in some of the secluded glades of this parklike region. There are no large tracts of bush, but the bottoms of the hollows are lined with a thick and varied growth chiefly of the strelitzia and the

dwarf palm, which here attain a most unusual height. Nothing of an arborescent kind could be more beautiful in form than these groves of plumed trees—some of them being at least forty and fifty feet high, while below was a thick undergrowth of tree-ferns. A gentle circular slope, half-ringed round the bottom by such a verdant fringe as one finds so often here, would form the most perfect pleasure-ground one could desire.

Riding through scenery of this character, and passing now and then by kraals where white men seem rare spectacles, to judge from the fright evinced by the children, we came at last to the township of Groutville, for such it really is, although nominally a mission station. Here there must be fifty or sixty cottages and houses all owned by native "converts;" some being substantial residences of stone and iron, with glazed windows and verandahs all round. This is one of the oldest mission settlements in the colony. Here for more than thirty years ministered the Rev. Aldin Grout, whose final departure for Europe we lately recorded. His mission house is placed on the brow of a hill overlooking the broad, shallow river below, and is surrounded by dense groves of orange and other fruit trees. Just behind is the spacious church, erected some years ago. Many of the other cottages have gardens round them. The river for some miles skirts a plain, now covered with canefields as far as one can see. Opposite, at some little distance, rise bushy hills.

The Umvoti at this point is from one to two hundred yards broad, with a sandy bottom. In times of flood it is impassable except by boat, but this seldom occurs. I should say that a weir like that at Verulam would meet the purposes of traffic for some time yet. As soon as the opposite bank is reached we plunge into canefields, pass the imposing looking mill, and draw up at the house of Mr. Ente, who for five years has been manager here. From this gentleman we receive a hearty welcome.

The Umvoti sugar mill originated, I believe, in a



suggestion of Sir George Grey made after his visit here in 1855. It has been erected about ten years, and was paid for out of the Native Reserve, for the benefit of the natives at this station. As an endeavour to accustom the natives to industrial pursuits of a superior character the experiment though costly is interesting. It is only just, however, beginning to be successful. When Mr. Ente assumed the management the prospects of the enterprise were bad. The cultivation of cane was not so largely entered upon by the coloured settlers as had been expected. Serious mistakes had been made in the arrangements and erection of the mill. And more than all, sugarplanting in Natal was yet in its infancy; experience was being bought; success here, as elsewhere, was to be the fruit of frequent failure.

The present, however, is what we have to do with. There are 300 acres under cultivation, of which 150 may be crushed this year. 140 tons of sugar were obtained last year from about 110 acres of cane. The general average of yield may be set down at about  $1\frac{1}{4}$  tons. This alluvial flat is rich in deep red soil. 36 feet of alluvial deposit has been found here. The highest known yield was three tons, but in no case has there been high cultivation. There are 47 different planters, seven of whom are still living in kraals as heathen. The largest quantity crushed for any one grower was ten tons, the smallest one cwt. The mill takes for its share half the sugar and the treacle. Two white planters are now growing cane within reach of the mill, and with the view of crushing at it. These will deliver 20 acres this year, but hope to have 60 next year. With them there will probably be special arrangements according to circumstances. When Mr. Ente came in 1865 there were only 170 acres under cultivation; the average has gradually gone up since then. These facts serve to show that the central system is capable of successful operation in this colony, even with natives. Mr. Ente has no trouble as regards the order of crushing. As a rule he calls the growers together before the season begins, and they leave the

arrangement in his hands. He has had many difficulties to contend with in the mill. A common boiler was supplied, instead of a multitubular one, requiring a much larger expenditure of fuel, which is a consideration on the estate. The engine itself is a very fine one, and the fittings of the mill are very complete, but the internal arrangements are as bad as they can be, the juice having to travel down long troughs right round the mill before it gets into the battery. Other difficulties might be mentioned but I have said enough to show that Mr. Ente's work has not been plain sailing and that nothing but his own admirable energy and aptitude would have enabled him to bring the enterprise to a point of success.

It may not be out of place to allude to the social aspects of this station, which afford some typical developments of mission work among the Zulus. In May last no successor to Mr. Grout had been appointed, it having been considered well to leave the people of the place without a shepherd until they were sensible of the loss entailed upon them by the departure of the venerable missionary who for 35 years had been among them. It is to be feared increased wealth has only served to make these natives less amenable to Church discipline. They spend their money fast, and find plenty of whitemen to assist them in its expenditure. Instead of hoarding their gains, which for people in their condition are considerable, they invest them in the improvement of their houses, in dress, and in other mild forms of luxury. It is no uncommon thing for them to pledge their crops beforehand, and this has an unfortunate effect upon their industry, as they say "of what use is it to cultivate our fields well, their produce belongs to the storekeeper not to us". I cannot but think that this disposition on the part of European tradesmen to prey upon the weakness and the cupidity of these natives by giving them credit, and inducing them to buy largely, will thus tend to check agriculture, retard industrial progress among the natives, and thus operate most prejudicially against the interests of the colony and of individuals.

The school here is also a typical institution, and may be cited as such. For four months past it had been in the sole charge of a native teacher, an intelligent young kafir, educated at the Amanzintote Training School. He gets £2 a month, and brings his report daily. The daily attendance at his school averages 56,—30 boys and 26 girls; 9 of these 30 can spell and read in Zulu; 15 can read the Zulu Testament; 27 can read in English; 2 understand plain English; 3 reply in plain English; 5 write from dictation in Zulu, and 3 in English; 26 understand the four first rules of arithmetic, and 5 understand the higher rules.

In all probability this station will, in time, be left entirely to native control and pastorship. The residents are now able to take care of themselves; and the American mission is more and more recognizing the principle of employing native agency in the work of native evangelisation. Unfortunately there are certain doctrinal and moral rocks ahead which will have to be passed before the rule of action in the future becomes clear and definite. Some old converts here have lately relapsed into polygamy, and gone back to kraal life. They profess to find justification for this in the Book, by whose precepts they are told to be guided. This is not the place to discuss the mission question, but it is evident that a critical period is approaching in regard to the inflexible application to native converts of our modern christian code of morals.

Between the Umvoti and the Tugela, our northern frontier stretches, a picturesque tract of country, watered by the Nonoti and the Siquasi respectively. On the way to the former the road passes a long and narrow sheet of water known as Sea Cow Lake. Advancing down the river we come to Dr. Addison's mill, and plantation, situated near the drift. There are about 200 acres under cane. Cotton has been tried here, but not with material success. About this locality the land is almost free from bush, but the soil in many parts is red and loamy. Crossing the river the first settlement of any importance we reach is New Guelderland, which has not unfortunately realised the

hopes of its founders. Mr. Colenbrander's spacious residence, with its noble verandah, still occupies the centre of the estate, and near it is the sugar mill, the largest in the colony, and capable of crushing a large acreage of cane. A variety of causes, which I cannot pause to enumerate, have embarrassed the progress of this undertaking. Many persons have assured me that a better situation for a central factory cannot be found in the colony. The soil is excellent, and the access to the mill good. There are, however, only 60 acres in cane on the estate just now, of which but 30 are to crush. About 400 acres, however, are said to be in course of cultivation on the neighbouring farms. Many of the individual settlers, judging by their comfortable little homesteads, are doing tolerably well. I earnestly hope that the founder of the settlement, Mr. T. W. Colenbrander, than whom no one is more respected, may yet reap the reward of his patience and his sacrifices.

Not much further on we reach Chantilly, the property of Sir Joshua Walmsley, and the residence of the redoubtable Border Agent, Capt. Walmsley. A lovely spot is this; with the river running down a forest-clad valley, over a rocky bed, on one side, and with hills besprinkled by umbrageous forest trees on the other. The gallant occupant keeps up some little state here, and has quite a retinue of henchmen and well-disciplined followers. The last time I was there he carried out that celebrated night-raid over the river, when he surprised and took captive the notorious Piersé, charged with the shooting of a kafir. It was from this point, too, that the little expedition which kept at bay Cetywayo's infuriated army in 1857, issued. A strict surveillance of the border does Capt. Walmsley maintain, as many a trader and refugee can testify. Beyond his residence the country gets even prettier and yet more parklike, with a few homesteads scattered about, and the most luxuriant vegetation all around, until Mr. Dickens' comfortable hostelry is reached, and with it the *ultima thule* of British possessions in South Africa. About a mile further on flow the broad waters of the Tugela;

here, near its mouth, quite a majestic stream. Above the river may yet be seen the remains of Fort Williamson, long since dismantled, and left in charge of a kafir. Alligators are often observed basking on the sandbanks that break the bed of the stream. Mr. Jack Hill presides sedulously over the ferry, and beyond the river spread bleak and bare, in strange contrast with the luxuriance on the Natal side, the hills of Zululand.

I should like to describe at greater length the natural charms of this locality—the most beautiful portion of the county,—but these notes are too long already. If we leave the main road and keep to the left from Mr. Ente's, we shall pass through a well-cultivated district. Mr. Ash is now the manager of the Kirkley Vale Estate, formed originally by Mr. J. P. Ablett. He has 100 acres to crush this year, and about 150 more under cultivation. This is the last sugar plantation to the northward. There is, however, in the neighbourhood and beyond a large acreage of coffee planted. Mr. Balcomb has 25 acres; Mr. Hulett, 60; Mr. Newcombe, 25; Mr. Milne, 50, with 40 more in course of cultivation; Mr. Adrian Colenbrander, 60; Mr. B. Goble, 40; Mr. Tollner, 25; Mr. Carter, 25; Mr. Dickens, 70; Mr. Nunn, 6; Mr. Symons, 25; Mr. Horwood, 12; with five or six more smaller plots belonging to planters whose names I could not ascertain. In the Mapumulo location—a wild and broken tract lying behind—the Rev. Mr. Abraham has 25 acres, and Rev. Mr. Udland about the same quantity of coffee. So that you may fairly put down the extent of ground under coffee between the Umvoti and the Tugela at 500 acres altogether. I consider that this is a very small portion of what will be cultivated ere long. This district is less visited by rain than others, but its soil is unsurpassed, as the length of the grass, the thick growth of the bush, and the large size of the trees indicate. Mr. Milne, I believe, has gathered a crop of twenty tons this year. Considering the distance from Durban—about 50 miles—the progress of agriculture there is

already very encouraging ; but I feel convinced that coffee and cotton, as well as sugar, will find in this part of Victoria County a large field of production. I was told that cattle thrive unusually well here.

Full of regret at having to hurry back without visiting in detail the estates I have enumerated, I turn my face southward once more, and ride through a bare and less interesting country as far as the Umhlali. At this point that river winds along a reedy and marshy bed, and is much less attractive here than higher up. Chaka's Kraal is the first estate reached. A chapter might be devoted to the history of this place alone. It has passed through a strange variety of vicissitudes. As its name indicates, it was the site of one of the kraals of the great Zulu chieftain Chaka, when all this fair land of Natal was terrorised by his presence. He did not die here, however. The scene of his death, by the fratricidal hands of his own kindred, is pointed out near New Guelderland, on a breezy slope where the dark traces of old kraals are visible, and where to this day natives have a superstitious dislike to be belated. In 1859 a large tract of land in this valley was covered with sugar cane, and one of the first steam mills erected in the colony was opened here, under the auspices of Mr. A. Coqui. In course of time that gentleman sold the estate to the Cotton Plantation Company, who put in a large acreage of cotton, imported a steam plough, and converted the sugar house into a cotton factory. Some years ago I rode through the plantations then laid out. They looked green and regular, but clouds of "fly" arose as one traversed the rows. This pest, a species of aphis, had been imported in the seed, and was so destructive that the cotton enterprise here was a failure. Since the estates of this Company came under the able management of Mr. Carl Behrens, of the Natal Land and Colonisation Company, every reasonable effort has been made to make this farm remunerative. Mr. John Acutt is now resident manager at Chaka's Kraal, but the present financial position of the Cotton Plantation Company's estates prevents him from giving due and full effect to

his long experience and practical ability. There are now 35 acres under coffee, and 25 under cane. Considering the large amount of capital which has at different times been laid out here Chaka's Kraal must be set down as one of the most notable instances of failure in the colony.

Next and close to Chaka's Kraal comes another yet older and well-known estate—Oatlands, the property of Mr. T. Reynolds. That gentleman, unfortunately, with his family, is absent, so I can do no more than leave a card at a house where I have, on other occasions, had the most hospitable reception. There is a trim, well kept air about the residence and grounds which reminds one of home. Several hundred acres of cane looked in first rate condition. One of the first stills erected on the coast, if not the first, was established here, Mr. Reynolds being the first planter who gave practical proof that a distillery is the necessary complement of a plantation. He is also one of the fortunate planters who have never had reason to complain of a want of kafir labour, owing, probably, to the excellent system he pursues, and the good name he has established with them. After leaving his estate the road bends towards the coast, and a number of buildings and homesteads is passed. There are two churches here, as well as a substantial jail and court house. Time was when "Fort Scott," erected after the Zulu disturbance in 1857, crowned a low hill in this neighbourhood. Piping times of peace, however, ensued, and population advanced more to the northward, so the encampment was dismantled and abandoned. About two miles on Mr. Coward has a large trading establishment and farmstead, one of the oldest settlements in the neighbourhood. Several small coffee plantations are to be seen from the road before we reach Mr. Knox's extensive stores. Williamstown, as it is called, is beginning to look like an embryo township, though I believe no village is laid out. Mr. C. H. Williams, the magistrate, lives just behind. The country about here is more level and open than usual. Here we may ride for miles over the Compensation "flat," a free, breezy down, where Mr. Morewood, in 1851-2, grew

the first sugar cane, and manufactured with the aid of wooden rollers and an iron pot, the first sugar produced in Natal. The "flat" is less cultivated now, however, than it was then, partly, perhaps, owing to the poor character of the soil, but chiefly because from hence nearly to the Tongaat, absentee proprietors hold the land.

The distance from Mr. Knox's to Tongaat is about seven or eight miles. Some pleasant wooded country is here and there traversed. Inland, a wide sweep of view over the district we have just been inspecting is obtained. On the shore at this point occurs the outcrop of anthracite coal, in a seam about 17 inches wide, so much talked of three years ago. This resource anywhere else would long since have been practically examined, and if possible, turned to commercial account; but Natal is slow to make use of her mineral riches, and the Compensation coalfields, be they valuable or be they worthless, remain for the investigation of some future adventurer.

Near the Tongaat the road skirts a new coffee plantation of about 70 acres, formed by Mr. Taylor, whose trees look very flourishing, and whose fields are commendably clean.

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## CHAPTER VII.

MOUNT MORELAND.—MR. BLAMEY'S.—MR. FYNNEY'S.—  
MUCKLE NEUK. — WATERLOO. — ENGELENI. — MR.  
ASHBY'S.—MR. ROBERTSON'S.—MR. GIRVAN'S.—MR.  
CAMPBELL'S.—MR. POVALL'S.—MR. ADAMS'.

AFTER leaving the Tongaat, and following the main road until abreast Mr. Remnant's, we strike seaward, and after cantering over a park-like uncultivated tract for about three miles, reach Mr. Blamey's. I am now at Mount Moreland. These are the "cotton-lands," as they were familiarly called at the time of Byrne's



immigration. That renowned adventurer got a grant of many thousand acres here, where a rivalry with the Southern States was then to be started. The twenty acre lots which tempted out so many deluded Britons were mostly situated here. At that time there were no inhabitants except kafirs in this neighbourhood. There were no roads. The lots were not surveyed. Although subsequently increased to forty-five acres these diminutive grants failed to attract many of the original holders. Few of the grantees took up their allotments. That few, however, deserve notice as being among the most persevering and patient of our colonial pioneers. They at once planted themselves here, and from that time to this, through twenty long years of toil and struggle, have borne living testimony to their fondness for the spot. Mr. Blamey and Mr. Fynney are amongst the oldest and most tenacious of them.

One cannot be surprised at the local attachment evinced by these settlers, as the situation is altogether charming. High enough to be breezy and healthful it is yet sufficiently tropical in its conditions to allow sugar cane to be grown. But this is a modern discovery. For years after sugar was first made in Natal it was deemed useless to plant cane on these cool hill tops. Now, however, 200 acres of splendid cane bear witness to the contrary. Let us traverse the fields. They spread round the mill and up to the house. They recede back almost to the top of the ridge which skirts the shore. They are so covered with thick, high, and matted cane, that it is difficult to force a way through the narrower paths. I saw some plant cane a few months old, whose height I should be afraid to specify. Mr. Blamey regards two tons an acre as a common average yield. This, of course, is from soil that has not yet been cropped for many successive years.

Mr. Blamey is fortunate in being aided by two sons who are able, if need be, to take the management of the estate in their own hands. The mill, which one has in charge, is of moderate size, and is said to do its work well. No want of labour has yet been experienced, owing largely, I suspect, to the perfect famili-

arity which the younger men have with the kafir language and character. Not far from the house may be seen the residence of Mr. Galloway, another settler of the same era, overshadowed by primeval trees. Almost adjoining this estate is Mr. Fynney's, which occupies a lower level, being just above the Umhloti. Here also there are about 200 acres of cane, and a mill of about the same capacities, near the riverside.

But let us diverge to the right a little and take our stand on Mount Moreland, near the little church where service has now been held weekly for ten years past. One of the loveliest views on the coast spreads around. Behind, the park-like slopes; in front a valley, with a river winding through canefields that line its bed, towards the sea, which is seen "rolling blue" beyond the surf-beat river bar, and framed in by dark bluffs on either side. Beyond, the sweep of sugar and coffee plantations clothing the hill sides and streaked by the shadows of deep gorges and vallies. A township with 3000 acres of commonage is laid out here, but three or four humble cottages comprise the village.

Descending into the valley and crossing the river, I soon reach Muckle Neuk—the worthy monument of a worthy man's industry and intelligence. Its founder, Mr. William Campbell, came here as a working man, and for some time pursued his calling at the Point as practical contractor for Milne's breakwater, in common with another neighbour. He then settled here, and was one of the largest and most successful of our arrowroot growers, when that industry was in fashion. He then began to grow sugar, and for years crushed his cane at a small and inexpensive mill. Advancing onward by steps, he at last was suddenly carried off, while yet in the prime of life; but his labours and achievements have been well sustained by his sons—Messrs. William and Marshall Campbell—who, since their lamented father's death have had the entire control of the estate. It does infinite credit to their management. From 300 to 400 acres are under cane; a certain portion of which, being on the flat, is China cane. When I was there in the beginning of June,

the old mill was dismantled and a new one in course of completion. This is the largest fabric of the kind, if I mistake not, in the colony. Its length is about 120 feet; its breadth, 80 feet; its height, 25 feet. All is under one open roof, as at M. Isabelle's, and as spacious as the lover of air could wish. A new boiler has been laid down, and Mr. William Campbell, who is now in England, will probably procure whatever new improvements have been invented. A vacuum pan will probably be one of these. The present mill is powerful enough for all reasonable purposes, and is being re-erected.

Mr. Marshall Campbell assured me that so far they have had no reason to complain of want of labour supply, although a possible scarcity is apprehended. Taskwork is the rule, and at three o'clock in the afternoon we met men going homeward after the completion of their task. Their evidently high spirits showed that the system was as satisfactory to them as to their employer. Mr. C. gave me some singular facts as to the bearing capabilities of the red and loamy soil, and showed me fields still heavily yielding, which afforded no proof of exhaustion. Further up the valley can be seen Mr. Waller's plantation and mill funnel, and on a steep spur running towards the river Mr. Noll's coffee plantation. Mrs. Campbell, with her family, resides on a rise above the river, in full view of its mouth.

The well-known Waterloo estate all but adjoins Muckle Neuk. It consists almost entirely of hill land and seven years ago was covered with bush. From the beginning it has been worked under the practical eye of Mr. Johnstone, of Messrs. Palmer & Johnstone, the original proprietors. The estate possesses the twofold advantage of excellent soil and convenient situation. The mill—a large and most complete one, capable of manufacturing the produce of seven or eight hundred acres—is placed in a hollow, towards which all the cane roads converge. A portable tramway, which can easily be taken up and moved to any part of the estate, is used for the con-

veyance of cane to the mill. The cost of this process is half what it is when merely carts and oxen are employed, and the wear and tear is much less. About 500 acres are now under cane, and nearly 150 more have been planted for next year's crop. These plant canes looked wonderfully big and vigorous. Mr. Johnstone told me that the monkeys have developed a sweet tooth, and are taking to regular robbery among the canefields, carrying the canes away on their shoulders in the most old-fashioned manner. It is not surprising that the yield on this estate should be so good, or that fully two tons per acre should be expected this year. No richer or deeper soil can be found on the coast than we often meet here. In 1867 the estate passed into the hands of a local company, and it is satisfactory to learn that last year there was a profit of £1000 left after all expenses had been paid; the capital invested being £16,500. Succeeding years will, of course, with a larger acreage show a larger profit.

The extreme end of Waterloo almost touches Engeleni, the residence of Mr. John R. Couper, and the property of Messrs. J. R. Couper and Co. From the narrow but lofty height where stands the house you see the Umblanga valley on the one hand, with all its sugar and coffee plantations, and on the other the winding depths of the Umbloti. I have said so much about the scenery of this region that it is needless to linger, as one would like to do, over the natural charms of so fair a spot. This estate is one of the largest coffee plantations on the coast. There are 220 acres already planted, a small portion being in bearing order. An additional 100 acres are to be cleared and placed under coffee, when the limit of the plantation will have been reached. Acacia, mulberry, and banana breakwinds abound. Descending down a steep and winding path, we reach at the bottom, near the Umblanga, the mill and drying grounds. These are all planned on an extensive scale, and constructed in a substantial manner, although, as the estate is comparatively a new one, the arrangements are not yet

complete. An imported huller is used; the trough and crushers being all made of serrated cast iron. The pulper is also an imported one. A large quantity of mealies has been grown and kiln-dried this year. The barbecues are made of cement only, without admixture of tar. When we were there the winnowers were busily at work, and the air was full of fine dust—the pulverised silver skin. An ox-power has been used hitherto, but when the plantation gets in full bearing condition, steam will probably be employed. The fields at Engeleni have mostly an eastern and southern exposure. Coolie labour is chiefly employed, but as the enterprise is one of more recent date, no general conclusion as to permanent requirements can be yet elicited.

I regret that the absence of the proprietor prevented my visiting the large and beautiful estate of Mr. Ashby, close by. There are here about 150 acres of coffee, in advanced condition, and in splendid order. Mr. H. Manning's plantation is also in the immediate neighbourhood. Nothing in its way can be pleasanter to any one who prefers the cultivated to the wild, than a ride along this ridge, dividing the Umhloti from the Umhlanga. It is a new sensation in Natal to find one's self hemmed in for miles by fences separating the road from luxuriant plantations. Now and then belts of bush occur, where the trees meet overhead, and the thicket below is gay with sweet-scented flowers, and gaudy-winged insects. At every turn of the tortuous road some new vista is disclosed; some peep at a distant prospect; some glimpse of the blue sea; some outlook over a deep gorge with the river winding below.

Retracing our steps, but still keeping to the north side of the Umhlanga, we pass Waterloo again, and come to the late Mr. Webster's sugar plantation, where about 200 acres of fine cane give promise of a good crop. High above the Umhloti stands Mr. Robertson's coffee estate—lying rather away from the road, and not, therefore, so well known as it deserves to be. I was particularly struck by the luxuriance and vigor-

ous growth of the coffee bushes here, and by the absence of any yellow trees. Some coolie women were sizing coffee by hand near the mill below. Mr. Robertson's house stands most picturesquely on the last coast ridge. A green lawn spreads in front. Beyond that a dark wall of primeval bush arises, and immediately beyond, the shore being invisible here, rolls the glorious ocean, the crested waves being distinctly visible from this point. 120 acres of coffee, in various stages of growth, spread around, and a crop of about 12 tons has been picked this year. Mr. Stanton, of Verulam, owns an estate in the neighbourhood, which I had not time to visit, where there are 70 acres planted with coffee.

Estates almost touch each other here, and we are not long in reaching the well-known plantation of Messrs James and Douglas Girvan, in point of situation the most charming on the coast. The approach to this sweet spot is down a grassy drive along the ridge of a hill leading right up to the house. On one side lie the earlier coffee fields, now guarded by breakwinds of mulberry as they once were by banana trees. On the other, and directly in front of the residence, falls a verdant lawn, in which the old native trees have wisely been left standing. Around this spreads the plantation. In the foreground rise wild woodland hills, closed in on one side by the river as it enters the sea. A delicious bit of the sea is thus framed in like a vignette in view of the parlour windows.

The Messrs. Girvan may be reckoned almost amongst our earliest coffee planters, and much credit do they deserve for the energy and enterprise, as well as for the excellent taste they have displayed in the laying out and management of the estate. It is not always that one meets in a colony with practical evidences of the latter quality. How often do we see a farmhouse stuck in some viewless and unwholesome hollow, while just behind a hill in command of a charming landscape and an airy situation, seems formed by nature for the site of a homestead. Happily on this coast fine sites are so common that a man can

scarcely avoid pitching his tent where some pleasant prospect discloses itself.

Of the 150 acres that are under coffee, 90 are in various stages of bearing. 18 tons had already been gathered when I was there, and there was yet a considerable quantity to be harvested. Some want of labour is complained of here. Coolies are chiefly employed, and at the time of picking it is not always possible to command an adequate supply. The mill is probably the most perfect establishment of the kind on the coast. In addition to the barbecues there are two substantial brick buildings. One, the old fabric, has been turned into a store. The other has not long been completed. It has three floors. In the basement story the pulping process is carried on. The parchment coffee is stored on the uppermost floor, which consists of perforated zinc, the object being perfect ventilation. On the middle floor are the huller and winnower. The former is of cast iron. A steam engine of 7-horse power works the whole, and it is needless to say that a very large crop could be worked off by these appliances. Cleanliness and order prevail everywhere. Neatness and method, in fact, are remarkably characteristic of this estate. Such completeness of arrangement has not, of course, been obtained without a large outlay of capital; but it is satisfactory to have such a substantial equivalent to show for money and energy expended;—a result not in all cases observable.

Parting with regret from my hospitable entertainers—Messrs. Douglas and Frank Girvan—I rode on. Not far from this estate, but nearer the mouth of the river, is an interesting sugar plantation belonging to Mr. C. Povall, who has a fine breadth of 200 acres under cane, which he works off at a steam mill. Although unable to diverge so far, I was told that some remarkable cane is to be seen here this season, showing extraordinary growth in a brief period. Close to the bridge is Major Adams' residence,—a very conspicuous object on the top of a steep rise. Mr. A.'s name is familiar to most of my readers in connexion with the Victoria Mounted Rifles, whose commanding

officer he was for many years. Few men know the country better than he does. He looks back to a time when his house was the only habitation for miles; when thick bush clothed all these hills, and elephants were often hunted here. In his garden may be seen some of the oldest coffee trees in the country. They are remarkable for their fruitfulness, as well as for their age. Eight of them are nineteen years old. Never pruned or interfered with—left to grow as they like—they present now quite a stately appearance, and are loaded with wood, with leaf, and with cherry. In their case the growth of wood has not diminished the yield, as much as eight lbs. of clean coffee being often taken from one of them in the year. Such exceptional results must be due to exceptional causes. I saw nothing like it anywhere else. It is more than probable that in old days, when this district was thickly populated by natives, there was a kraal here, and that in some way or other the soil at this point became peculiarly enriched. It would be worth while to ascertain what the particular constituents of the soil really are, although it is almost certain that the *debris* of shellfish, and the consequent admixture of lime, are the quickening elements.

On the other side of the road a new plantation, about 120 acres in extent, has been formed by Mr. W. Campbell, unfortunately absent when I passed. About 10 tons have been picked this year. The soil looks splendid, and the trees, young as they are, do justice to the soil. On all these estates fruit is superabundant and the golden spheres of the heavily-weighted orange trees gleam out from their dark foliage in every direction.

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## CHAPTER VIII.

BLACKBURN.—MR. SMITH'S.—THE FOUNTAINS.—SMALL  
 PLANTERS.—MR. HUSSEY'S AND MR. NEWBERRY'S.  
 —MR. TURTON'S.—MR. TURNER'S.—MESSRS. SANER  
 AND STEPHENSON'S.—OTTAWA.

A SMALL bridge spans the Great Umhlanga, which at this season is a stream of the puniest dimensions. A little further on it passes between dark and steep bluffs, and spreads into a lagoon, deep enough to make a boat constantly navigable, and to afford shelter to a select family of alligators which here have their abode. Just over the bridge the road enters the village of Blackburn, represented by about half-a-dozen cottages and houses, the chief of which is the store belonging to Messrs. Campbell & Co. I also noticed another store, a butchery, and a forge. Without traversing the village, however, let us turn sharp to the left, and ride up a bridle path cut out of the bush and steeply ascending for about a mile until we emerge on cleared and cultivated ground, and find ourselves on an airy elevation three or four hundred feet above the sea, immediately below. Coffee and fruit trees surround us; a cottage stands in front; a substantial brick store is seen behind. This is the estate and residence of Mr. G. S. Smith who, in honour of his services as an officer in the Garibaldian legion, is better known by the prænomen "Garibaldi."

Knowing, as I did, that cotton as well as coffee had been successfully grown here, and that the estate was one of the best managed on the coast, I was prepared to be somewhat inquisitive in eliciting information from the proprietor. Mr. Smith's modesty, however, and aversion to discuss his own achievements, forbade any undue cross-questioning,—and I must honestly confess that conversation flowed so pleasantly along other topics, that for the time being both my companion and myself forgot to "talk coffee," as we had been doing

all that day. Hence my inability to do full justice to Mr. Smith's performances as a planter. His plantation consists of 110 acres, and the trees we inspected looked very luxuriant. The first were sown in 1864, and Mr. Smith told us that his experience so far gave 5 cwt. as an average yield; but he is inclined to think that, with improved treatment, a higher average may be attained. In clearing his ground he burns all the small branches, but leaves the trunks of the trees to rot upon and in the ground. He prefers double holing to planting mealies between rows, which are 8 feet apart, and when he finds the bushes begin to suffer he thins them out. He does not approve of too early hoeing, as it tends to exhaust the soil. During the picking season 100 kafirs are employed, but the ordinary gang is from 25 to 30—an average which agrees with that given by others.

Mr. Smith uses one of Gavin's pulpers, and finds it work well. On the upper floor of his fabric we saw the bulk of about 15 tons of clean coffee, most of it having yet to be peeled. He, like other planters, spoke of the patchy character of the yield, some particular spots yielding so much more than others. For instance, one year he got 15 tons off 20 acres of land—a most exceptional return. This year he has got 5 cwt. per acre off the same land; but last year there was no return. I observe the same experience mentioned by planters elsewhere; and the fact is important, as pointing to the danger and difficulty of generalising from special facts,—as has too often been done in this colony. Mr. Smith is a believer in cotton, and thinks it will do well in this colony. His experience justifies this opinion. From his verandah the eye sweeps over the whole of the country northward, and over the Eastern sea. Between this and the beach a forest of open trees intervenes, where game is as closely preserved as circumstances permit. Thus, we have sugar and coffee, the tokens of man's industry, everywhere present; while in close proximity wild life and wild nature still hold reign. How long this contrast will be visible it is not hard to forecast from the evidences of recent progress.

Leaving our genial host all too hastily, we ride on to an adjoining estate, known as "the Fountains," and belonging to Messrs. H. & W. H. Savory, of this town. Here, too, we have a somewhat similar situation, although the house has a more southerly exposure. Mr. A. P. Marillier has for many years resided here as manager. He has placed under cultivation about 130 acres, from which about 30 to 35 tons have been gathered this year. The mill lies at some little distance down in a hollow. It is a compact and roomy edifice, with the usual appliances for preparation. It would appear as if at such a height rains could do no damage, but during the last flood, the downpour was so heavy that masses of earth were scooped out, and a brick well was left standing like a chimney in solitary state. It is a notable fact that this coast ridge, well wooded and lying close to the sea, gets more rain than land lying just beyond. This advantage probably compensates for the lighter nature of the soil, which resembles that of the Berea. The number of hands employed here is about sixty.

The road inland from The Fountains winds deviously through the bush, and passes several smaller plantations. I have so far dealt chiefly with larger growers, but we shall find it no less interesting to inspect the more modest ventures of a less ambitious class. Throughout the whole of my trip I visited no places which pleased me more than those we are now approaching.

It has often been said in the local prints, and maintained in the local legislature, that tropical agriculture is wholly unsuited to men of small means; that sugar and coffee planting can only be successfully carried on by the possessors of large capital. As regards sugar, instances to the contrary have already been given. Of coffee two are at hand. Proceeding cautiously along a winding bushpath we at last come to a small thatched cottage of the primitive order so well known to us older colonists. A few pigs are grunting contentedly in a sty hard by. A cow is standing at her ease in a kraal. We tie our horses to a stake, and

go where we are bidden in search of the proprietor, Mr. Hussey. To do so we have to make our way through a small field of coffee, to a little brick shed of tiny proportions, just big enough to hold a £10 pulper, made by M'Neil and Singleton. Two naked kafirs are turning this machine, and, feeding it, too intent upon his work to notice us for a minute, stands the worthy object of our search. He evidently, like all good workmen, dislikes interruption, but when we get him fairly warmed up to conversation he proves a perfect mine of practical information, and one most easily worked. I may fairly say, without any disrespect to others, that in a quarter of an hour's talk with Mr. Hussey, I got more insight into coffee planting than a dozen books would have given me.

He is a twenty-year old settler to begin with—a fact which is at once a bond of union. He came out with the rest of Byrne's immigrants in 1850. When he had bought this bit of land, 35 acres in extent, and put up a straw hut for his accommodation, he had five shillings left in his pocket. His life had been spent in agriculture since he was 11 years old. He knew no other kind of occupation; and he stoutly maintains that English cultivation is a guide to cultivation in Natal, and that high cultivation above all, in the case of sugar and coffee, just as much as in the case of wheat and turnips, is the true key to success. Quality not quantity he says is what planters should go in for. It is better and more economical to produce less of a good article and sell it well, than to produce more of an inferior article and sell it at low prices. By using manure he believes you might get as much coffee from 20 acres as many men would get from 50 acres. Coffee is not so particular about soil, as about shelter, and aspect. Those are the all important considerations in this colony. A morning aspect gives a late ripening as well as a large crop. The afternoon aspect imparts a deeper green to crops, and ripens earlier, owing, he thinks, to the circumstance that it retains the morning dews longer on the leaves. In both cases he thinks the healthiness of the

plant is equal. The cold and strong southerly winds he regards as the great peril of the coffee tree in Natal. If you can protect your plantations sufficiently from these you will, as already said, with a southerly exposure have a larger though a later crop. The bulk of his crop can be gathered in two months, having two heavy and two light gatherings.

Mr. Hussey has twenty acres under coffee, and he estimates the average return from the maiden crop at £12 per acre. Five acres from which he picks this year will return him £100. The cost of his machinery is represented by the £10 pulper, with which he can clean as much as 10 cwt. of cherry a day. His average yield is about 7 cwt. per acre, but he has got as much as 1500 pounds from one acre; this was from a particularly well-sheltered spot. From the same plantation at a point further uphill, and therefore more exposed, he has not had one half that quantity. His oldest coffee trees are 7 years from the seedling. Manure he considers to be both essential and remunerative. Root pruning is also another necessary process. He thinks it well to cut the old wood freely away, and to stint the tree in this respect. There cannot be too much cleaning of the soil. The sorting or "sizing" of beans seems to him indispensable, and he has noticed that new wood bears smaller berries.

These are Mr. Hussey's statements given in their unvarnished integrity, and they need no comment of mine. It will be seen that he is as firm a believer in coffee planting here, as he is a living proof that small growers of humble pretensions can grow coffee to pay in this colony. He assured us that he was perfectly satisfied with the colony, and believed that failure in the past was due to bad cultivation and to local ignorance. People are only now beginning to cultivate, he said. Formerly they used to make a hole and stick a cane top in, leaving the rest to nature. Now, men see that they must plough and pulverise the soil here as thoroughly as they do elsewhere. Mr. Fyles, a neighbour, has 37 acres of coffee, from which this year he has an average yield of 1000 lbs. per acre, from old

trees which in previous years have not borne at all. Now his plantations are properly sheltered and better cultivated, and the result is seen in a heavier crop. Soil in Natal is not deep as a rule, though it may be productive, and there is all the more need of careful tillage.

Riding past other small farmsteads most snugly embedded in the primeval bush, let us pass on to another typical place of the same class. Mr. Newberry came to Natal, as a lad, about the same period, and has grown up on the soil he so creditably represents. He has 17 acres of coffee, in beautiful condition and fine order. From seven acres he has obtained two tons, or 4000 lbs. of clean coffee. His farm altogether comprises 30 acres, a portion being cultivated with mealies. The wages of his regular native labourers amount to £25 per annum, but reckoning food, his yearly expenditure for labour reaches a total of £50. He spoke very forcibly of the patchy character of the soil and alluded to an extraordinary yield he obtained from a few trees which proved to be planted at a spot where a quantity of mussel shells had been buried by the former native residents of the locality. Here there was absolutely no outlay for machinery. Two kafirs were hard at work hulling the parchment coffee by beating it with logs of bushwood, the beans being first placed in an old sea-chest. This economical process, simple as it was, seemed quite effective.

Here, therefore, are two instances of success in a small way achieved without capital, and with no other help than that afforded by native intelligence and unflinching industry. The old proverb that from nothing nothing can come is not verified here. To how many worthy and would-be industrious men at home would not the prospect of a compact little farmstead, clothed as these are, with luxuriant plantations of coffee shrubs, intersected by heavily bearing fruit trees, burdened with no debt, subject to no rent or other charges, and cultivated by means of labour so manageable and cheap, be a glimpse of a new, and almost utopian existence. Nor is it going too far to say that

to men of Mr. Hussey's character, prepared to deal with circumstances as they find them, and contented to work on year by year, bearing patiently the ill fruits of inexperience, and not discouraged by occasional disappointment, these coastlands of Natal do present a not uninviting nor a contracted field.

There are a few other estates in this neighbourhood which it would be impossible to visit in detail. Mr. Lean has forty acres of coffee in fine bearing order. Mr. Turton has a large acreage of cotton which looked well as I rode past, as well as some coffee carefully sheltered by dholl—an uncommon arrangement. Advancing up the valley we come to the methodically arranged estate of Mr. Turner. That gentleman is one of Natal's older colonists. Victoria County knows few longer European residents than he. A surveyor by profession, his plantation is planted with geometrical exactitude. The fields are all of the same dimensions; they have each the same number of trees; all the rows join each other, and, though broken by breakwinds, form continuous lines; and thus, when viewed from a distance, the estate looks just like a chessboard. Mr. Turner's books are kept with such precision, that he knows exactly what each field has cost, and what it returns, and he has a map which presents at a glance the history and condition of the whole. Although his trees are seven years old, and are loaded with wood, looking as luxuriant as it seems possible for such shrubs to look, they have not borne well, and the proprietor does not speak yet of any decided financial success in this department of his enterprise. Of cotton culture he speaks much more confidently. Fourteen acres have yielded 6000 lbs. of clean cotton, and he looks upon 400lbs. as a fair yield, where cultivation is good, and other things ordinarily favourable. In a building behind, kafirs were busily ginning cotton, several bales being already packed. Under the same roof were a kiln for drying maize and a silo for storing it, both very useful arrangements in an economical point of view. Not only is an adequate supply of food for the natives grown, but by thus preserving the grain, advantage can be taken of any exceptionally high prices.

Mr. Turner also believes that hill rice will prove a valuable resource upon the coast, and in time become a large food staple.

Descending once more into the valley we are not long in passing the cotton fields and homestead of Messrs. Saner and Stephenson. These gentlemen were absent at the time and I am unable, therefore, to do adequate justice to their achievements as successful cotton growers. It is well known, however, that their experience bears highly favourable testimony to the remunerative character of the enterprise. At this point the valley of the Umhlanga spreads into a small undulating plain surrounded by hills more or less cultivated.

Mr. A. Wilkinson's wellknown estate, Ottawa, almost adjoins its neighbour, and its cane fields cover a large portion of the valley at this point. Nothing could be finer than some of the cane we passed. There are about 200 to 250 acres under cultivation and to crush this year. The mill, situated near the river, was in course of re-construction at the time, the enterprising proprietor having brought back with him from England a vacuum pan which will be the fourth erected in Natal. Close by is the distillery celebrated throughout the colony for the fine quality of rum it has now for many years produced. Mr. Wilkinson is one of our pioneer distillers, and has machinery capable of a large output of spirits. Both coolies and kafirs are employed upon this estate which is probably one of the most systematically managed and successful in the country.

Here we re-enter the main road once more, and shall henceforward follow the route most familiar to travellers in Victoria country. To the right as we turn our faces towards Durban spread the wide plantations of Trenance and Sunderland. A small coolie village has lately been formed here. The little wigwam-like dens of these people, with their accompanying patches of garden ground, skirt the road and form a new social feature. A few fowls and a cat seem to be part of the family circle in all.



## CHAPTER IX.

SACCHARINE HILL ESTATE.—CAPTAIN SMERDON'S.—MR. LISTER'S.—SPRINGVALE.—MR. EDMESTONE'S.—MR. HARRISON'S.—MR. LOGAN'S.—AVOCA.—MR. JACKSON'S.—EFFINGHAM.—DR. EDIE'S.—MR. CHICK'S.

PART of the Saccharine Hill Estate may be seen from Ottawa,—cane-fields covering the top of a hill where, twelve years ago, no one would have thought for a moment of growing cane successfully. In point of fact few localities can boast richer soil, or show finer cane, than may be found here. Mr. Stephen Gee was the founder of this estate about fourteen years ago, and it is distinguished as being the first plantation at which the possibility of growing cane on the tops or upper slopes of hills was demonstrated. From the high density of the juice the estate derived its name. It is now chiefly in the hands of Mr. A. W. Evans, and for a year past has been ably managed by Mr. W. H. Peddie, one of our most experienced planters. Under that gentleman's superintendence the area of the fields has widely extended so that not only has the little valley of deep rich red soil, skirting the road, been ploughed and fenced, but the land up the hill on the other side has also been clothed with what are now luxuriant plantations. There are 380 acres altogether under cultivation here, and of these 180 are to crush; 120 acres are to be planted this year, and 80 acres are left to fallow. A new mill is being erected where crushing will begin about six weeks hence. Mr. Peddie is a believer in high cultivation; ploughs, re-ploughs, and sub-soils his fields; and sees the results of such treatment in the quick and strong growth of plant cane. Some of the fields on this estate have been fourteen years under cultivation, and begin to want the rest they are now getting. Under the new management the land is first ploughed as deeply as one of Gavin's largest iron ploughs can go, is again followed in the same furrows by a plough of similar size, is then harrowed, and

afterwards planted with rape which in due time is ploughed in. During the past year the estate has been enclosed by a ditch and sod wall, and new dwelling houses erected for manager and workmen. A new mill house and engine are also being put up, one of Howard's new steam boilers for the saving of fuel being employed. There is also a still at work, and experience shows that this is a very useful accessory. A large piece of land adjoining the estate has lately been acquired, and will be brought under cultivation next season. 90 and 100 coolies and Amatonga kafirs do the work of the plantation; and when we look at the length of solid fencing that has been done, and at the state of cultivation throughout the estate, to say nothing of other improvements, one cannot but feel that this estate is likely, under such able management, to prove worthy of its name.

Passing the humble little Saccharine Hotel, we can canter easily over "Smerdon's Flat," a level stretch of land sinking westward for a mile or two and fringed towards the east with bush. A fine free view of the country inland is obtained from this point, and many a time have I seen the tall cliffs of the Inanda mountains standing sharply against the morning sky, or bathed in the blue haze of evening. Towards the end of this little plain, spreads Captain Smerdon's sugar plantation—one of the earliest in Victoria County, and still, I am glad to say, under the management of its pioneer proprietor. Some seventeen years ago, when the house was being erected, a grand elephant hunt took place here. A herd of these huge animals emerged from the bush behind and came close to the house, to the great excitement and discomposure of all then present. Now the advances of cultivation leave little chance of such wild encounters. The soil on this estate produces in many parts magnificent cane, and this year there are some splendid specimens of luxuriant growth. About 400 acres are under cane, and of these about 170 will be to crush this year. If appearances are realised,—and both here and at the Saccharine frost seldom does mischief,—a crop of 300 tons may be expected. The average yield per acre has been  $1\frac{1}{2}$  tons. Here as else-

where certain patches will yield much more than others, but the general result is as stated. This estate is very economically managed as regards labour, eighty hands being employed in all, half being coolies and half kafirs. This fine estate is a mixture of bushland, rich open soil, and pasturage.

For about two miles after passing Smerdon's Flat the road winds up and down through a wooded country, without any evidences of life or cultivation, except the former be represented, as it often is in the early morning, by a large tribe of monkeys who have their home here. After a sharp turn we come face to face with Mr. Lister's well-known estate—Red Hill. This is one of the very earliest coffee plantations in this county, and has long been scanned by the admiring eyes of all passers by. From the long residence on the brow of the hill lines of orange trees sphered with golden fruit radiate downward, while on a higher hill behind the same dark lines are seen continued, with coffee planted between. Though slow-growing, oranges form a permanent and effectual breakwind. Whether they do not take too much out of the soil is another matter. In earlier years the proprietor made £300 a year from fruit alone here. Latterly the 70 acres which form the coffee plantation have naturally enough showed signs of exhaustion. As kafir mealie gardens existed here before the first white resident pitched his tent on the spot, this circumstance is not surprising. Thirty years' cropping of different kinds, corn, fruit, and coffee, is enough to impoverish any soil, and Mr. Lister is a firm believer, as are all experienced planters, in the necessity of manure. Perhaps the heaviest crops of coffee per acre, ever picked in Natal came off this plantation in former years. More than half a ton has been averaged off a portion of the ground. During Mr. Lister's absence in Europe the plantation passed into other and inexperienced hands, and on his return he found it less productive than it had been. I have no doubt now that the experience of the original proprietor is being brought to bear actively in the resuscitation of the soil, and in improved cultivation, that this beautiful estate will realise once more its early

reputation. In a valley behind the house Mr. Lister has convenient arrangements for hulling and preparing the coffee.

Immediately adjoining Red Hill, is Springvale, formerly the property of Mr. W. H. Acutt, but now in the possession of Mr. Gooch. It was laid out by Mr. Brown, of Reit Vallei, and does infinite credit to his power of arrangement. He has found a worthy successor in the present resident manager, Mr. Anderson, who kindly took us over the estate, which may be cited as being perhaps at this moment the prettiest and most compact plantation in the county. Nothing can exceed the luxuriant growth of the bushes, nor did my inexperienced eye perceive many of those blanks which are the vexation of the planter. All the available lands, 150 acres, are under cultivation, and 100 are in bearing condition. The trees are planted with great regularity, and as the shape of the estate is long and somewhat narrow, you see the plantation to great advantage as it sweeps over the hill. Thirteen tons had already been picked, but many of the trees were still loaded with cherry, and if the crop should realise appearances there will be 25 tons to pick altogether. Mr. Anderson comes across the borer occasionally in different trees and cuts them down. He prefers the north-westerly aspect to others. Although so late in the year (July 29) when I was there, the trees were loaded still with cherry and were full of wood. This late ripening seems a peculiarity of the present season, and is due probably to the protracted rains. Evidences of winter could be seen in the withering effect of cold southerly winds,—the greatest enemy coffee has to fear in Natal. Coming as they do at the coldest season of the year, and at a time when the tree is exhausted by its growth of leaf, wood and berry, these gales leave their traces in brown and shrivelled leaves.

The buildings and machinery here are on a scale of much completeness. Each barbecue is separate and has a little storehouse of its own. The huller is of wood and iron and cleans effectually a ton a day. A supply of water for the pulping is obtained by a pump. Singular care is observed in the preparation of coffee for the

market. In the storehouse several women were at work sorting the beans, after they had gone through the sizer. Not only are they sized, but all irregularities are picked out by hand afterwards. This process is called "garbling," and adds £3 per ton to the cost of production. The beans are then packed in boxes holding 200 lbs. each. These packages cost 6s. 6d. This mode of packing adds about £2 extra to the cost per ton, as compared with bags. It is supposed, however, that the improved condition in which the coffee reaches the market after all these processes compensates for the enhanced cost by better prices. Last year £72 per ton was realised for the crop.

45 coolies, 11 women, and four or eight boys, with eight kafirs, form the labour supply. The former have been entirely fed with hill rice grown on the estate, planted between the rows of young coffee plants. This experiment has been most successful. From thirteen stalks, the product of thirteen grains, Mr. Anderson picked 1 lb. of rice. About one ton and a quarter per acre was the yield, and the entire crop gathered was  $8\frac{3}{4}$  tons. Coffee trees more than three years old could not bear, however, this additional strain upon the soil, as they need all its strength for bearing purposes. There is no difficulty in growing this valuable crop, and the coolies prefer the rice thus gathered to that imported. If our farmers in the midlands can but produce this crop, a valuable resource will be placed within their reach.

At the highest point of this estate a charming lawn has been levelled and prepared for the residence, which I hope the proprietor will one day erect. This estate has been fortunate in having lately been under the general superintendence, as Mr. Gooch's agent, of Mr. F. W. B. Louch, who brings to bear both agricultural and commercial experience.

Almost within a stone's throw of Springvale, and just opposite Mr. Lovatt's homely but very welcome half-way hostelry we reach an estate which is being formed under the auspices of Mr. J. D. Ballance, and under the energetic management of his relative, Mr. Edmestone. This plantation is only two years old

as yet, and the 50 acres of coffee are scarcely in bearing condition. A more immediate return will be obtained from 50 acres planted with cotton. A few hundred yards further on, at the other side of the steep valley, spreads the flourishing coffee plantation of Mr. Harrison, the greater portion of which lies unseen from the main road on the slopes behind the last coast ridge.

This estate is interesting, as the work of a settler who came fresh from England without any previous agricultural training, or any specific knowledge of tropical conditions. Seven years ago Mr. Harrison pitched his tent here, prepared, with his family, to battle manfully with all the difficulties and privations that are incidental to the colonist's career. He can point with just pride to the results of his labours. Around and behind his house stretch 120 acres of coffee, more or less in bearing condition; 20 more are to be planted, and then new operations will cease. Next year the plantation will be in full bearing order. 13 tons have been gathered already, and about three more are expected. 50 coolies and kafirs suffice to keep this estate in order; 30 alone being employed at this time in pruning, in the efficacy of which Mr. Harrison is a great believer. Some want of labour is already experienced here, and the difficulty on this point, since the coolies' engagements ran out, is sensibly increasing. "Free coolies," or those who are not hired for lengthened terms, are much less manageable and trustworthy than the assigned ones.

Walking through the fields, although the season was late, I was impressed by the apparent vigour and healthiness of the trees. Mr. Harrison is much puzzled however, by a remarkable blight which here and there seems to fall on particular patches, causing the trees to wither away and die, although when cut down they grow again. There are no signs of any borer or other insect plague at work. "Is it lightning, or what is it?" the proprietor asks. Can any one assign a cause for this arbitrary effect of unknown agencies? Mr. Harrison considers that at first too much of the

original bush was burnt. Now the large logs are left to rot in the ground, and stumping has gone out of vogue. The cost of clearing his first fields was £5 an acre. Now he considers he could clear ground for coffee at £2 10s. an acre. He prefers orange trees for break winds, as, though they grow slowly, they last well, and present a substantial barrier; and, like others, he finds the north-westerly aspect best. His soil is red, and strong as the vigour of his trees testifies. He considers that from 150 to 200 acres of coffee is as much as any one man can successfully keep in order.

The buildings are commodious and substantial. Formerly the parchment coffee was dried in zinc-bottomed trays, of which 100 remain as evidence of that obsolete system. As they cost about ten shillings each, they are in reality more costly, and infinitely more troublesome than the tarred barbecues which now take their place. In the store the piles of coffee ready for market did one's eyes good. Mr. Harrison sold his coffee early in the season for £50 a ton. He has a good crop of mealies. The pulper is an imported one by Gordon. It performs a double operation, cutting the cherry before it passes to the grater, which by being pegged inside possesses unusual strength. The large low tanks behind will hold 9000 lbs. of cherry. Mr. Harrison uses stone hullers. Buying in town a pair of French millstones, which were difficult of sale, he resold one for the price of the pair, and split the other in two, making a pair of crushers out of it. As wood and iron hullers are usually employed it is worth noting that these stones do their work particularly well, and remove both parchment and silver-skin more effectually than the old-fashioned wooden wheels.

From a hill behind the house the eye ranges over a wide stretch of cultivated land stretching as far as the old bush road to Verulam. To the right we see the Messrs. Logan's plantation of 100 acres, all under cultivation; 25 to 30 being in bearing. From their house a magnificent view of the sea, the Bluff, the anchorage, and of the Inanda mountain, is obtained.

In the early morning when the dew yet hangs on the leaves, and the bush which closes overhead, is filled with the notes of birds, a ride along this rarely traversed road is a true enjoyment.

During the last flood a landslip occurred on Mr. Harrison's plantation, carrying bodily down to the main road about an acre of coffee. The gash made in the soil gives one a good idea of its depth. On the point of yield Mr. Harrison believes that 30 tons from 100 acres is a fair average yield so far as Natal is concerned. Coffee, he says, is the thing for any man who wants to make a home, and to follow a pleasant pursuit without any expectation of clearing a fortune. It requires patience, and a regular annual expenditure of capital, until bearing fairly sets in. He has most successfully cultivated hill rice, and found it made capital forage. As a resource for farmers in the midlands he considers it of great importance, saying with much justice that coffee planters have enough to do with their own avocation, and can well enough afford to leave the growth of food-stuffs to their fellow-colonists up-country.

The estate of Avoca, so well known to all travellers in Victoria, almost adjoins the estate. It has passed through so many vicissitudes and managements that data derived from its experiences would be apt to mislead. Mr. A. Cooley is now the active and enthusiastic manager. There is a large acreage under coffee, but the yield for reasons which it is needless to explain, and which have nothing to do with the soil and locality, both being unexceptionable, has not yet been satisfactory. There is reason both to hope and believe that the history of this beautiful estate will be brighter in the future than the past.

We now cross the road, above which rises Mrs. Simons' house of call, gaze with interest on a modest religious edifice, where service is held weekly on the most catholic principle of unsectarianism, and wind up and along the hill for about a mile until we reach Effingham, the coffee plantation of Messrs. Wheeler and Haddon, and the residence for some years of the



latter gentleman. We have here almost emerged from the more bushy coast belt and overlook the Umhlanga Valley. There are 80 acres planted with coffee, from which a crop of 5 tons has been picked this year. Although the trees in many parts, owing to their having been planted in grass land, do not look so well as those in the more sheltered hollows, where a growth of bush had previously enriched the soil, Mr. Melliss, the intelligent manager, has every confidence that time only is wanted to develop the bearing capacities of these fields. It is not, he says, mere wood and early blossom, which indicate the permanent qualities of a plantation. Slow growth is usually the precursor of lasting vigour. We have seen how even rich bushland gets exhausted in a few years and trees cease to bear. If these more open lands are liberally treated with time and manure, it is believed by many experienced persons that they will prove in the long run satisfactorily productive.

Mr. Melliss has planted coffee in Ceylon, and can therefore compare notes with that island. After four years' experience here he has formed a very favourable opinion of the capabilities of Natal as a coffee-producing country. Shelter from the cold winds of winter he regards as the chief requirement. The borer gives him no trouble. When he finds it in a tree he thrusts a pointed but flexible piece of wire up the passage made by the insect, until the intruder is pierced and destroyed. By this ingenious method he stops the mischief and saves the tree. He has also made very cheaply an original description of huller, formed of stone concrete, cast in a mould by himself. These crushers are three feet and a half in diameter, and do their work well. The pulper is down by the river side below, where the Little Umhlanga flows deeply and sluggishly between banks of reeds. This machine is one of a novel kind, having instead of a grater a serrated disc which peels off the pulp with much rapidity and efficacy at the rate of 10 to 12 cwt. an hour. Mr. Melliss's ingenuity is here shown in an arrangement by which "light" cherry, or cherry

which has no bean inside it, is floated away from the disc. 23 hands, of both races, are employed here. Broad roads are also laid out, so as to render communication with all parts of the estate easy and regular. It seems to me that true wisdom is shown in this, as the roads if planted on either side afford breakwinds which must so far exhaust the soil as to render the loss of a row or two of coffee a matter of slight importance.

As we look westward from Effingham towards a southern edition of "Mount Pisgah," the eye rests on Dr. Edie's plantation, beautifully situated on the heights overlooking Sea-cow Lake. There are here about 30 acres under coffee. The lake receives the waters of the Little Umhlanga, and communicates by a reedy swamp with the Umgeni. It lies calmly amongst its hills, and one cannot but hope that the day when its aboriginal inhabitants—its family of hippopotami—shall cease to give a living interpretation of its name—may be far distant.

By pursuing a winding bushpath we are not long in arriving at Mr. Coleman's plantation, a promising estate of new creation. Our next stage, however, is Mr. Jackson's, lying on the right hand side of the road as we go towards Verulam. There is a splendid sweep of coffee land visible here; the rows running at right angles, unbroken by a road, in dark luxuriance. 120 acres of bushes in an advanced condition bear witness to the proprietor's energy and to the excellence of the bushland which has been reclaimed. Mr. Jackson has picked a crop of about 25 tons this year, and his store is crammed with coffee in various stages of readiness for the market. He uses one of Gavin's pulpers, and finds it work well. The huller is an imported one, turned by hand power, and differing remarkably from the ordinary system. A horizontal stone below revolves against an upper sphere of India rubber,—the whole arrangement not taking up much more space than a common maize mill. It does its work well and costs about £30. Near the store a large pile of rotting manure gave us evidence of Mr.

Jackson's conviction that the free use of manure must be a leading article in the coffee planter's creed. He allows the drainage from the pulper to run into this heap, and the result, though somewhat inodorous, is full of rich promise for the trees.

I had here an opportunity of inspecting Mr. Jackson's little tea plantation—a small patch it may be—but very encouraging as a proof that this shrub grows easily and luxuriantly on our soil. The leaves are regularly prepared and used with satisfaction by the consumers. It is interesting to find tea growing in the midst of coffee, and a sugar plantation within eye-shot; while cows grazing below show that the only other requisite element is not wanting. Mr. Jackson is about erecting a new residence on a height behind, overlooking the ocean, and therefore called Sea View. He is the lord of the manor hereabout, and owns a large tract of valuable land. The labour question he considers a pressing one, being himself chiefly an employer of coolies.

Just before we left I saw swaying about high above the coffee trees on the opposite hill-side a number of tall appearances, resembling the bare stems of trees, coming towards us. These proved to be ostriches, of which noble bird Mr. Jackson has a family of ten. They are quite tame, and came direct to their night's roost with wonderful rapidity. Easily fed and managed, they seem to thrive in our climate and are not useless as the consumers of weeds. Here was a bit of Savage Africa imported into our last picture of Victoria county.

And so we wind down this little valley again along the familiar road, until Mr. Chick's new mill-house, dispels a pleasant recollection of more primitive times. Beyond, above the steep flank of the escarpment, are seen Mr. Buttery's coffee fields, where pines are still allowed to grow unchecked between the rows. Rumour says that the proprietor has got a famous return from these same pine plants in past years, and therefore one need not wonder at the somewhat depressed aspect of the coffee trees.

Immediately above the bridge rises a steep hill, on

the top of which Mr. Buttery resides. Here we have around us the results of labour expended through many years by a hard-working and indomitable colonist. Mr. B. has often been a victim by flood, fields of arrowroot planted by him near the riverside having been destroyed at different times by floods. Now, however, most of his operations are conducted on the hill side, where he grows pines, coffee, arrowroot, and bananas. He has, I believe, at times made a respectable income from the first alone, the nearness of the railway to the Point, affording special facilities for shipment. But it is as an arrowroot grower that Mr. B. has been most successful, and his well-earned prosperity is only another proof of what can be effected on the coastlands of this colony by persevering industry. I also owe apologies for not having noticed at the right place the flourishing estate of Mr. Godden, near Mount Moreland. Here we have arrowroot cultivated on a scale of unusual magnitude. This worthy colonist possesses a farm of 1200 acres, not far from Mr. Blamey's sugar plantation. Last year he turned out a crop of from 20 to 30 tons of arrowroot, manufactured by means of extensive steam machinery. I understand that as high a yield of this commodity as a ton per acre has been obtained. It is satisfactory to find that this staple still supplies a source of income to so many old colonists. Fourteen or fifteen years ago it was grown on all sides, to such an extent that the prices obtainable at home ceased to remunerate. Since then, however, prices have improved; the farina is put to more numerous uses, and our planters have brought to bear in its preparation better appliances, and greater knowledge.

Immediately the Umgeni bridge is crossed, a road not long formed turns off along the foot of the hills towards the sea. A few houses, most picturesquely situated, crown these heights, and from the windows a magnificent expanse of sea and land is seen. If we keep to the road it brings us at last to Prospect Hall, a sugar estate established many years ago by a pushing colonist—now, alas! dead—Mr. A. Gleig. It is now being worked for the proprietors by Mr. T. W. Lamport, formerly manager at Merebank and Reunion. No

plantation lies so near to the sea as this. It sweeps up from the water's edge, almost to the crest of the littoral ridge in continuation of the Berea range, which skirts the shore northward. From the outer anchorage this fair expanse of cane is a very prominent object. The extraordinary yield obtained from cane grown here proves beyond a doubt that these bushy hills, with their light sandy loam, are well suited to sugar, and already movements are in progress whereby at least one large sugar mill will be established at a point some miles further on. As there are thousands of idle acres, covered with nothing but bush, and tenanted only by bucks and monkeys, stretching to the northward, the scope thus opened out for the extension of sugar cultivation, within easy reach of Durban, is obviously considerable.

Mr. Lamport works this estate with great system. Last season the area of cane crushed was  $68\frac{1}{2}$  acres, from which a crop of 81 tons was obtained. This season, up to the middle of February, 27 acres crushed have yielded 114 tons, a most exceptional average of more than three tons per acre. Such a yield from so large an extent of land, has probably never elsewhere been equalled, nor could it have been looked for from other than virgin soil. There are still 21 acres to crush, but it is calculated they will be worth 70 tons. Next season 78 acres of rattoons, and 58 acres of plant cane, in all 133 acres, are to crush. The crop is estimated at 350 tons, but this, of course, is subject to the usual contingencies. Most of the land is out of the reach of frost. The working staff consists of a manager, engineer, 33 coolies, and 45 kafirs. The crop for 1872 will probably be the same as 1871. These returns are so exceptionally favourable, that although it would be unfair to withhold them, it would be no less unsafe to accept them as the basis of any generalisations regarding sugar planting in Natal.

Once more the Umgeni flows before us, and the Berea rises beyond; the locomotive is seen puffing on the other bank, and the toll bar stretches in front. We have at last reached the end of our journey through this beautiful and progressive county. Whatever

general conclusions I may have to draw from observations of tropical agriculture in Natal will come more appropriately after the Southern Coastlands have been inspected. Meanwhile let me remark that whatever vicissitudes its pioneer settlers have undergone, whatever disappointments they have borne, whatever losses they have sustained, no unprejudiced eye can scan the evidences of industrial enterprise in Victoria county, without being impressed by the vigour and intelligence of its planters, and by the fair promise which their works afford of a prosperous future.

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## THE SOUTHERN COASTLANDS.

### WARD No. 2, COUNTY OF DURBAN.

[Before beginning this second series of "Notes on the Colony" it is as well to explain that the district about to be described consists of Ward No. 2, Durban county, and the division of Alexandra. The mid-section of our coastlands, lying beyond the Berea, and including the districts of Clare, Sydenham, Cato Manor, Pinetown, and New Germany, forms the subject of a distinct series.]

#### CHAPTER X.

DESCRIBED 200 YEARS AGO—CLAIRMONT—COEDMORE—  
NORTHBANK—WOODVILLE—MERE BANK—REUNION—  
MR. ATKINSON'S—ISIPINGO—STATISTICS OF THE  
WARD.

Nearly two hundred years ago the country lying somewhat to the southward of the port of Durban was thus described in quaint yet genial and hearty language, by certain mariners who were cast by shipwreck on its shores. They say that "there are standing waters, but many rivers with plenty of fish and full of sea cows. There is no want of elephants, rhinoceroses, lions, tigers, and leopards. Many kinds of large and small centipedes, toads and frogs abound. Elands, harts, redboks, together with crocodiles, are numerous. Geese, ducks, pigeons, red and brown partridges, pheasants and *pauws* or wild turkeys are abundant, as also are crested cranes, many birds and all kinds of fish. The country is full of negroes who cultivate three sorts of corn, as also calabashes, pumpkins, water melons, and beans much resembling the European brown beans ;

they sow annually a kind of earth nut, and a nourishing kind of underground bean. Tobacco grows there wild, and if they knew how to manage it it would in all probability resemble in flavour the Virginian. The true European fig grows wild, also a kind of grape which is a little sour though well-tasted—they are best boiled. They have also a kind of tree not unlike the fatherland medlar, and not unpleasant to eat. Wild prunes grow abundantly on the shore and are well-tasted. There are also wild cherries which are very sour, and a kind of apple which is not unpleasant eating if ripe. The country is exceedingly fertile and full of cattle. If a grain of wheat is let fall on the top of the mountains, it will produce as much as if sown in the field.”

Before the time of Byrne's immigration the land thus depicted had scarce a settler. A few of those immigrants, however, lost little time in settling upon or near what is now the Isipingo flat. Its nearness to the port, its deep alluvial soil, its unbroken surface, its abundance of water, made this little plain appear, of all other localities near Durban, the best fitted for agriculture. It was here that, early in the fifties, the second sugar mill in the colony was erected, and it is here that still, in spite of severe and unparalleled vicissitudes, broad fields of sugar cane, and smoking sugar mills, testify to the goodness of the soil and the stubborn industry of its settlers.

Between the bay of Natal and the Umtamvuna stretches a coastline of 125 miles. The winding valleys of at least sixteen seaward-flowing rivers intersect this region, and give to its contour an extraordinary variety of expression. But beautiful and bountiful though it may be in aspect and in capability the number of European settlers living there does not exceed at the most 1000 souls. This is all there is to show for 25 years of British colonisation. Fairer scenes than abound here the eye cannot wish to look upon. Fewer evidences of man's industry and enterprise could scarcely be conceived. Ten years ago I traversed the same road, with the same object in view, and found more inhabitants and more plantations. Hills that were then cane-clad



are now covered with waving weeds. Mill fabrics that were then full of busy life are now empty and deserted. On some estates there has been substantial and visible progress. On all that are yet being cultivated there is a measure of improvement and contentedness that were then unknown. The causes of this general stagnation, by the side of positive instances of advancement, will, I hope, in part be made clear by the following papers:—

Some years since the present writer thus recorded his impressions on leaving Durban for the southward:—

“The road though flat is sandy. Long hills, shaggy with tropical bush-growth, and enlivened by the gardens and cottages of suburban residents, skirt our way. On the other side the mangrove swamp, which lines the bay, hems us in.” Thus as far as the Umbilo.

Ward No. 2 of Durban county extends from the river Umbilo, which is the borough boundary, to the Umkomazi. It has the good fortune to possess a most industrious and zealous Fieldeornet in Mr. R. B. Willey, who for more than fifteen years has collected the statistics of the district and to whom the public are much indebted for unusually full and explicit information regarding the progress of the county. In this respect both Alexandra and Ward No. 2 are better off than certain other portions of the colony that might be named.

There are in this tract of country 414 square miles, or 264,960 square miles of territory; of which native locations and mission reserves alone absorb 360 square miles or 230,400 acres. All that private persons hold is 54 square miles of land, or 34,560 acres. The significance of these figures—and I beg particular attention to them—becomes apparent when I state that the kafir population numbers 12,420 souls, and the white population 536, but that while the former cultivate only 5277 acres of maize and 188 acres of cane, the latter cultivate 2888 acres of cane, 508 acres of coffee, and 241 acres of garden ground. The natives, therefore, till only one acre in forty one, while the whites cultivate one out of every nine and a half acres, or more than four times as much.

As soon as we have crossed the little Umbilo by a bridge which is famous as one of the few that withstood the flood of 1868, the eye is attracted by the banana groves which surround cottages on the hill to the right, and by the imposing skylight which crowns Mr. Crozier's beautiful residence at Clairmont. Glancing up the twin valleys of the Umbilo and the Umhlatuzan the country is seen spreading away in more open but still parklike slopes, inland. If we follow the road which turns off here, we shall first come to Mr. Grainger's plantation, a perfect wilderness of luxuriant fruit trees, one of the earliest orchards in Natal, and probably the first orange grove in the colony, when it was laid out by the late Mr. Dunn as Sea View. From this point an exquisite view of the bay, with its islands, its white-sailed boats, its over-shadowing Bluff, and the shipping beyond, is obtained. In the immediate foreground the eye wanders over the bushy undulations of Clairmont to the hills beyond the Isipingo plain. A succession of snug-looking homesteads follows. Mr. Grainger has a healthy coffee plantation of 25 acres.

A mile or two on is Coedmore where Messrs. Stainbank's mills were opened last year. Here an 18 power water-wheel drives a corn-mill capable of crushing 80 sacks a day, saw-mills, coffee-pulper, bone-crusher, and cotton-gin. May the enterprising proprietors, who, in spite of their many losses by flood, have, nevertheless, 30 acres of coffee in, find work enough for all these appliances. Just beyond, on the brow of a picturesque hill, stands the beautiful rusticated Church near the Home-mead, the vicarage of the Reverend Mr. Rolfe. Further on, at a yet higher elevation, is Bankhead, the sugar estate of Messrs. Bell and Morrison—of whom more anon. There are 100 acres under cane here, and 70 were crushed last year at a steam mill of 8-horse power. Mr. Marshall acts as manager. Then we reach Northbank, Mr. North's plantation, where 78 acres are under cane, 60 acres, crushed last year, having yielded 77 tons of sugar. The mill is 10-horse power, and there are also 21 acres of coffee on the estate.

In the immediate neighbourhood is Bellair, well-

known in former years as Mr. J. A. Ross's property, now occupied by Messrs Hillary, who produce wonderful fruit there.

At Snaresbrook, a most picturesque estate just beyond, Mr. Copley has 40 acres under coffee. This place is familiarly known in connexion with the name of its original owner, Mr. W. H. Middleton, author of the *Coffee Manual*, and one of our pioneer coffee planters. Just over the river Mr. Williamson has a coffee plantation of thirty acres.

Further than this we cannot go now without outstepping the ward. Suffice it to say that no part of the coast presents so frequent a succession of pleasant views as this corner of the country. Ere many years are past the rousing locomotive, and the life-giving iron track, shall pass through the centre of this district, and give a new character to its prospects. In all probability it will be the most favoured resort of Durban people for suburban residences, as scarcely any qualification is wanting to fit it for that purpose.

But we return coastward and pause at Clairmont, once the property of a gentleman of whose death we have but just heard, Mr. W. R. Thomson of Grahams-town. It is a large and beautiful estate, and the grounds around the spacious residence have long been famous as the best laid-out near Durban. Since the estate passed into Mr. George Wood's hands—also of Grahamstown—Mr. Crozier has resided here, and much advancement in cultivation has been made under Mr. Archibald's able management. There are 70 acres of coffee planted and looking well, and a crop of 14 tons was picked last season. It is said that arrangements are in progress whereby this property will be made available for cultivation by small planters. Let us hope so.

A grassy plain dotted towards the bay with trees divides the Clairmont hills from the Bluff range. On the wooded heights opposite we see a line of homesteads scattered at wide distances apart. On the brow of Fynnland to the extreme left Messrs. Bowers and Shute have now 36 acres of cotton in fine condition. This point is interesting as being the residence of the late Mr. H.

F. Fynn, one of the original settlers of Natal forty years ago, long before either Dutch or English Governments were established. Here, or about here, stood the first settlement of Englishmen ever formed upon these shores, and here, according to some, ought to have been placed the town. There are two ranges of hills, one fronting the sea and the other the bay. The former is known as Wentworth, and is chiefly famed as a favourite locality for suburban residences, albeit the only two such tenements built there have fallen into decay.

A steep and winding bush-ride brings us to Woodville, the coffee plantation established by Mr. M'Arthur. The mill-house is passed on the flat below. Stone hoppers here attract attention. They are formed out of an old mill-stone cut in twain—like Mr. Harrison's—and do their work better than wooden ones, and as well as iron ones. This is one of the largest as well as oldest estates on the coast. There are 116 acres under crop, most of the trees being well-grown. Last year a crop of 20 tons was gathered. Judging from the heavy yield of berry the crop was estimated at a much larger figure, but the proportion of "light" or beanless cherry was so great as to cheat these calculations. This is a common complaint among planters on the light red loam of which this estate consists, and seems to point to the absence of lime or some other constituent in the soil which artificial means must supply. It is more than probable that a pound spent in the right kind of enrichment would yield five pounds in the improved crop. Reformation rather than renovation of the soil will be required.

Mr. Willey's residence stands hidden amongst magnificent orange trees close by Woodville. Mr. Cass's farm is also close by. This industrious old colonist last year produced a crop of 19 tons of arrowroot—a quantity which consumers of that commodity will best estimate. Mr. Cass has long been famed for his production of this article. Mr. Clarkson—another old settler—cultivates among other things 30 acres of coffee. Beyond this estate the hill sinks gradually to the Umlaas mouth.

Merebank, Mr. E. P. Lamport's sugar plantation, lies

nearest to Durban of any in this direction and his mill stands in the middle of the flat. Like all other estates on the plain it is liable to visitations from the three dreaded "f's"—frost, flood, and fire. The flood of 1868, and the frost of 1869 did terrible damage, and reduced the present season's crop almost to a minimum. In consequence of the rapid growth of weeds and cane Mr. Lamport deemed it well to stop crushing and put all his strength on the fields. There are close upon 400 acres under cane, the bulk being the "China" variety. Cultivation is now being pushed on the hills, as free from liability to injury from frost or flood.

Isipingo flat has now been under cultivation for at least fourteen years and it is not surprising that renovating processes have now to be generally adopted. Mr. Lamport proposes when manuring, to assimilate the crude manure with a green crop of rape, ploughed in as a fallow crop. Drainage has also been largely resorted to and has sensibly modified the climate. Did space permit I should like to say more regarding Mr. L.'s interesting and painstaking observations of atmospheric conditions. He has established and tabulated the very decided connexion between the thermometer and the saccharometer, shewing the necessity of observing the former when determining the value of the juice from its density.

The mill at Merebank presents one or two novelties not observable elsewhere. The juice after being pumped up from the rollers, passes into a receiver, where it subsides and is seived, leaving behind the grosser impurities before reaching the clarifiers. Here are two "Bour" pans (hollow discs filled with steam), and two "Wetzel" pans. Mr. Lamport employs about 120 labourers, and could do with more. He is fortunate in having an excellent sub-manager in Mr. Joel Lean. From his hospitable residence on the hill a view of the whole flat, with the sea beyond, is gained, with massive old trees in the foreground.

Under Mr. L.'s guidance I ride on through continuous cane fields to Reunion. Before reaching this large and important estate we cross the Umlaas, a shallow, sandy stream, by means of an excellent bridge, put up

by and at the expense of the proprietors. Here we have a remarkable instance of private *versus* official action. This same river was bridged higher up at a cost of about £1600. The flood came and swept everything before it, not only the public bridge but a private one which had been erected here at a cost of about £350. Now the ford higher up is bridgeless, but this new structure has been erected here, at a cost of little more than £200. It answers every purpose. Its roadway is only slightly raised above the ordinary level of the stream and offers no obstruction to the current, so that should a flood again take place the water would probably pass over the bridge and leave it uninjured.

Reunion represents three different estates, those owned when I was here in 1861 by Mr. Babbs, Mr. Smart, and Mr. R. King. The mill stands where that belonging to the firstnamed gentleman stood ten years ago, but practically, it is altogether a new establishment. Since Messrs. de Pass and Co. became the owners of the property a large amount of capital has been expended in improvements. Under the vast expanse of iron roof which covers in the fabric two engines, and six centrifugals are at work. The first is 25 horse power and drives the mill, which is the original one imported by Mr. Babbs, the largest probably in the colony. The other engine, which is a little larger, works the vacuum pan and centrifugals. China cane is almost exclusively crushed on this estate, and to look at it when cut, one would say that but a poor return would be got from such thin and weedy-looking material. Unattractive as it looks, however, this cane contains an ample proportion of saccharine, as is proved by the fact that the average yield this year is  $1\frac{3}{4}$  tons per acre. One was reminded of Mauritius, by the way the attendant natives heaped the cane on the feeding board, and by the broad stream of juice pouring forth from the rollers.

The vacuum pan just erected on this estate has proved a success, and is an additional evidence that where operations are conducted on a large scale this appliance is economically indispensable. The pan has been erected in a spacious building, and is 8 feet 6 in.

in diameter. It turns out two tons at a strike, but could do three, and although it has a capacity equal to seven tons a day, its average work is from three to four. Two batteries are employed to feed it with juice, and in addition there is a long row of eight huge iron tanks called "subsiders" in which the juice is allowed rapidly to purify itself before going into the pan. A beautiful straw-coloured sugar was being produced whilst I was there, and the impression left on the mind was altogether in favour of the vacuum pan system, which produces a much finer and more marketable article with greater ease, simplicity, and speed.

780 or 800 acres are under cane all round. 220 labourers are employed. Although I heard of no immediate clamour for labour, the future is regarded with some measure of disquietude. In sugar-planting there must be no relaxation of effort if the enterprise is to pay. The work of the mill and the work of the fields must all go on with equal certainty and efficiency if adequate returns are to be realised. The ordinary labour gang on this estate would be about 170 kafirs and 110 coolies. Though the ground consists of deep alluvial deposits, it cannot be worked continuously without exhaustion and guano is freely employed. Drainage, too, is more or less necessary. The crop this year is fully up to the estimate, being about 350 tons. Like all its neighbours, Reunion suffered disastrously from the flood of 1868 and the frost of 1869. The use of mules on this estate is a feature well worthy of notice. About 40 are employed, and they are found to be both efficient and economical. A traction engine forms a part of the establishment, and now and then is used, but in spite of India-rubber tyres to the wheels, it is found of little value. It is constantly sinking into some deep hole, in which the wheels go round without biting the ground. From what I heard here I feel more than ever convinced that these road engines are unsuited for unmade, that is unmetalled, roads.

It is very cheering to visit an estate like Reunion where all the resources of mechanical science. capital.

and personal capacity have been brought so largely to bear in developing the wealth of the soil. That the natural conditions of the locality, as regards flood and frost present certain drawbacks is but too apparent. Against these, however, have to be recharged ease of cultivation, depth of soil, and contiguity to Durban. The plantation is under the able management of Mr. E. Beater, who may well be congratulated in discharging so zealously the duties of so responsible a position. Mr. Pillans, though the local representative in town, I had the good fortune to meet on the occasion of my visit.

I much regret that want of time prevented me from visiting more than one other plantation in the locality. This was the estate belonging to Mr. Atkinson. Ten years ago when visiting this district, I referred to this gentleman as being one of the most thorough agriculturists in the colony. That character he has subsequently most fully sustained, and I was glad to find one of the "old standards" to whom Natal owed so much, still presiding over the estate, which so to speak his own energies have created, and his own intelligence directed. Frequent disasters have by no means disheartened, though they may have disappointed him. Last year he had no less than seventy acres entirely smitten by frost. Nevertheless he has about 155 acres under cane, and has produced a crop at the rate of about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  tons per acre this season. He spoke most strongly about the want of labour; said that a large supply was absolutely necessary to the success of sugar planting: that without it the production of sugar must be materially diminished. Give labour, and sugar planting, he says, must do—but the supply is not so large as it was. He finds megass suffice for fuel, if properly applied, and has always taken good care to manure his soil. Upon the latter he lays great stress, and named some remarkable instances of fields that have been restored by a timely application of manure.

Mr. Laurence Platt is another old settler in this neighbourhood who still clings to his original location. Ten years ago I was the guest of his brother, Mr. Sidney Platt, who, I am glad to hear, now occupies an excellent position in the United States. Mr. L. Platt



has himself a plantation of 50 acres, but he crushes also for Mr. R. King, who cultivates cane on the hill.

Opposite Mr. Atkinson's, but nearer the sea shore, with its back against a hill, is the estate established by the late Mr. Mack—a true pioneer—but now in the hands of Messrs. Muirhead & Co. There are here 300 acres under cane, and up to the end of the year a crop of 170 tons had been produced. 44 kafirs and 60 are employed. Mr. Jeffel's plantation is skirted by the road, and is distinguished as being the first plantation erected in this direction. Here the second steam mill worked in this colony was erected by the enterprising father of the present proprietor. There are now about 80 acres under cane. Mr. Quested, on the other side of the hill, has the advantage of hill-land for his plantation, one of more recent growth. He has 190 acres cultivated, a substantial steam mill, and altogether a very economically worked estate, and one which promises to be a very successful one. Mr. John G. Maek has a small plantation near Mr. Jeffels, of about 60 acres. He got a good return this season from the cane reaped, and employs about 20 hands. Throughout this valley it is impossible but to be struck by the economy of labour on the several estates.

Of the elder planters who were here ten years ago, Mr. Smart, Mr. Jeffels, and Mr. Mack have been removed by death. Mr. Babbs and Mr. S. Platt have left the colony. Mr. Priddle has quitted the flat. Mr. Fayers and Mr. King no longer work their mills. There are fewer mills at work—eight instead of eleven—but the breadth of land under cane is probably greater, and there can be no comparison as regards improved knowledge both of cultivation and manufacture.

## CHAPTER XI.

THE ISIPONGONDWE—A SEA-BATHING ESTABLISHMENT—THE  
 UMLASI LOCATION—AMANZIMTOTE MISSION STATION—  
 ILLOVO—COOLIE FARMS—THE UMKOMANZI—UMGIBABA  
 SUGAR ESTATE—UMNINI'S AND COLLEGE RESERVES.

The road winds round the detached hill, at whose foot Mr. Jeffels' mill stands, and for some distance is skirted by the thin reedy stalks of China cane, which are stopt by the banks of a broad and shallow stream flowing over a sandy bottom, and flanked on the other side by wooded hills. This is in common parlance the Umbogontwini, a singular corruption of Isipongondwe, the correct kafir designation.

About half a mile down the stream enters the sea, a broad bit of which is framed in by sandy hills. On that small spurlike cone to the right, or rather just behind, stood, three years ago, an unpretending little building where many a happy hour has been passed by unfashionable occupants. This small tenement witnessed more true enjoyment than watering-places of greater fame. Among the breakers that burst incessantly on the shore, and the rocks that line the beach, there was scope for unlimited fun of the best kind. But our present road leads straight on, and wind through bush and rich red sand, up a long hill the top of which seems ever to recede. When once gained airy views of park-like scenery are obtained. No European evidences are visible, but kafir kraals are seen here and there amongst the bush. From this onward the country is delightfully picturesque, though depressingly blank. From the Isipongondwe to the Umkomanzi, a stretch of 25 miles, the county is locked up and blighted by a false but fatal philanthropy, whose intentions—beneficent enough probably in the first instance—have been sadly belied by the result. It is hard to say where now we are not upon reserved lands, so extensive are these. The Amanzimtote Mission Station consists of 8619 acres; the chief Umnini has 7977 acres; the College lands at Illovo comprise 3000 acres, and Ifumi has 8122

acres. When these demands are satisfied we shall probably be told that the residue is native location—though where the natives are, or how those that are here manage to make use of even a tenth of the area 'twore hard indeed to say.

No part of Natal attracts the eye more than this ill-fated district—thus doomed by insagacions statesmanship to lie blank and barren. To ride through it is to ride through a series of landscapes in whose adornment nature has left little for man to do. Formerly the road turned inland for a few miles and went through the Amanzimtote (American) Mission Station—one of the most successful centres of the kind in the colony—lying pleasantly in a basin. There is a roomy church here, and a sugar mill, interesting as the result of native industry. It was bought, and is worked by natives, and is in itself a proof of what the people are capable under proper training and supervision. Now, however, the road keeps nearer the coast, so still traversing a breezier upland, we push on.

The Amanzimtote, a river of sweet waters, is a small stream running over boulders of stone and mostly hidden by trees and bushes. Mrs. Jones keeps a clean little hostelry on the hill above.

There being so little else to write about let me do justice to the roads, which are in capital condition and reflect great credit on those who have the repair and construction of them. The amount of traffic on the road in November last astonished me. Wagon after wagon was passed in unending succession, and one could not help wondering where the traffic came from to employ so much transport power. Some excellent cuttings ease the gradients at several points. Away, inland, level lines of pastoral country are seen, and, indeed, the district there is reckoned one of the best grazing grounds along the coast.

Evening is drawing in as we ride gradually down towards the Illovo—a pale-brown quiet stream running through level tracts of alluvial ground, which ought to be clothed with cane, instead of the trees and reeds that cover them. Mr. Price has lately established a friendly house of call on this side, which reminds us of

the dear old days when a large and roomy kafir hut was as a palace to the weary way-farer, and, indeed, I have slept in far more pretentious buildings with less comfort, and with less satisfaction to mind and body.

The Illovo is seldom impassable, and there is no ferry worth the name across it. On a hill-side beyond is a seedy-looking and not inviting tenement where entertainment may or may not be offered to man and beast. Hence we pass on up a broad cutting, now in course of being covered with shattered shale. This escarpment is one of the widest and best pieces of work of the kind in the colony, and is in itself a token of the zeal and ability displayed by Mr. Ballenden, whose practical services as an overseer of this kind of work will, I hope, have full recognition hereafter.

The branch road we have now to traverse, like other branch roads in this colony, is easily enough deciphered by those familiar with it, by no means so by strangers. It turns sharply round towards the sea, passes into a fat-looking valley where a few coolies have lately leased small plots of land, which they are cultivating in their own unsystematic fashion, and where one or two white settlers are growing a little tobacco, fruit, and cotton, and then goes up and up again, only to descend once more. Some large kafir kraals, and corn-fields, tell us that we are in the midst of Umnini's location. This old chief is supposed to be the only aboriginal chieftain in Natal, and on the strength of that belief he has had set apart for and alienated to him, about 10,000 acres of the best and most valuable land in the colony. The fact of the matter is that Umnini is little more an aboriginal chieftain, or his tribe an indigene of the soil, than one or two other chiefs and tribes. His claim to being considered native of the soil does not probably extend beyond the beginning of the present century. He reaps nevertheless the full benefit of aboriginality. His grant contains much excellent sugarland, and this is already in considerable request. The trustees of his estate have already let out a few leaseholds on terms highly advantageous to the tribe. The old chief, however, is anxious to be gone. Few as are the settlers round he feels cramped and uneasy, and it is understood

that he would gladly exchange his possessions for a larger extent of less valuable land further away from the haunts of—sugar planters. His people are said to be opposed to the change, however, and for the very reasons that make him so anxious to move. They like being near the plantations, where they can get abundant supplies of treacle—the chief concomitant of shimiyana, that maddening beverage which the kafirs of Natal have so lately evolved out of their inner consciousness. All well-wishers of the colony will pray that the chief's desires may be realised, and that this fine tract of land will be made available for reproductive purposes. If the natives would themselves cultivate soil capable of such things one would not be disposed to cavil at their occupation of it, but it is deplorable in a county where sugar lands are limited to see so much wealth-yielding territory lying waste and idle.

We just manage to descend into the valley of the Umzimbazi and to cross that little stream, and then to ride in the gloom past a mill-house, and through long canefields, to a hill-crowning residence, before it is fully dark. This is Umgibaba or St. George's, the sugar plantation of Messrs. H. & W. H. Savory, and the residence of its most capable manager, Mr. Morrison, to whose hospitable roof and household I am indebted for a night's most pleasant lodgment. Originally the estate was formed by Messrs. Stafford and Fyvie, but since it came into the present hands it has undergone such extensions, improvements, and additions, as to be scarcely recognisable. Ten years ago it was not.

The morning's sun discloses a pleasant prospect. The house stands on a steep hill overlooking a small valley, through which the river, wider and deeper than where I crossed, creeps crookedly. Dark bluffs, and cane-clad slopes overlook some flat land and diversify the picture. Few plantations are so near the sea as this, but the growth of cane is quick and vigorous. There are 500 acres of cane, out of a total acreage of 800. The average yield is over two tons per acre. The highest yield was that obtained from nine acres of plant cane which gave five tons per acre. Another extraordinarily

large return was obtained from 10 acres of ratoon cane, which gave an average of four tons per acre. Last year 350 tons were obtained from 160 acres of cane, this year a crop of 500 tons is expected from 400 acres. The average of this season's crop up to the beginning of last November was  $2\frac{1}{4}$  tons. It ought to have improved since then. The difficulty so often complained of this year, in making sugar—that is in getting the juice to crystallise—has been felt here. 70 coolies and 80 kafirs are employed upon the estate. No particular pressure has yet been experienced, but then few estates have so isolated a position in the centre of a native population. The mill is situated in the midst of a wide clear space, the convenience of which is so obvious that it is odd all planters do not strive to give themselves a like abundance of elbow room. The engine is about 15-horse power, and does its work well. Three wetzels are employed and three centrifugals, driven by a smaller engine of 10-horse power. The ordinary capacity of the mill is three tons a day, but it is adapted to turn out five tons daily if need be. At the end of the battery there is a double teach, the only one of the kind I have seen here, though they are common in the West Indies. The arrangements for drying and sciving the sugars—a very important part of the process in a marketable point of view—are particularly complete. But what struck me as more remarkable even than the completeness of the appliances was the perfect cleanliness which prevailed throughout the fabric. In a building at one side is a still, at work for only three months yet, but already seen to be an indispensable adjunct in the future. Although so much bush abounds in the neighbourhood fuel is reckoned a dear and scarce article, being set down at £1 per ton, all things considered. Mr. Morrison regards this as a most important item and one which planters will have to take into their calculations more than they have done. He does not approve of burning the begass which ought to be rotted and go back into the soil, and the amount of labour and ox-power which are taken up in carting wood ought to be applied to the estate.

For the manager of this admirably-conducted estate,

like all other successful planters, is a warm believer in the efficacy of thorough cultivation. He would have his fields not only kept clean and loose, but would have the soil manured with every enriching material that may be within reach. The fruits of such treatment he has already seen in returns which, perhaps, are exceeded by no other estate. He has been four years at work here. The yield given by ratoons is surprisingly favourable, three-year-old canes having given an average of two tons. China cane is not in favour, the yield being poor. No field is suffered to exhaust itself, but after a certain period the ground is left to fallow.

It is suggestive to find in Mr. M. an advocate for central factories when properly situated and worked. He thinks it would be better for the mill-owner to pay in cash so much for the sugar made or cane delivered rather than to share the produce and he believes that a larger share of profit might be left to the grower, without any injury to the manufacturer.

Reluctantly leaving this secluded but interesting estate, which has the special peculiarity of being a leasehold property, the land being rented from Ummini's trustees, we ride along a fair bye-road through woodland scenery for some miles, still keeping on Ummini's land. There are more kafirs resident about here than a passing stranger might imagine, their kraals being erected in quiet vallies where they lead lives of uninterrupted ease. Mr. Shepstone's name has immense influence with the natives hereabout, who are pronounced to be amenable enough when fairly treated.

Leaving Canon Tommessen's friendly house, perched on a commanding hill to the right, we soon reach the main road again, and begin to descend a cutting which evidently leads into a deep valley. A turn of the road brings us into view of a bit of Paradise. A narrow gorge-like valley, walled in by high hills steeper on this side than the other, encloses a deep yellow river, which makes a sweeping bend at our feet around a circular tongue of land. This rounded elbow sloping gently riverwards is entirely covered with canefields, which creep up the hill behind to its very summit. The

mill-house stands in the central flat below, and we look down with a bird's eye upon the yellow stream, the crawling wagon, the ant-like figures of the labourers, and the scattered buildings around. From where we are the hill falls sheer down in a woody and winding precipice which skirts one side of the river for a mile or more, almost, in fact, to the sea, a glimpse of which, and of the further estate of Canonby, we see in the distance. The suddenness of this amphitheatric view, in which man's handiwork combines with nature, to animate and vary the picture is one of the pleasantest surprises possible. That still but rapid stream is the Umkomanzi and that compact sugar estate is Craigie Burn.

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## DIVISION OF ALEXANDRA.

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### CHAPTER XII.

CRAIGIE BURN, MR. MCKENZIE, ITS FOUNDER—CANONBY—  
SOUTH BARROW AND ITS PROSPECTS—AMAILLONGWA  
AND UMPAMBINYONI.

Craigie Burn is one of the oldest and most successful estates in the colony. It was the first sugar plantation on this side of the Umkomanzi. Before its proprietor, Mr. John M'Kenzie, himself a veteran colonist, came here in 1855 and started operations, there were scarcely any settlers in the district, except one or two at the Umzinto. Before reaching this interesting spot, however, we have to descend the face of the hill by a long escarpment. At the bottom, on a shelf of ground carved out of the hillside, is Mrs. Nelson's comfortable hostelry, quite shut in by the lofty hills that rise on all hands. This is the centre of the ferry and the post office, and the fact of the latter being on the wrong side of the river is made the ground of what to me



seemed most reasonable complaint. A hundred yards further down flows the river, seldom passable with any comfort by horsemen. No stream runs more deeply or treacherously than does the Lower Umkomanzi at this point. Taking its rise in the Drakensberg, it flows through and is fed by a large tract of country. Sometimes during fine weather it will suddenly rise six or ten feet, almost level with its banks. Residents near it have learnt by observation of the different colours of the water, to know where the rains have fallen. It is sometimes yellow, and sometimes reddish, according as the rains have occurred about Richmond or further inland. An invariable token of flood is the appearance of branches of trees and snags, which are borne along the stream. When once up it may not subside for months. Such a river, of course, presents great obstacles to traffic. Through many months wagons have to be unladen, if not taken to pieces, at a cost of time, trouble, and money, which adds considerably to the expense of transport. A bridge is sadly needed, and a bridge the inhabitants seem determined to have. 1200 tons of sugar already cross the river yearly, to say nothing of other traffic. A moderate toll would yield £500 a year at least and more than pay interest on the cost of construction and maintenance, and engineers there say that the work might be done cheaply and substantially. A large portion of the trade with Griqualand and Pondaland crosses this ford, and the natives would probably contribute their quota to the revenue. Accidents are constantly occurring and one was recorded only the other day. Even when the river is low there are holes and quicksands in its bed which may prove perilous pit-falls to the unwary. Here, too, a few famous and voracious alligators have their haunt, and from time to time give proof of their existence. One big old fellow in particular—a kind of patriarch apparently—is held in especial awe by the inhabitants.

The boat, or punt rather, takes one over quickly and pleasantly. It is safe and roomy, though the whole process of crossing is one which would never be tolerated in any but a poor and sparsely-peopled land. Once

landed we proceed at once to Mr. G. E. Robinson, the lessee of Craigie Burn, and one of the most accomplished agriculturists in Natal. He lives within reach of the mill, and within view of his fields, whither we will under his guidance proceed. This estate is famous for possessing one of the very few tracts of alluvial deposit to be found along the coast. The river, checked and turned aside in its course by the rocky cliffs opposite, has gradually, by the action of successive floods, thrown up here in this bend about 225 acres of the richest soil; so deep that a probe of 12 and 15 feet will not find its bottom, and so fertile that it has been cropped year after year for thirteen years. Some of the fields have lately been fallowed, but I saw patches of enormous cane, planted so far back as 1858, growing with as much luxuriance as though planted only last year, and bearing stools of 14 and even 20 canes to each. Good as his soil is, however, Mr. Robinson is too good a cultivator to exhaust or overtask it, and he fertilises liberally, by putting three inches of manure mixed with a little salummonia or ammonia into each hole. A very slight allowance of rest and enrichment is needed, however, for soil which is naturally so prolific.

400 acres are under cultivation here, and a crop of more than 300 tons has been already manufactured. The mill is worked by a powerful perpendicular engine of 16 horse power, and is supposed to work off 3 tons a day. Last week's production for  $5\frac{1}{2}$  days had been 17 tons. There is no still as yet upon the estate and the manure heap gets the benefit, therefore, of much that would otherwise be turned into rum. The peculiar richness of the soil was evidenced in a strong gaseous exhalation which was more pungent here than at any other estate I have visited. Mr. Robinson succeeds in getting a full return from his canefields. He kindly gave me from his clearly kept books the following interesting statistics:—

In the season or year 1868-69 the mill was working 160 days, and made 248 tons of sugar, the produce of 96 acres of plant cane. This yield was at the rate of 2 tons 12 cwt. an acre. The quantity of sugar turned

out per diem was  $35\frac{1}{2}$  cwt., and per gallon of juice  $1\frac{1}{4}$  lbs.

In the season or year 1869-70 the mill worked 127 days and made 239 tons of sugar, being at the rate of 37 cwt. per day. This year a gallon of juice gave 17-16ths of sugar. The area of cane crushed was 125 acres; of which 100 were ratoons, and 25 hill plant canes.

Mr. Robinson considers that one-sixth of the land should always be out of cultivation, or resting. This, of course, applies to his own soil, whether other land would bear five years' cropping is a question which proprietors themselves must determine. 120 coolies and kafirs are employed on the estate. Last year there were 30 Basutos at work. A hospital is being put up for the use of sick labourers, and it is expected that this institution will prevent a good deal of shamming.

Much more than this Mr. Robinson told me concerning the conditions of Craigie Burn in particular, and of sugar planting here in general. But I must hasten on, up the hill, steep and long, though traversed by a good road. Two or three houses enliven the way, and at the top a building surrounded by laughing children bespeaks the presence of a school. On the top of the high table lands that spread hereabout we find Mr. M'Kenzie's ever hospitable residence, standing in the midst of a luxuriant garden, and commanding such views as one seldom meets with even here. Behind and around the swelling outlines of this hilly land; in front the roll of country seaward, with its rifts of valley, and its streaks of canefield; beyond that stretches north as far as the Bluff, and away south into obscurity, the vague but foam-flecked ocean. Here among the breezes Mr. M'Kenzie has established his abode. The greater part of our southern coastlands may be swept with a glance of the eye from his verandah, and though the changes he has witnessed here may be few by comparison, they are, let us hope, but an earnest of the ultimate fruits that shall spring from his bold and confident enterprise.

Although agriculture on no great scale is carried on

in this neighbourhood except at the estates we are now visiting, there are a few other settlers in the neighbourhood. Mr. Parkin, of Hull valley, is a settler of many years standing. Messrs. Turner and Compton, at Ellingham, carry on a large salting and trading business. The former process is carried on by means of the hydraulic principle, and the enterprise is altogether an extensive and important one. I regretted my inability to visit their establishment.

The upper road to Canonby is about as rough and bad a one as you will find on the coast. If an amateur engineer wishes to study sharp curves and steep gradients I recommend him to the observation of this track. Bad as it is, it is infinitely better than the path I followed ten years ago, and it says much for the enterprise of the maker that with limited means he should have succeeded in threading the hilly mazes of the country. Steep as the hills are they are cultivated to their very summit. The estates of Canonby and Craigie Burn join their broad acres, and the whole side of the river on the south is skirted with cane. Canes are planted at some points where one would think it scarcely possible to get foothold, much less plant a hoe. The result, however, rewards the effort, as the yield from these localities is usually good. At the bottom of a valley I notice a skilful piece of drainage—a process too little regarded in this land of springs and running streams.

Reaching the river edge again the road follows its windings as far as the mill-house, and a pleasant ride it is along that smoothly flowing and somewhat majestic stream. The "fabric" stands conveniently at one end of a semi-circular little flat—another nook of alluvial land formed in the course of ages by the river. This flat is particularly fertile. The estate now runs down almost to the sea, an arrangement having recently been effected with Government by which a large portion of the commonage lands of South Barrow are made available by the company to which this property now belongs.

The reader must understand that some years ago Government laid out on either side of the mouth of the

Umkomanzi, a township, divided by the stream into two sections, called respectively North and South Barrow. At that time works were going on for the improvement of the harbour and it was expected that a small seaport town would soon arise here. Several thousands were spent, however, in running out wattled piers near the entrance so as to straighten the channel and direct the outflow of the stream, but the crisis came, the works were stopt, and no apparent effect has been produced. There is no reason to doubt, however, that were a proper trial made the mouth of this river would be easily accessible by small vessels. So far every attempt to establish a shipping trade has been an ultimate failure. The "Natalie," a steamer of 90 tons (now the "Congune"), when she came was found unfitted in a variety of ways for the work she had to do, though on two occasions she came inside. So also with the "Gnu" which was much more unsuited than her predecessor for the service. The fact is that no fair trial with a proper vessel has been made. There are shallow flat-bottomed crafts made for plying along the Australian coast—boats of light draught with sliding keels—centre-boards in other words—which ought to do as well here as they do there. There are steamers of the same class made for use on the West coast. It only needs that men of enterprise and honesty of purpose, personally concerned in advancing the good of the locality should set their hands to the work to make the establishment of a harbour here a fact.

Canonby now consists of 600 acres, of which 500 are under cultivation. Two tons per acre have often been obtained here from particular fields. A good deal of the land, however, is now lying fallow or at rest. When I was last here, in 1861, Captain Maxwell, to whom the estate originally belonged, was just beginning to plant cane on the flat below. Now not only is the whole of that flat a dense mass of cane, but all the hills round have been cleared and planted. The mill-house is a model of orderly arrangement, the whole process being carried on under one open roof. In a corner on a raised gallery stands the vacuum pan, the first erected in the colony. One

never understands mechanical processes from written descriptions and, therefore, I do not attempt any fuller description of the operation than to say that the juice after leaving the clarifiers passes into a large copper sphere, where it is boiled "in vacuo" and comes out in a thick granulated stream ready at once when cool for the centrifugal or turbine. The advantages of the plan are that it is quick, regular, and efficacious, that it prevents waste and undue production of molasses, and that it turns out a fine, large, and clear-grained sugar. Upon this estate three "strikes" are worked off a day, each being equal to about three-quarters of a ton of sugar.

Mr. Lewis Reynolds, the manager, and presiding genius of this estate, has a still also under his supervision, an adjunct which he with others deems to be but the complement of any efficiently worked estate. Stuff which else goes to waste is in this way transformed into a saleable commodity. The still and the manure heap together are the true economisers of all the waste material about a sugar factory. Mr. R. never allows neglect to fall upon the latter. Nor does he fail to trash in the fields. Several of them were being fallowed with dhol. 130 kafirs and 60 coolies are employed, and, owing to Mr. R.'s good name and excellent management there is no lack of the former. A happier and more contented lot of fellows I would not wish to see than the natives employed at Canonby. When their day's work is over they come singing and dancing back, and one evening while I was there they continued dancing as only light-hearted and contented men could do. It is a significant circumstance that despite the extent of the property and the number of hands employed, the magistrate is scarcely ever appealed to.

It is satisfactory to know that an estate possessing so many natural advantages, having so much fine land, being so near a future port of shipment, should be in the hands of capitalists who are able to work it as it deserves to be worked. Pity that the excellent bushland across the river could not be turned to the same account. It is sad to see such breadths of productive

soil lying blank and idle as though they were the sterile desert. Surely it is worth the attention of the Lieut. Governor to promote the cultivation and occupation of these localities. Would that a progressive policy, rather than a passive sufferance of things as they are, was the ruling principle of our Governor's career.

There are other things to see at Canonby, as well as sugar and canefields. There are the loveliest roses and one of the most carefully-tended gardens I have seen in Africa. The culture of the former are a hobby of Mr. Reynolds', and if all hobbies were as successfully pursued nothing could be said against them. To find many of the rarest favourites of the fashionable floriculturist at home blooming luxuriantly under an African sun, and in the midst of scenery so delightful, is an unexpected surprise. Behind the house stretches a rose walk some hundreds of yards in length, and a blaze of pink. Pigeons, of fancy breeds, flutter about everywhere. A large vinery occupies a sheltered position to one side. I must be pardoned for mentioning these domestic surroundings, but it is so refreshing in a new colony to find the home-making propensities of the Englishman manifested in good, practical and pleasant fashion, that the fact cannot be passed over.

The country between Umkomanzi and Umzinto—a distance of about 15 miles—is very varied in its character. The northern portion of it is high, and seemingly more pastoral than agricultural. Towards the shore the ground slopes rapidly and is beautifully wooded. In the valley of the Umpambinyoni, which succeeds that of the Amahlongwa, there are two sugar estates neither of which I was able on this occasion to visit. The first belongs to Mr. C. R. Sinclair, who has for many years been sugar planting here on a moderate scale. The proprietor being absent at the time I reserved my visit until a future occasion, when the new machinery which is about to be erected will be at work. The estate is visible from the main road and occupies a most advantageous position. Near the mouth of the river, Mr. Landers, a typical colonist, has also planted sugar for many years. When I visited him ten years ago the mill was of the rudest description and worked by ox-

power. Now, however, a steam engine is at work, and capital sugar is turned out. Mr. Landers has about 70 acres of cane in. He was one of those many colonists who have been blest by no other capital save their own industry and that of their stalwart families. For like most of his neighbours he is the patriarch of a large household. I was delighted to hear that so much progress had been made on this plantation.

More picturesque landscapes than those that are visible along this road cannot be desired. There is first the valley of the Amahlongwa, a deep narrow gorge, where the river flows noisily over rocks, and under the shade of shaggy precipices. There is the yet more striking gorge of the Umpambinyoni, walled in on one side by cliffs of red sandstone at least 200 feet high, and shut in on the other by a woody mountain almost as steep. Higher up there are the "Gates of the Umpambinyoni," a yet more tremendous gorge, from the summit of whose cliffs the eye sweeps over a bewildering expanse of country varied by uplands, mountains, precipices, ravines, gentle lawns, and shadowy vales, darkened everywhere by the graver tints of bush or forest, and bounded eastward by the sea. Had we time to go coastward, the sylvan beauties of Park Rynie would spread before us. Here nature has done a bit of landscape gardening on her own account, and done it so perfectly as to be past improvement. Soft sward clothes the gentle heights: large out-branching trees stand dotted about; here and there delicious little glades break the surface, or some rounded knoll tempts one to stay and build, and at last the ground sinks down suddenly to the sea in a cliff clothed with the waving plumes of the "wild banana." This is, as it deserves to be, the pleasure ground of the district.

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## CHAPTER XIII.

UMZINTO—CHANGES—MR. BRANDER'S—THE CHURCH—THE  
MILL—UMZINTO LODGE—BEACH—MR. JOYNER'S—MR.  
AIKEN'S—MR. BAZLEY'S.

Before reaching the Umzinto you ride a distance of fifteen miles and see scarce a house. All round you until lost in the clouds spreads a productive and healthful country, fair to the eye, generous under the plough, pleasant to every sense. And yet with difficulty can you discern any token of man's presence in the form either of white man's house or black man's hut. A considerable part of the way you are riding through a mission reserve—the Amahlongwa—consisting of 7500 acres. A deserted mission house near the road, with the wind whistling through its broken windows, and the weeds fast covering its little garden, is the only sign of civilisation on this estate. Here we have one reason why the land about is so unpopulated. For the rest we must find it in the one incontestible but too significant fact that we are in Natal. Where else would you find such a country, bordering the sea, within fifty miles of a port, lying thus bare and blankly under the sun?

As we approach the Umzinto after ten years' absence great changes are manifest. Formerly the mill was the centre of activity and attraction. Now it stands a monument of desolation and failure, with weeds covering the hills that were vocal with rustling cane-leaves, and growing unchecked up to the very door. About a mile and a half on this side of the river, however, one sees many signs of improvement. Here a cluster of homesteads within gunshot of each other gives one the impression of a township, although, I believe, no such settlement exists, even on paper. First we see the thick fruit trees surrounding the residence of Mr. Johnson, the oldest settler in the district. Then we come to our more immediate destination—Belle Mont—the domicile of Mr. Brander, who well deserves the title of Father of the district, considering how many years he

has been connected with it, and how closely he has identified himself by various kindly offices and professional services, with almost every household in the county. He is not only Field Cornet—an office he discharges with most painstaking assiduity—but he is the attorney and man-of-business—*par excellence*—for the whole of Alexandra proper. His house has for many years been the hospitable resort of all comers. Just now its owner has to take refuge in his office, for the old dwelling has been razed, and a spacious two-storied mansion, planned and built mainly for the better accommodation of visitors, is rising in its place. Long may Mr. and Mrs. Brander live and flourish in it. A small plantation of coffee clothes the hill on which the house stands.

Several other houses are scattered about, among others the Parsonage. For, on a hill opposite, stands one of the prettiest and most orthodox little churches in Natal, fitted up internally with a most unusual display of ecclesiastical taste. Illuminated texts adorn the walls, and Mr. Stoequeler's clever brush has emblazoned the windows. The Rev. J. Barker is still the pastor of the district.

Not far from the Church, but a little way off the road, stands another public edifice, the Court house and gaol, sagaciously placed on the top of an open hill, and easily capable of defence. This is a point which should always be observed in the erection of these necessary evils. Mr. W. J. D. Moodie succeeded the veteran Mr. Fynn, as Magistrate of "Lower Unkomanzi," very many years ago. The eye is at once attracted by his noble mansion, situated a few minutes walk from the court house, on another rise. This spacious edifice is built of grey stone, and is one of the most imposing-looking private dwellings in Natal. The convict-labour of the district is said to have largely contributed to its erection. If so, we have a remarkable instance of what this labour is capable when properly directed. In these distant magistracies the routine of official work is necessarily much less severe than it is elsewhere. On the day I happened to be visiting the court house, in company with a fellow-traveller, who

had a case on, the court did not open, or rather the magistrate did not arrive, until some time after twelve. Time must surely be of less value to public officers than to planters, who can ill afford to dance attendance during the busiest hours of the day.

The road in this particular neighbourhood would be all the better for a few repairs—a little drainage and a culvert or two, with perhaps some metal here and there. In rainy weather it is both troublesome and treacherous. It brings you at last to Mr. Knox's substantial stores, where the weary traveller may also crave accommodation without disappointment, if not otherwise provided for. Here is the butchery of the district. The name of these enterprising brothers is quite a household one on the coast, where it is everywhere the badge of good provender for man's corporeal needs.

On all sides rise the hills of the Umzinto Company's celebrated but ill-fated estate. Just before coming to the mill the road passes the spacious stores of Messrs. Black, Baxter & Co., who have done much by their energy and enterprise to develop the trade of the district, and who will, I hope, be more closely bound up than they have been with the fortunes of the neighbourhood, should certain pending negotiations come to a successful issue.

The mill-house stands still, it is true, and in more senses than one. Its engine is motionless, and its interior is silent. I might write a chapter on the vicissitudes of the Umzinto Company were this the place to do it. More than £40,000 has been sunk here, and all there is to show therefor now, are yon weedy hills—the relics of abandoned plantations, yon lines of mulberry trees, this great fabric with its idle machinery, and—9000 acres of the best land in the colony. Seeing, however, that the company got the last item for nothing, it can scarcely be cited *per contra*. In all probability the misfortunes of this company have been due to the want of one central controlling and practical will, directing the affairs of the whole enterprise. There have been too many minds at work, and too much experimentalising. The undertaking was started, moreover, at a time when

sugar culture in Natal was scarcely understood, when much was being learnt and unlearnt. Its operations were suspended when men on other estates, having mastered the knowledge and experience by which alone success is earned, were beginning to work on prosperously.

If this estate should fortunately pass into the right hands it can hardly fail to become one of the most prosperous enterprises in Natal. All planters who have visited concur in pronouncing it the best large tract of sugar land on the coast. It is peculiarly adapted by its hilly conformation for the Central Factory system, and several settlers in the neighbourhood have been deterred from moving elsewhere, and have been induced to struggle on, in the hope that under energetic management the mill may once more be opened, and the surrounding lands made available for occupation and culture by colonial lessees. Were this hope to be realised and the Umzinto Estate again to become a centre of action, Alexandra would flourish as it deserves to do.

Under Mr. Brander's pilotage we now bend our steps coastward once more. Bridle-paths lead us deviously through a delightful country, a constant succession of hill and dale, where dewy flowers brighten everywhere the grass and woods. The air is keen, and the sky is blue; all nature bespeaks herself Natalian. Homesteads are seen at wide intervals. Mr. Wylde Brown's residence, with its beautiful garden, occupies a lovely situation. We look in at an old settler's—Mr. Pigg's, another patriarch, who looks none the worse for twenty years of toil in this sequestered valley. Beyond his house we see the sea, and the Ifafa hills in the distance. So changed now are the aspects of the country that I can scarcely identify the locality as that where I shared ten years ago the hospitality of the late Mr. Arbuthnot. Since then what was bushland is now plantation. Both house and mill, too, have shifted their ground, and now occupy higher and more central positions.

Umzinto Lodge Estate belongs to its creditors, and is now being worked chiefly for the benefit of Messrs. Muirhead & Co. Mr. Bell, its manager, is a thorough

planter, and the estate does honour to his skill and care. 300 acres are under cane, and he expects a crop of 350 tons this year. From 138 acres of cane crushed last season he got a return of 300 tons of sugar. Let this fact stand by itself, without comment, as a rebuke to all croakers. Not that such a yield can be expected always. Circumstances were specially favourable, but the fact shows of what soil and climate and management are capable.

Mr. Bell rode with us over the plantation, and pointed out large tracts of land that were lying at rest. He manures with everything he can lay his hands on, and leaves the wood as far as possible to rot in the ground. The mill is compact and driven by an engine that has been at work for 11 years. We were shown some splendid samples of large grain sugar made by the wetzcl. A superabundance of fuel was observed here. Everything about the place was exceedingly clean and orderly. Some of the ratoons were remarkably fine, while the plant cane showed extraordinary growth. Ten years ago the cane was confined chiefly to the flat, and the hill was not thought so much of; now the latter is almost entirely depended on. If space permitted I could add much more concerning what Mr. Bell told us about his observations and experiences; and, in fact, if a man thinks of becoming a sugar planter the best thing he can do is to avail himself of the hospitality of those who have preceded him in the pursuit. A night's talk with such a man as Mr. Bell, and a ride round his estate, are worth a dozen manuals.

Leaving with regret this beautiful estate, we proceed down a bush-path to the beach and ride dry-shod over the sand bar at the mouth of the river. The stream being thus dammed up forms a lagoon or small lake, lying between protecting bluffs, deep enough to float a boat and large enough to make a row upon it enjoyable. When the water within rises higher than the bar and flows over, the latter is scoured away, and the mouth is open for some little time until the sand silts up again and the same process is repeated. We scramble through some tangled brushwood, frighten a huge guana, scare one or two big bucks, pass Mr. Pennington's,

and after riding through a park-like country, emerge on to more open ground. Scarcely any European residences are visible except Mr. Stone's mission house, standing in magnificent isolation, the centre of another gigantic reserve of 7500 acres, lying waste and desolate with hardly a meadic garden to clothe its nakedness. Another mile or two brings us to Mr. Joyner's.

This is another estate which represents industry more than capital. Mr. Joyner, after plying his calling for some little time in Durban, went to the Isipingo and gradually formed a little sugar plantation there, using a small sugar mill, and working his way by slow but not unsatisfactory steps. Then came the terrible flood which ruined so many, him amongst them, and which sent him back to Durban there to resume his business, until opportunity induced him to come down here, and begin again the tedious work of establishing a plantation. Assisted by his intelligent and industrious sons he has year by year laboured on, until now more than 200 acres of sugar cane stretch round his house, and a steam mill smokes under his windows.

Many years ago the kind of soil around here, being grassy and open, was not deemed suitable for cane, but experience has shown that it is little inferior to land of a more favourite description. Some remarkable instances of large yield are recorded by Mr. Joyner, and I give them not as the basis of a general average, but as proofs of favourable cultivation under what were once deemed unpropitious circumstances. We rode round one field of 12 acres which has given upwards of three tons per acre, and were shown another patch of less than five acres which had yielded 21 tons. This estate is liberally intersected by broad roads which are planted with an acacia fence—a plan which adds greatly to the picturesqueness of a plantation. Nor does Mr. Joyner neglect tree-planting. Although at this time he had a sufficiency of labour he fears that a time of scarcity may be near.

As evening is drawing on we have to hurry off sooner than we wish to do, being due to-night at Nil Desperandum. The road on to the Ifafa traverses a more woody country. Ere long it is skirted by a neat mul-

berry hedge, and coffee fields, beautifully clean and regular, cover the hill-side. We dismount at a cottage embowered in flowers and fruit trees, and are struck by the home-like aspect of the surroundings. This is Maryville, the residence of Mr. Aiken and his sons, of whose hospitality we can but avail ourselves in a flying fashion. Coffee and cotton are the specialities on this charming little estate, and the painstaking way in which both are cultivated would do credit to an agriculturist in the old country. Mr. Aiken, senior, is very partial to flowers, rightly deeming them the "fairest of God's inanimate works," and you find them blooming everywhere, filling the eye with their bright forms and the nose with their sweet scents. The attention paid to flower-gardening throughout this county, and the success attending the pursuit, add a special pleasure to a trip in this direction; and are sure signs that the earlier and severest struggles of the settlers are overpast. The coffee crop last year in this district was almost a failure, but the next or rather the present crop will, it is expected, be more favourable. Considering how much excellent coffee and cotton land there is undisposed of, I am surprised that both these industries should have such small development here.

The road hence soon dips over a ridge and follows a cutting down towards the Ifafa. This river winds through one of the most striking vallies on the coast, the hills skirting its tortuous course being very high and densely wooded. Running swiftly over rocks and pebbles the stream seldom impedes traffic. We pass its shingly bed in the gloaming and ride for a mile or more up a mulberry avenue, overhung with fruit-laden branches, so borne down by luscious berries that one is constrained to pick and eat. And so, fast ascending, we reach the summit of the hill and pull up in front of a roomy house, from whose verandah the hearty tones of an English voice give us genial greeting and kindly welcome.

## CHAPTER XIV.

NIL DESPERANDUM—SMALL MILLS AND SMALL PLANTERS  
—IQUEEFA—BERVERSTOWE—NEW SETTLERS—GOLDEN  
VALLEY.

The hearty English tones proved to proceed from a burly Englishman, one of the good old school, such as we fear our sub-tropical sun is scarce like to breed—Mr. John Bazley, a right hand man of George Stephenson in former years—famed colonially as the fearless denouncer of “square men in round holes,” We are at Nil Desperandum.

Mr. Bazley's function as the exposé of abuses has made his name so familiar to the readers of the *Mercury* that they will probably share my satisfaction at meeting this stalwart correspondent in his own castle and under his own vine and fig tree. I had heard much of certain engineering achievements carried out solely by means of his own labour and that of his family. Of that family I had likewise heard much. Nor was I disappointed in regard to the magnitude of the one, or the patriarchal character of the other. Seven grown-up children, married and unmarried, range themselves regularly round the parental board, and take part in the common work of the estate. Each has a distinct department of labour—in the mill, at the battery, in the workshop, in the fields, among the cattle—thus the whole work of the estate gets vigilantly supervised or efficiently done. I mention this arrangement thus often in these notes inasmuch as it represents a very marked feature in the social condition of our coastlands, and proves that in Natal the Psalmist's ideal of happiness has practical utility as well as truth to commend it.

Though it is summer our host has a blazing fire alit on an open hearth—a custom he keeps up more or less all through the year. “It looks homelike” he says, half apologetically, but the glowing logs seem well in keeping with his hearty nature. During the cheerful hours passed around this hearth I heard many



things, the result of long experience and stubborn struggle, in the battlefield of life, the which it would well repay both my readers and myself, could I reproduce again.

Nil Desperandum is one of the 600 acre farms granted here many years ago, at the time when the 3000 acre grants were so indiscriminately made up-country. Mr. Bazley has formed a sugar estate here in the teeth of great financial difficulties, simply by dint of sheer hard work, and frugal living, alone. The place is beautifully situated. The plantation covers the best part of a rounded hill, almost insulated by the river which twists about so as to form a knot, only prevented by a narrow tongue of highland from being a perfect circle. Beyond the river and on all sides rise richly-wooded hills, and at the back of the house a short walk through cane-fields brings you to the edge of a tall cliff, overlooking the river, whose stony bed winds at your feet amongst the tall precipices that here and there flank it. Surely in few countries does industry so expend itself under picturesque conditions as here.

On a plantation which boasts labour rather than capital you do not look for any wide area of cultivated ground. There are 47 acres of cane to crush this season, 16 of which are ratoons. 70 tons had already been manufactured and 30 more were confidently expected. Being anxious to collect statistics of yield I ascertained from Mr. Bazley that in one field of 12 acres, 8 acres were totally killed off by frost; the remaining four were not touched. From this field 20 tons of sugar were obtained, being an average of about 30 cwt. per acre, including the yield obtained from the frosted cane. Another field of 14 acres of plant cane gave 38 tons 10 cwt. of sugar. Mr. Bazley always ploughs round, rather than up or over, the hill, as he gets a bigger furrow, and eases the cattle thereby. He does not believe particularly in fine cultivation or cross-ploughing. Weeds he considers fallow a land as well as anything, and are nature's restorers of exhausted soil. If you loosen the ground too much around the plant it blows down, and he believes the loss from this cause to be greater than many imagine. Good tops are an essential to begin with.

Mr. Bazley is a strong advocate of sugar planting as a resource for poor men—provided they can lease a plot of good land within a reasonable distance of a mill. Upon this place there lives a man, shoemaker by trade, who cultivated 6 acres of his landlord's land with his own labour and that of three kafirs and a coolie. The sugar yielded by the cane thus grown, when crushed at the mill here, left £38 to the good after all expenses had been paid. He has another tenant who has 25 acres ploughed, and who will get the tops he requires to plant from Mr. Bazley—who in his day had to pay £5 for 2000 tops.

He, by the way, strongly urges the importance of cutting the canes low, and as close to the ground as possible, as the juice in the lower portion of the cane is much more productive than that in the upper, and as the ratoons are much stronger and finer than where a stump is left. This is but one of the many observations made by Mr. Bazley, who truly says that if you follow nature's guidance you can't go far wrong, for "Earth teaches her children lessons that are not wholly learnt in a lifetime."

One is less interested in agricultural operations at Nil Desperandum than in its exhibitions of mechanical ingenuity and enterprise. Mr. Bazley does not approve of steam being employed when water is at hand. Being possessed of a freely running stream he determined to make use of it as the motive power of his mill. Owing to the conformation of the ground it was not easy to do this without considerable contrivance and trouble. His own keen intelligence, however, soon planned out the way to utilise this power, and his own labour, with that of his sons, lost no time in carrying those plans into effect. His mill is driven by a waterwheel of 12 horse power. The mill race is more than half a mile in length, and the water below escapes through a tunnel about seventy yards in length, dug out of solid rock, and high enough for a man to pass through. Another mill is being erected and another somewhat smaller tunnel has been bored at a point lower down the stream, which here tumbles over huge rocks and boulders, some of which, incredible as it seemed, are,

in times of flood, carried long distances by the force of the raging stream.

Notwithstanding the excellence of the water power, however, a steam engine of six horse power has to be employed for driving the centrifugals; a necessity which might, perhaps, now be avoided by the use of the American speed-jack or multiplier of power. Another drawback connected with water power is that the juice must be pumped or lifted up by a separate process before it reaches the clarifiers. In this case the juice from the rollers falls into a well from which it is lifted by a dipper hauled to the upper floor by means of a winch worked by two kafirs. Close to the mill is a maize kiln and silo, heated by means of a comparatively small furnace.

Higher up the hill we reach the workshop, where Mr. James Bazley proves himself to be a cunning artificer in every material, and where he turns a table pedestal, or forges a bowie knife, with equal aptitude and artistic skill. Here, too, I saw the diminutive "Samson" with its teatray-like evaporator, of which it is needless now to say more than that the successful trial of these American productions, under decidedly unfavourable circumstances, renders sugar-planting practicable as a pursuit, by men of almost no capital whatever.

After taking a hearty leave of our host and his family we start on a trip across country, by a hilly bridlepath, to visit the valley of the Iqueefa where some new settlers have, during the last two years, located themselves. The road goes straight over the hills, and at last reaches a high and breezy elevation, from which a splendid landscape is visible. The valley of the Iqueefa lies at our feet. The high land about the Untwalumi, and the bold square outline of Table mountain more particularly, stand out to the right; the river winds below. The whole scene is full of picturesque beauty. When riding along the ridge a fierce wind nearly blows us off our horses, but the air at this height is so keen and fresh that one pushes on vigorously, through the tall weeds and tangled herbage, now diving into the dark depths of woody

gorges; now creeping along the edge of a dizzy slope; now startling the clamorous dogs infesting, as usual, some native kraal, until the hill-top narrows, the ground falls off sharply on either side and a barrier stops the way. Restoring and passing this we are sensible of being near some civilised abode. The path is well worn; a well-groomed horse grazes at large in a fenced meadow. A little water-course crosses our path on its way from a bushy valley hard-bye, to where the roof of a house appears in front. Tired and cold we hurry on to the hospitable welcome that awaits us at Beeverstowe—the charming residence of Messrs. T. and J. Kirkman.

Our roadless track seems to have led us to Paradise, for to wet and weary men an English home, and an English greeting, amidst scenes as lovely as the eye could wish to rest on, is about as close a realisation of that "idea" as our materialistic beings can understand. And, in truth, to the eye of a stranger the situation and surroundings of Beeverstowe seem to fall little short of perfection. It crowns the brow—but not the highest point—of a spur or shoulder projecting from the head of a valley through which an ever-flowing stream winds amidst bush and herbage. The valley stretches below; high bushy hills shut it in on either side; but in front it spreads out, and is broken by knolls and heights, until the view is closed by the level sweep of the uplands.

Other homesteads may be seen crowning hills of lower attitude, thus humanising the prospect. Behind the house, however, may be seen the gem of the valley, where the Iqneefa falls over a cliff of white rock to a depth of, probably, two hundred feet, the gleam of the water contrasting beautifully with the dark foliage of the trees and shrubs that line the gorge above, and that cling to the rocks down which it tumbles.

This "happy valley," for such in sooth it seems as scanned from Beeverstowe, is one of the later settlements of the colony. Government having land to grant here, one after another about half a dozen settlers have chosen their allotments in, and transformed the aspect of, this sequestered but most charming vale. As no

settler has been here longer than three years, agricultural operations are not far advanced, but the progress made in the course of this period—barely more than two years—both here and at Hawksworth, is very marked. In both cases greater attention has been shown to the domestic surroundings of the homestead than is often exhibited, and I could not but feel how much better is the lot of immigrants to this colony in the year 1870 than it was in the year 1850.

Although Mr. Kirkman's residence crowns the summit of a lofty knoll his acquaintance with civil engineering has enabled him to bring to his door an ever-running stream of pure water. This invaluable adjunct is brought by a water course cut out of the hill side from a spring distant at least half a mile at the head of a bushy gorge behind the house. The labour expended is well rewarded by the result. While walking along the edge of this stream we skirt the young coffee plantation, which, together with corn and cotton, is to represent the industry of the place. There seems no reason to doubt why any one of the three e's should succeed here. Below in a deep valley the little river has been already dammed up, and the foundations sunk for the water-mill that is to be at once erected. The proprietors let no grass grow under their feet, and the energy of their operations, directed as it is by intelligence and education, augurs well for the future. I would that a vigorous colonising policy could plant innumerable Beeverstoves, adorned with like domestic charms and graces, throughout the wide spaces of our unpeopled country.

Hawksworth adjoins Beeverstowe, and its house crowns a lower knoll. This also in its way is a typical place, being an evidence of what can be accomplished by the energy and industry of three intelligent English youths, bringing with them the will to work, and the capacity to direct their efforts. Nearly three years ago the Messrs. Hawksworth arrived. At that time no settlers occupied the valley, and their prospects were damped rather than cheered by the prognostics of older colonists. Guided and helped, however, by Mr. Brander and other friendly neighbours, these lads, for they were

little more, set manfully to work, built a house, enclosed land, and formed what is now a comfortable homestead, where two years later they were able to receive their father. Flowering plants bloom in front of the house. A brick kraal and cattle shed has been built in the valley. In a well-fitted workshed our host is found experimenting on the different kinds of native wood with which the bush abounds. Fruit trees of vigorous growth flourish behind. Below, land is being ploughed and planted with corn and cotton. Here, as throughout the valley, we heard doubts expressed as to the sufficiency and permanency of the native labour supply. If success, indeed, is to be commanded by steady and persevering application then Hawksworth ought to flourish.

On a lower slope of the hill opposite, overshadowed by the shaggy height, Mr. Davey, another young settler, is building a house, and laying out his fields. Were it not for his professional services, the district now would be devoid of any local medical aid. We learnt here that tooth-drawing is in great favour amongst the natives, whose stoical indifference to surgical pain is one of the peculiarities of their condition.

A mile or two further on, along a winding road, where the unwonted sight is seen of a roadside seat in alcoves cut out of the bush, stands Mr. W. Arbuthnot's residence. Ten years ago it was my good fortune to be hospitably entertained by this gentleman's late father, at his sugar estate near the sea. Since the subsequent death of Mr. Arbuthnot, sen., the family have removed to this spot, where a household of patriarchal dimensions gathers round a common board. Mr. A. grows maize chiefly with a little coffee. A spacious garden, skirted by a long vinery, stretches in front of the house. One is strangely reminded of the rapid growth of things in a young colony, by the reflection that only ten years ago this neighbourhood was wholly unpeopled. Mr. W. Brown was the first settler at Iquefa. His place—which was then in its infancy—Woodhouse Lea, is now in charge of Mr. Palmer. The largest coffee plantation in the district may be seen here. 45 acres of coffee trees

in bearing are under cultivation and look exceedingly well.

Before passing northward once more let us glance at the country we are now turning our backs on. It is broken and hilly. Round the sources of the Ifafa the land rises to a great elevation, and magnificent prospects are obtained. Further yet, over the Umtwalumi, where Mr. Wilder's American Mission Station flourishes in the valley, the frowning crags of Table Mountain boldly front the east. This is the most imposing mountain on our whole coastlands. Nearer, however, about six miles from where we stand, another new settlement has lately been formed, on the higher ground near the Ifafa. Here, amidst charming scenery, is the Umgibelo. I reserve a visit to this interesting locality until another time when the weather may be more propitious, and when the settlers there shall have been a longer time at work. Mr. Armstrong, C.E., whose engineering experience is often found of practical service in the district, is probably the earliest of these new colonists. Messrs. Fitzgerald, Wallace, Woodward, and Gordon, are his principal neighbours.

From this point the country spreads in wider and grassier sweeps. Just in front an open valley winds away amongst the hills. This is Golden Valley, and from the bed of that little stream all the gold that has ever been found in Natal was obtained by dint of patient and laborious washing. It is estimated that about one hundred diggers have worked here during the last two years. About twenty ounces of gold, washed out of the dirt beneath the bed of the stream, was the product of their toil. Such a return was, of course, unremunerative. Where these particles of the precious metal came from has yet to be determined. No auriferous reef has so far been discovered, although quartz outcroppings abound. It is the natural belief of most persons acquainted with the subject that a gold-bearing reef exists somewhere, but when or where it will be found—who can tell?

Here must end the descriptive portion of these Southern notes. Beyond the Ifafa the mission stations of Umtwalumi and Umzumbe are the only settlements

of importance. Ten years ago cotton was grown and sugar cane cultivated in this direction, but both enterprises have been abandoned. I am glad to hear, however, that the natives at Mr. Wilder's station intend to grow sugar-cane largely, and to crush it by means of the small American mills. I am also glad to bear testimony to the practical zeal with which Mr. Wilder promotes the industrial improvement, as well as the moral elevation of the natives.

Beyond the Umzinkulu we come to the County of Alfred, where Mr. H. C. Shepstone rules as magistrate, but beyond a few trading stations, there is no European enterprise requiring notice further south.

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## DIVISION OF DURBAN.

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### CHAPTER XV.

#### FROM DURBAN TO PINETOWN.

THE MID-COASTLANDS — OVERPORT HOUSE — SYDENHAM —  
CLARE SUGAR ESTATE — CATO MANOR — WESTVILLE —  
NEW GERMANY — PINETOWN.

Let us now start forth on the last of these coastland tours; the last that is until the advances of industry, and the increase of population, shall necessitate another visitation.

These Notes have hitherto been confined to the Northern and Southern coastlands. There is, however, a belt of coast country which can be said to belong to neither one nor the other, being that portion of Durban County lying between the Umgeni and the Umbilo, and immediately behind the townlands of Durban. Though this district comes last in the order of description, it is by no means least in importance.

The road which separates the borough from the



county, following the wavy ridge of the Berea, leads the traveller near its northern extremity to a gate with a gabled lodge near it, and an appearance of cultivated ground beyond, very suggestive altogether of a country residence in some hilly district of old England. Passing this road and keeping to a broad carriage-way, skirted by a coffee plantation on one side and by a paddock on the other, we come to a spacious and elegant one-storied dwelling-house, with an irregular roof broken by many gables, flanked by a castellated tower, and surrounded by a broad terrace. This is Overport House, the residence of our old and well-known fellow-townsmen, Mr. William Hartley, banker.

Let us at once proceed to the mill-house, which is situated beyond the park railings. Here there is much to see and learn. Looking around we see seventy acres of coffee, more or less in a bearing condition, and in due course to be made up to one hundred acres. It mostly stretches down the western slopes of the hill, and has a northerly aspect. Mr. Hartley characterises the whole of the commanding knoll upon which his house is built, and up which his plantation extends, as a huge ant-heap, and in truth the luxuriant and heavily-weighted aspect of some of his trees betoken a sort of special fertility.

The mill works occupy a brick building which forms one end of a vast shed, roofed in with iron. From this roof vast stores of water are collected in an open circular tank twelve feet deep, from which the boiler is fed. Such a reservoir would be a nursery of mosquitoes were it not for the imported fish that abide there. In the open space beneath the upper floor of the shed are stabled the cattle and the horses of the establishment, fed upon home-grown mealies which have been cooked with waste steam. Into this enclosure is carted the parchment and other *débris* of the mill, and the manure thus created is removed fortnightly into a series of capacious tanks, where the pulp is also carefully preserved, the whole being deodorized and left to rot until such time as it may be wanted. It seemed to me that this system, as carried out here, resulted in a great economy of waste material, and in a remarkable absence of offensive

odours. The manure alone contributed by the cows covers the cost of their keep.

Passing upstairs, we came at once to the curing-house. At one side is a small apartment with a floor of perforated tiles, warmed from below, which acts most efficiently as a kiln. The parchment coffee dried here is at once poured into the huller. This is a compact, boxed-in arrangement, resembling, in shape, the ordinary winnowing machine. My readers are mostly aware that hulling—or removing the parchment-covering of the bean—is done by means of two wheels revolving round a narrow trough—a slow and awkward process—while the winnowing is usually the work of a blowing machine. Here the whole operation was seen being done by one machine, driven by a 4-horse engine below, at the rate of two tons per day. Although the berries seemed to pour out as fast as they went in, they came out in a perfect condition, with but little silver-skin left upon them—singularly little when it was considered that the beans were not in a dry state.

Seventeen tons were reaped last year, and a like crop will be yielded this year, ten tons being already gathered.

It must not be omitted that the brick building and all its appliances, were erected at a cost of £150. This is exclusive of the shed. Few men, however, possess Mr. Hartley's aptitude for economical but effective arrangement.

Overport House is, perhaps, the most complete and elaborately finished private residence in the colony. Its two reception rooms are lined with polished cedar, panelled and beaded with gold; and lighted by tinted glass ceilings, admitting a soft and mellow light. In the centre of the house is a conservatory with a fountain playing under a glass dome. From this on one side opens out a hall fitted up as a billiard room, while at the further end it terminates in a gothic hall, lit by a large and beautifully painted window, which once adorned an ancient manor house in England. Here stands a magnificent harmonium. All round the house stretch broad terraces adorned with vases of flowering plants, and in front plays a fountain, fed from water

tanks enclosed in an ornamental tower. Ascending by a winding stair to the summit of the hall-tower, a magnificent view, probably the finest on the Berea, is obtained. From this point Durban wears a larger aspect than from more southerly points. Within this wide-spreading prospect, the eye seems to rest upon every charm that a landscape can possess, except snowy mountains. There is the lakelike bay with its islands, the darkly wooded hills beyond; the foamy ocean, bluer almost than the skies above it; the jungly hills in the foreground. Behind, the Umgeni is seen winding amidst cane-fields, and the hills roll onward in the sunhaze to the west, until they cease with the precipices of the Inanda. As my companion said, Captain Lindley's eye must have been terribly jaundiced if he could see naught but an "ugly puddle," and no beauty of vegetation or of scenery, in such a view as this.

About a mile beyond Overport the road winds pleasantly amongst a few cottages and houses, which collectively bear the name of Sydenham. This high and healthful locality—raised as it is above the damps of lower levels—is a favourite place of suburban residence. Mr. Louch is one of the longest residents here, and has done much for the social and intellectual weal of the locality. To his efforts, ably seconded by many other residents, the erection of The Hall, a building devoted, with Catholic impartiality, to the religious and mental service of the neighbourhood, is chiefly due. There, lectures and other entertainments are often held, and there divers Christian churches dispense the offices of religion.

In the vicinity of this village some of our oldest and most persevering settlers still abide. The names of Spearman, Sparks, Kinsman, and Harvey, are all associated with this locality. Below the hills spreads the "Springfield flat," which shares, with Compensation and Isipingo, the honour of being one of the earliest fields of sugar enterprise in the colony. The old mill house, long abandoned, still stands, and sugar cane still grows upon the alluvial plain. Strange vicissitudes has this patch of river-deposit seen. Oats and cane; flood; oats and cane; are symbols of its history. A

strangely varied record of ups and downs, of successes and of struggles, such as is the history of Natal as a whole.

Passing on we come at last to Clare Estate—the property of one of our very oldest families—that of Clarence—whose store near the spreading fig tree, hard by the flagstaff of the present North German Consulate, will be pleasantly remembered by all colonists of twenty years' experience. Now we find—as elsewhere—father and sons all working ably together in the management of one of our largest plantations. 600 acres of cane spread around. When operations first began the level fields near the river were chiefly cultivated, but later experience, justifying the cultivation of the hills, has led to the covering with canes of the slopes that shut in the valley.

In the absence of Mr. Clarence and his elder son George, I took a rapid ride round the estate under the guidance of Mr. Ralph Clarence, jun. The plantation forms such a mixture of hill and dale that a cursory glance does not give one a fair idea of its extent. Both near the river and on the hills the growth of the cane was very satisfactory. Two tons per acre are quite an average yield here from fields of considerable size, and larger yields have been obtained from special blocks, but of these I say nothing. The land at the bottom being alluvial, and, therefore, specially rich, manuring has not yet been attempted on any large scale. Fields were shown me still ratooning, that had been planted five and six years ago, and that still bore cane of excellent promise.

Here, as elsewhere, the labour difficulty presses. There is not half the labour available for the estate that would be employed could it be found. Scarcely any Natal kafirs were at work, although as a rule the Messrs. Clarence are popular masters amongst our natives. "Basutos" and coolies do the work of the plantation. The mill is situated in a wide open space, and though the mill has been fully eleven years in operation it does its work well. Like most other Natal plantations, however, the acreage has outgrown the manufacturing power of the machinery. Common

hempen sacks are used for packing sugar, instead of the double vacoa and gunny sacks ordinarily employed. It is needless to say that at a mill managed by the gentleman who brought over "the secret" from Mauritius, the quality of the sugar produced is excellent. There is no still on this estate, but the skimmings are boiled up again in a small battery which has proved one of the most profitable adjuncts to the mill.

If we now return through Sydenham, and strike into the main road from thence to town, we shall keep along the back of the Berca hill until the road to Maritzburg is reached. That is crossed; we pass some brick kilns, and still ride along the same valley until the mill house at Cato Manor brings us to a stand. As the name signifies, this plantation is connected with the pioneer settler of Durban, the man who suffered imprisonment for his position as a British subject, during the Dutch occupation, and who was rewarded for his fidelity by the grant of this splendid farm. No man has been so continuously bound up with the history of Natal as Mr. G. C. Cato, or has taken a more active part in its commercial matters. It is pleasant to find him so well represented here by his son Mr. G. J. Cato, who has in the course of eleven or twelve years formed around him a plantation of four hundred acres.

The chief interest of this estate is centred in the mill, where a splendid high-pressure engine, made by Messrs. M'Onie, is at work. It is a singular fact that no lime is used in the manufacture of sugar here, and yet a most admirable quality is produced. The boiler also possesses the charm of novelty, being one of Howard's compact new safety boilers. From what I saw and heard here, I cannot but feel that these boilers must in time be generally adopted. As the steam is generated in tubes—instead of the fire being thus diffused, there is not only great economy of fuel effected by this system, but there is perfect safety from accident. The only damage which an explosion in one of the tubes could do would be that it would put the fire out. The system of conical pans for the reception of sugar from the coolers has also been in use here, drainage being left to do what the centrifugals usually

do. The solid blocks of brown sugar thus produced meet with a certain demand in the Cape colony, but the process can scarcely compete with the concretor or vacuum pan sugars, and is not generally made use of.

Here, too, the great want is labour, and the fields had already suffered through the insufficiency of hands.

There is a marked prevalence of iron in the soil hereabout, and traces of former native workings show that the metal was smelted here in old days. Mr. G. J. Cato, who is a theoretical as well as practical agriculturist, makes due allowance for this peculiarity. I may, perhaps, now be permitted to say, as this is the last sugar estate in the colony we shall have to visit, that in no industry so much as in sugar culture is it requisite to study the chemistry of the soil, and of the plant. Natal, moreover, is an extraordinarily patchy land, and the conditions of estates are widely various. Within the circle of a mill or two you will, in some places, have chocolate soil, dark loam, and sand. This diversity of character, combined with variations of climate, require all the attention and care that observation and experience can alike supply.

Returning to the Maritzburg road, the great highway of the colony, we continue riding through Cato's Manor, passing one or two small farms on the way—round one of which cotton is blowing—a neat little hostelry at Rooi Koppies—until we reach Westville—at present represented only by Mr. Carpenter's well kept roadside inn. Here a notification of "tea gardens," and sundry rustie seats under trees, remind one of suburban retreats in the old country. Around, Mr. Vanderplank has lately laid out a township, which, as population grows in Durban, will probably be a favourite place of residence. Behind, on a near hill side, is seen the estate latterly occupied by Mr. H. Brooks, in former times the abode of Mr. Brooker, and, I believe, the site of the first cotton ever grown in, and exported from Natal. This was twenty-three years ago; and it says little for Natalian enterprise, or rather it says much concerning Natalian struggles, that cotton should still remain one of our minor exports.

From this point we leave the main road, dive into the depths of the Palmiet ravine, and emerging, traverse New Germany. This is one of the most interesting localities in Natal. Here, in 1848, came a party of Hanoverian weavers, and other German emigrants of the poorest class. They were brought out under the auspices of Mr. Bergtheil, planted on this large 6000 acre farm, and here they have lived and laboured ever since. No colonists have worked harder, or led more frugal lives than these people. The idea, at first, was to grow cotton, but that industry was abandoned, because when Byrne's emigration in 1849-50-51 set in, landing many thousands of food-consuming people at Durban, the sea port, only twelve miles off, a large demand at once arose for sweet potatoes and forage. For some years the Germans made a living—scanty it might be, but yet sufficient for their wants—out of the growth of these commodities. Their own home-made carts took the produce of their own farms weekly into town, where their wives and daughters mostly disposed of it. Then came the lungsickness, and the failure of crops, which reduced them to great straits. The farm they occupy is, perhaps, one of the least fertile on the coast. Its surface is park-like, well wooded and picturesque, but the soil itself is sandy and poor. Successive cropping did not tend to improve its fertility, and for some years poor crops, and a bad market, combined to reduce the Germans to severe straits. They were planted in a wrong locality for a settlement of their character. The kind of farming they most naturally took to, does better in the midland or upper districts than on the coast. There, too, dairy and cattle farming can be more successfully pursued, and there is little doubt that had these Hanoverians been located about York or Richmond, or even further inland, they would have formed a most flourishing community. As it is, they have immensely bettered their position. Instead of the hard, scraping lives of badly paid mechanics in Europe, they have secured the independent position of freehold farmers in a healthy climate, and in a country where food is abundant. They have their little farms in place of their town garrets. Their

frugal habits enable them to live on the produce of their own soil. Some of them have saved money. One man has accumulated £1500. Others have built roomy and comfortable brick houses, and surrounded themselves with comforts such as they never could have hoped to realize at home. I went into one substantial dwelling, recently erected at a cost of £300, where the papered walls, cement floors, and gaily painted wood-work, were all that a man of moderate desires could wish for his habitation. I saw other cottages, where the fruit trees, the flowery garden, the poultry pecking around, and the tented wagon drawn up by the house-side, bespoke progress and contentment. If these worthy people have thriven, it is due entirely to their own patient industry, to their steady and laborious habits of work—to their frugal and simple mode of life. Their history, were it written, would be an epitome of the history of Natal—a record of toil and trouble, of ups and downs, of success and disappointment. No child's play, or life of ease by any means; but just such a chapter of vicissitudes as represents in brief the progress of Anglo Saxon colonization.

New Germany is chiefly distinguished by its extraordinary healthfulness, of which the following vital statistics are sufficient proof, and as they will stand for most other country districts in this colony, they are well worthy of insertion here:—

The settlers arrived in 1848. They then numbered 183 souls. A good number left, and settled at New Hanover, York, and other parts, and had they remained the births and deaths would have been greater in proportion. The births have been 259; the deaths 61, of whom 39 were children and 22 adults. Among the causes of death were the following:—Attack of tiger, 1; lightning, 2; fire, 2; drowning, 2; poison, 1; murder, 1; suicide, 2; wagon accident, 2; snake bite, 1—so that only 47 out of the 61 died from natural causes, and this is the death-roll for twenty-three years, including, be it marked, many still-born children.

But a more healthful place even is the adjoining township of Pinetown, which we now arrive at, lying in a free and airy basin between Cowie's and Field's



Hills. The main road to Maritzburg runs right through its centre; the valley of the Umhlatuzan bounds it to the southward. The place was laid out in 1850, and owed its existence to the enterprise of Mr. A. K. Murray, a name which still greets the stranger first as he enters Pinetown from the coast. I remember this locality in April, 1850, when only one solitary farmhouse broke the waste. At that time a road of awful steepness, passing, crow-like, right over the summit and right down the steep face of the hill, gave access to the farm. Now the scene is dotted over with homesteads and gardens, and one cannot help remarking how much man can do by tree-planting to beautify and garnish a landscape. The groves of tall, poplar-like gum trees, the drooping bamboos, the plumed bananas, the fragrant syringas, the golden-sphered oranges, give a varied charm to the country which it never had before.

Pinetown bears the reputation of having a healthful climate but a poverty-stricken soil. The latter looks sandy and seems poor. It bears trees and shrubs luxuriantly; however, and must be more fruitful than it looks. Capt. Harford has grown tobacco abundantly upon it, while bamboos—an exhausting crop, one would say—flourish everywhere. The most characteristic farm in this neighbourhood is Mr. P. Davidson's, lying towards the Umhlatuzan. The groves of orange, banana, and other fruit trees here are a "perfect picture." Long lines of bamboos stretch on all sides. Fields of forage and potatoes spread around, and the coffee shrubs bear well. As the entire work of one man's industry, unaided by capital, this farm is a signal instance of what can be done by hard work, intelligent effort, and perseverance.

A place so frequented by visitors as Pinetown is necessarily enjoys certain social privileges not possessed by more obscure country districts. It has three churches—at least three hotels—any number of private boarding houses; a minister of the Presbyterian Church and two representing the rival sections of the Anglican communion respectively. It has a doctor, a post office, a constable, and several stores. It has a butchery, a bakery, a shoemaker, one or two smithies, and a public school. It has also a library. Two omni-

busses connect it both with Maritzburg and Durban. Until the other day the member for the county resided there. Altogether Pinetown is better endowed than most colonial villages with those institutions which may be regarded as the badges of civilisation. Its fine clear air makes it a favourite resort for debilitated Durbanites, who find ample accommodation for their families in one or other of these many hostels, of which Murray's Hotel is the recognised chief. I scarcely like to say how few deaths there have been here during twenty years, lest my home readers should disbelieve me.

Our coastland wanderings are now over. From the top of Field's Hill you pass into a different region. Grassy and treeless downs roll inland as far as the eye can see. From Cowie's Hill we sweep at a glance over the greater part of our cultivated coastlands—the southern portion of Victoria, the northern district of Durban county, the Bluff and the Isipingo. Twenty years ago when one's eye swept this prospect not a house was to be seen, and the smoke of kraal-fires was the only vestige of man's presence. Now the bright green of cane fields glows everywhere, while along the Victorian, Berea and Wentworth slopes, darker rectangular patches mark the sites of coffee plantations. Along the ridge of the Berea gardens and houses stretch continuously. In the foreground homesteads may be detected in all directions. The white shaft of the lighthouse crowns the extremity of the Bluff, and a dark line across the river indicates the Umgeni bridge. Marks of industry and progress all of them, suggesting to us thoughts of yet more vigorous advancement hereafter. For these are but signs after all of what may be done by a larger European population.

## CHAPTER XVI.

## CONCLUDING REMARKS.

From the foregoing chapters it will have been seen that the coastlands lying south of Durban, though more extensive than those to the northward, are cultivated and populated to a much less extent. Victoria county covers an area of 870 square miles, and Durban county, including Alexandra, of 1734 square miles. Although, however, the last is more than twice as large as the former, the amount of cultivation is not more than one-third what it is north of the Umgeni,—tho the white population may be set down as equal.

This disparity naturally suggests an enquiry into its causes. These are not far to find. The fault by no means lies with the settlers. As regards energy, industry, and intelligence, they are equal to any other section of their fellow-colonists. They number amongst them several of the pioneers of tropical agriculture in Natal. The first cotton grown in any quantity here was produced at Brooker's. The first steam mill was erected at Isipingo by Mr. Jeffels. The first coast township outside Durban was formed at Pinetown. The first European immigrants' settlement was that at New Germany. If Durban county has not made equal progress with Victoria county it is from no lack of perseverance on the part of its residents.

The reason has, I think, indirectly been made apparent in these notes. Where the land has been accessible to European enterprise there it has been occupied and cultivated. Ward No. 1, or the tract lying between Durban and Pinetown, bordered by the Umgeni and Umlazi rivers respectively, is as thickly peopled as any other part of the colony. No district is more continuously cultivated than the Isipingo. But with a few exceptions the rest of the county is locked up in native locations, mission and college reserves, and farms held by large non-resident proprietors. From the Isipongondwe to the Umkomazi, a distance of 24 miles,

as we have seen, the road traverses nothing but reserves. It is true that a certain number of natives occupy this tract of about 250,000 acres, but the vestiges of their presence are not visible. Here and there a mealie garden may be seen amongst the bush, but there is no cultivation going on commensurate with the area of the ground or the character of its capabilities. Where this land is not native location it is reserved for college or mission purposes; and the effect, so far, has been equally the same,—to keep it wild and waste, free from the improving operations of European effort and European industry.

The following is a list of the reserves between Durban and the Umzinkulu, in their order of rotation :—

	acres
Amanzimtote Mission . . . . .	8619
Umnini's location . . . . .	7977
College reserve, Illovo . . . . .	3000
Ifumi Mission . . . . .	8122
Amahlongwa Mission . . . . .	7464
Ifafa „ . . . . .	7500
Umtwalumi „ . . . . .	13,407
Umzumbe „ . . . . .	8000
College reserve, Iqueefa . . . . .	3000
Umlasi Mission, say . . . . .	4000
	71,089

Thus we have close upon 64,000 acres of the best land on the coast, lying mostly close to the main road, devoted to mission or educational operations. The question naturally arises—how far do these operations justify this sacrifice? For such it is. This interval of barbarised country has been a barrier to the industrial advancement of the whole district. It has compelled settlers to go long distances from port, across an often impassable river, and to cut themselves off from those facilities of contact with the centres of commerce and population which are so essential to the progress of communities. Had the Victorian settlers been relegated to the other side of the Tongaat, and the intervening district been given up to the natives, that county would

have been no further advanced than Alexandra is now.

It is clear now that Government committed serious mistakes, first, in locating natives in such a position, second, in setting aside such vast reserves for future—rather than present—requirements, and third, in locking up so much useful land in college endowments, before they were prepared to establish those institutions, and by turning these lands to account, to derive a revenue from them.

With respect to the mission stations carried on through so many years by the zealous and faithful missionaries of the American Board, no right-minded man would wish to dispute their claim to consideration, or to deprive them of aught that may be needful for their uttermost requirements. At Amanzimtote, the Ifumi, and the Umtwalumi, agricultural operations to some extent are going on, and at the first the very interesting spectacle of a sugar mill, owned and worked by natives, is to be seen. Were that a common experience no one could reasonably complain, however much poor Englishmen might envy the happier lot of their coloured neighbours, so kindly cared for by a paternal government and distant philanthropists. It is probably no fault of the missionaries that their system of treatment has not borne more abundantly practical fruit, and that reserves which could only be justified on industrial grounds, have so far added but little to the industrial wealth of the community. Twenty years have now elapsed since most of these stations were established, and it may fairly be asked—have these reserves fulfilled the purposes for which they were created? I do not speak of the 500 acre grants made to each station. No one would wish to dispute the validity of those. But the circumstances of the colony not only warrant, but require, a calm, impartial, and considerate enquiry into the question I have ventured to submit.

It must be remembered that the natives are gradually leaving the southern coastlands. Slight as the European occupation of these districts has been it is enough to give the kafir a sense of being cramped and

crowded-up,—to give him longings for wider pasture lands and greater elbow-room. As missions to the heathen are established simply and solely for the benefit of the natives, it may well be asked whether it be not the duty of the missionaries to follow those natives in their migrations, and as their tendency is undoubtedly to move onwards towards the frontiers of the colony, ought not the missionaries, in pursuance of their self-denying objects, voluntarily to ask for an exchange of land, from districts where the natives are getting scarce, and the purposes of their ministrations are becoming unattainable, to districts where the heathens yet congregate in abundance, and where—to use their own simile—the harvest is yet to be gathered in.

But this question is one for judicial enquiry, rather than political discussion. It cannot be considered too closely or dealt with too tenderly. It is preeminently the subject for a commission, composed both of missionaries and laymen, who would enquire into and report upon it, with equal reference to the great work of moral improvement among the natives, and to the no less important consideration of the general good.

The appropriation of the location lands to industrial purposes is, I venture to hope, a less difficult question to deal with. There is every reason to believe that the natives living in this county would readily accept a proposal to exchange their lands here, for a larger area of more pastoral country in outlying districts. And I feel confident if this matter is gently and patiently taken in hand that ere long we may see plantations and homesteads multiplying between the Isipingo and the Umkomanzi.

Another great want the district has, namely, a bridge over the Umkomanzi. This deep, broad, and rapid stream, which takes its source in the Drakensberg, offers a great hindrance to traffic. Produce-laden wagons have constantly to be unloaded, and the exposure of an article like sugar to the risk of being wetted, is a great drawback, to say nothing of the delays and extra expense entailed. There is no reason to doubt that the traffic would provide a revenue more than sufficient to

cover the whole cost of a bridge, and it is to be hoped that Government will place no obstacles in the way of any proposal to meet this pressing requirement.

If the district is to make any progress at all, many years cannot elapse before the facilities afforded by the river Umkomanzi, for the shipment of produce, are made practically available. Both here and at the Umzinkulu, fifty miles further south, we find two rivers accessible to vessels of small tonnage. A comparatively small expenditure would, it is estimated, suffice to make harbours at both points, deep enough for vessels drawing six or seven feet of water.

## CHAPTER XVII.

### STATISTICAL SUMMARY.

At the end of 1869, the acreage of crops reaped throughout the Coastlands of Natal was thus distributed:—Sugar Cane, 5757 acres; Coffee, 1680 acres; Maize, 1677 acres; Millet, 27 acres; Oats, 155 acres; Barley, 5 acres; Beans, 121 acres; Buckwheat, 17 acres; Arrowroot, 360 acres; Cotton, 127 acres; Cayenne, 6 acres; Tobacco, 56 acres; Common Potatoes, 99 acres; Sweet ditto, 662 acres; Vegetables and Fruit, 381 acres; Chicory, 6 acres. The total acreage of land held by Europeans under actual crop was,—Victoria County, 6408 acres; Durban County, 3675 acres; Alexandra County, 1040 acres; Alfred County, 28 acres.

The Agricultural Produce of these districts during this period, is represented by the following totals:—Maize, 36,564 bushels; Sugar, 7823 tons; Coffee, 21,198 lbs.; Rum, 34,778 gallons. Kafir Corn, 456 bushels; Oats, 450 bushels; Oat-hay, 222 tons; Barley, 60 bushels; Beans, 2706 bushels; Buckwheat, 513 bushels; Arrowroot, 3310 cwts.; Cotton, 31,860 lbs.; Castor Oil, 75 gallons; Millet, 273 cwts.; Cayenne Pepper, 2110 lbs.; Tobacco, 65,052 lbs.; Common Potatoes, 1697 sacks; Sweet ditto, 45,100 sacks.

The acreage of crops standing in December, when the Census was taken, may thus be summarized:—Sugar Cane, 15,892 acres; Coffee, 5,365 acres; Arrow-root, 398 acres; Cotton, 279 acres—[this is much below the mark]. The rest of the figures are partial and untrustworthy.

The above figures represent European industry only. During the year, the natives reaped 17,224 acres of maize; 7753 acres of kafir corn; and 731 acres of sweet potatoes. They also reaped 164 acres of sugar cane, crushed at the Umvoti and the Amauzimtote mission stations respectively. In the three counties of Victoria, Durban, and Alexandra, respectively, the natives, numbering in the aggregate 82,346, were estimated in December to have 22,508 acres in crop. The whites, numbering altogether 3675, cultivated 26,850 acres. The number of kafirs in service throughout these districts by no means makes up the disproportion, being only 7646. In Durban County, the Electors number 470; in Victoria, 314; but both lists are most defective.

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THE Blue Book for 1870 not yet being issued, it is impossible to give later statistics. It may be stated, however, that the sugar crop for 1870-71 is estimated at not less than 8000 tons, the export for that season having been 7663 tons. The coffee crop for 1871 may be set down at fully 1000 tons, the yield being much in excess of previous anticipations. In fact, the experience of the last few months has rekindled the hopes and energies of coffee planters, and convinced them that, with careful cultivation and prudent choice of locality, the enterprise is a remunerative as well as an easy and pleasant one.

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## THE COTTON-FIELDS, UPPER UMKOMANZI.

(BY AN AMATEUR COTTON PLANTER.)

## CHAPTER XVIII.

Several parties, both in the colony and in England, having sent pressing enquiries relative to the growth of cotton in the midland districts, I deemed it desirable to make a personal inspection of some of the more accessible estates, that I might report from actual observation. Accordingly, accompanied by a gentleman of large colonial experience, I left Hill-Top—the model, and probably best managed, midland farm in the colony—for the Valley of the Umkomanzi. Hill-Top, as many of your readers must be aware, overlooks the trough or gorge through which the Umkomanzi rolls its rapid and headlong course. Standing one hundred yards from the homestead, there you see below you—down—down—1000 feet, what appears from your position a quiet, silvery river that has carved for itself a way through the red sandstone hills that here overshadow its course. That river is the most treacherous and powerful river in the colony, having a fall every half-mile, which renders navigation, even in flood times, out of the question. Probably, at a future time, some ingenious colonial engineer, with the enterprise of an American, will blast its obstructions, and force a passage to the coast. Such things have been done in that famous, pushing country; but we fear the day of such an undertaking is far distant for our young colony. In a future article, which I purpose to contribute to the “Handbook of Natal,” I shall have much pleasure in giving a review of mixed farming operations in this district, when the success of Hill-Top, and many other farms, shall have a place in our colonial history.

Leaving that thriving homestead on a breezy morning, well suited for the journey across the valley, we begin to descend to it at an angle of nearly forty-five degrees! Down—lower down—we go, the horses picking their way step by step, until we find it desirable to dismount and lead them; over the rough road. Mounting again, we descend for a mile and a half, and come to the roughest

part of the road, where the descent is literally as rough as the steps of the Monument. Such a getting down stairs for wagons and oxen (or cart) we never did see; and well might my friend remark that none but plucky fellows would think of making their fortune with such a hard road to travel. That a good road is to be made here, without any great expense, it requires no road engineer oven to decide. I was informed that Mr. Paterson had decided to improve the road, and it is to be hoped he will set about it at once, before the crop is gathered. At the foot of these road-steps is the dwelling of Mr. Conyngham, about 80 feet above the flat. The river here makes a sudden bend, and it is at this point his plantation lies; the house overlooking the whole farm. Mr. Conyngham says there is always a breeze blowing up the river in summer, and he very seldom feels much inconvenience from the heat. When it is unusually hot they keep inside at mid-day, and do their work early and late. Here are about 40 acres of cotton under cultivation, nearly two being ratoons.

We first inspected this piece, and found it loaded to the ground with boles. These two acres of ratoons—provided the worm does not attack it—will yield a return of at least 500lbs. of clean cotton to the acre. Last year, as a plant crop, it gave 400lbs. The land is sandy, evidently formed from the disintegration of the sand and limestone rocks overlooking this coast. Further on, as we leave the neighbourhood of these rocks, the soil is a reddish loam. The plant cotton promises well; indeed, this enterprising farmer, who has been the pioneer of cotton planting in this district, will this year get a rich reward for his pluck. He gave to Messrs. Harcourt and McMinn £200 for 200 acres, about 60 of which may be placed under cultivation. A great part of it had to be cleared, at a cost of, probably, from £2 to £3 per acre. The cotton is just bursting, and he informed us that he had succeeded in engaging his old hands to pick it. A small patch of mealies looked well, and beans succeed very well here.

Mr. Conyngham manages the ferry, which is a very great convenience to Europeans and natives residing in this district.

Last year's cotton crop did not average a bale an acre, the frost having, for the first time, killed the greater part of the plants, which he did not replant or fill up in time to give a good crop. That of 1869 he sold to Messrs. Harcourt and McMinn for 7d. 4<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> lb. The crop has paid for the farm, so that Mr. Conyngham wants only a good

road now to make his estate one of the most valuable, for its size, in the colony.

Arrived across the river, we found Mr. Rhodes had lost his cart in the river, also an ox. By a very daring feat, he jumped into the river at a place where the rapids are strong, and cut away six oxen—which, along with the cart, had been carried down some 500 yards! The oxen were put to the river without forelooper or driver—not an unusual thing with oxen that are accustomed to pass frequently the same drift. The front oxen turned as they neared the bank, and, all jumbled together, went down stream. We have since heard of a similar accident to Mr. Powys' cart and oxen at the same place. It will be found necessary to have a large boat at this drift as population increases.

From the river to Mr. Powys' is about two miles, over a rough road, and very steep at one point, which is, however, capable of much improvement. His plantation lies in a little valley surrounded by precipitous hills thickly clad with underbush, and the ever predominant mimosa, the acacia, the giant euphorbia, and aloc. The mimosa is now in full bloom, its rich perfume filling the glen and spreading even to the tops. The plumages of blue and gold of the flitting birds, give quite an enchanting appearance to these valleys.

Mr. Powys has about twenty acres of good and well cultivated cotton; a very creditable stand after only a few months location. He has a large family here, and we were glad to hear he is about to select an elevated situation for his dwelling house. His loss of six oxen and a cart comes very unfortunately indeed—just at the time when they will be most wanted. The cart will probably be recovered when the river goes down, unless a heavier flood comes.

From Mr. Powys' to Messrs. Rhodes, is about three or four miles, through bush all the way, except a cleared patch or two.

To the right of the drift is a small patch of about six or eight acres of cotton, belonging to Mr. Bannatyne, which looks remarkably well. I was informed that he reaped 300 lbs. of clean cotton per acre last year. The land is rich loam. Farther on he has about twelve acres more, all promising a good yield.

The estate of Messrs. Rhodes was first settled upon by them about eighteen months ago. They have done a great deal of clearing, and have now about forty-five acres under cultivation. Last year's plants were only

four feet in the rows, their growth was so luxuriant, and the whole plantation so matted together and inter-twined, that it was all but destroyed by the bore-worm and caterpillar. A few bales were picked, but hardly sufficient, one would think, to pay expenses. This year they have just doubled the distance of their plants, and have planted rows of mealies about every eighty feet, to attract the grub from the cotton. Monkeys must be plentiful here, as they have left their mark on hundreds of mealies. The owners, however, do not seem to care much for this so long as the cotton is all right. From Messrs. Rhodes' dwelling, may be seen several other smaller plantations, giving the valley the appearance of a lively and busy spot.

Messrs. Sewell and Grey have built a large house, but have had barely time to commence operations for cotton planting. The small patch there, will, we fear, be too late to yield much this season. Messrs. Amos, Summerville, and Leslie, have also small patches of cotton here. Mr. Summerville is at the diggings. Mr. Amos is said to have the best cotton in the Umkomanzi valley. Last year he had a very large crop from a small piece of land. We see some small patches planted every alternate row with mealies. We should say Messrs. Rhodes' plan was much the best, if the object is to catch grubs and have a good crop of cotton, which to secure—being essentially a sun-plant—the more it gets the better and quicker it boles, as our American cousins proved years ago.

I should say nearly all the good flats are taken up hereabouts, which in a few years time will be one large cotton field.

Messrs. Rhodes are preparing to place upwards of 100 acres of cotton plants in the land next season, and well they may, if they can grow cotton like this. The plants are bolling well, are very large, and promise a good crop. Their ratoons were ploughed up; we noticed a few scattered about, which are easily discovered by their small leaf, and thicker foliage. Both Messrs. Rhodes and Conyngham prefer ploughing between the rows to hoeing, being less expensive, and opening up the soil deeper. Old hands at cotton planting say some lands require deep and some shallow ploughing for cotton, as it is not the largest and woodiest plant that yields most cotton. These are points which experience alone can determine.

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## CHAPTER XIX.

From Messrs. Rhodes, by a tortuous kafir path, we ascend to the breezy tops once again; a short canter brings us to Dr. Callaway's celebrated Mission Station, nestling in a pretty valley dotted with mimosa and acacia trees. A small patch of cotton is planted as an experiment. It has not, however, the vigorous appearance of those we have left behind us. It would be an excellent plan if Dr. Callaway—whose influence is very great amongst the natives hereabouts, could induce them to grow small patches of cotton in the warm sheltered nooks along the edges of the thorns. Their crops of maize very frequently fail by reason of drought, which does not very materially affect the cotton plant, unless very severe indeed. There can be no earthly reason why the native population should not be persuaded to grow something more than bare necessities. They may by careful management be induced to grow cotton. Why the experiment made some years ago did not succeed it is difficult to say. Cotton was then an enormous price, and England was begging and praying for its production, particularly in the colonies.

Leaving Dr. Callaway's we ascend a gentle incline of short, crisp, and curly grass, which one would think ought to be a favourite place for sheep. Higher up still, we come across a few flocks belonging to Mr. Walker, who owns a large extent of land here, and depastures some four thousand sheep.

Leaving his place to the right, we pass an open country denuded of wood, until we reach the source of the Um-pambinyone river. A very short distance from its source it suddenly breaks into a deep ravine. It is reported that the gold found near the Umzinto, is washed away from the quartz reefs of these high lands, and to a non-professional eye the debris in the river bottoms, particularly in a gully near the Catholic Mission Station, is highly suggestive of the precious metal. Perhaps these lines may induce some one to explore these parts, who has a knowledge of gold bearing districts.

The Mission Station appears to have been abandoned by the Roman Catholic Missionary who formerly resided there. We found it in the occupation of Mr. J. Wright, jun., who had a small patch of cotton here, which, considering that it was only planted very late, looked well.

Here we again enter the thorn districts, and from a hill close by, we see the valley of the Umkomanzi, with a fearfully broken country on each side. In the valleys are small flats, in which, no doubt, cotton would thrive, and we should say there is not much frost; it is very much higher than the plantations on the Umkomanzi, some fifteen miles away.

Many pretty and healthy spots might be selected here for immigrants. We were informed that the lands were mostly in the hands of the Crown.

Cattle look remarkably well, and the natives appear very civil and well disposed. There is said to be a good road to the Umzinto; the road to Richmond is good, and if shortened by a proposed road through Rhodes' valley, they would be brought within easy reach of either Maritzburg or Durban. For immigrants it is desirable to get them land suitable for the growth of exportable articles, healthy for man and beast. The happy medium appears to be along the edges of the thorn country. Some fifteen miles from here is the plantation of Messrs. Surridge and Cuff, on the Umkomanzi. We were not able to visit them, but heard good reports of their plantation. On our return we saw in the distance Captain Trevor's farm, situated on an eminence overlooking the valley. Here can be seen the Drakensberg on one side of the colony, and its ocean boundary on the other. The Captain (who is commanding officer of the Richmond Rifles) has a fine and costly residence, which is said to be one of the healthiest situations in the colony.

Passing the same route again for some distance, we approach Mr. Charles Green's farm, Gorton. This gentleman, not undeservedly, boasts of having one of the best stock farms in the colony. Certainly we never saw finer sheep, and his horses looked well. We had not time to visit his hospitable roof, where he has a large corn mill and fields of maize under cultivation.

We descend the water shed of the Inheaveni or Ixopo river, and again enter the thorns near Messrs. Oakes' farm. We examined a small patch of cotton belonging to Mr. S. Crouch, looking well, but unfortunately rows of maize were planted between each row of cotton plants. We cannot think cotton will succeed under such a plan of cultivation. However, time will show. Here is unquestionably to our mind, the most charming spot we have yet seen in Natal. The house is erected at a bend in the Ixopo river, giving a commanding view of two well wooded valleys, the vegetation of which is highly tropical,

but the quietness, only disturbed by the rumbling of the river through the reeds, is almost appalling. All up and down this valley, are numerous flats of wonderfully rich land—some thousands of acres. Near the river the soil appears to be formed of alluvium brought down the Ixopo ages gone by; closer under the krantzes the soil assumes a different colour, and is evidently formed by the decomposition of the rocks above.

The land is so rank with vegetation, that in some places there is no small difficulty in riding through it.

We pass on through a thickly wooded valley to Messrs. Oakes' farm, and see large fields of maize on the way. They have gone to great expense in irrigation, and now are able to run the waters of the Ixopo upon some hundreds of acres if they choose. A field of cotton was planted on their former waste land—it was unfortunately destroyed by hail, and was ploughed up and afterwards planted with maize; the crop of which was very large and heavy. About fourteen acres of cotton planted after the hail storm, was looking very fine, quite equal to anything we had seen. This farm was formerly occupied by the Dutch, by whom it was named Doorn Vlakte, there are some four or five hundred acres of magnificent land, the homestead is about twelve miles from the Umkomanzi. From the plant crop last year, Mr. W. Oakes informed us he had about 200 lbs. of clean cotton per acre. This farm was celebrated amongst the Dutch, as a wheat farm for which purpose the present owners first used its fat bottoms. There being a large demand for mealies about the Umzinto, it was found to pay better to grow them; now that they are so cheap, we should not be surprised if cotton, wheat, and oats, were not produced to a large extent up this village, at all events before many years are gone by.

For some miles along the Inheaveni valley, rich flats are seen; passing through Dr. Sutherland's farms, we enter the Amaponda road, and descend the valley of the Umkomanzi; once more a short trot down Nolan's cutting brings us to the river, where we find two or three small patches of cotton looking well, but we should say planted too late. This farm belongs also to Dr. Sutherland, and is occupied by Mr. Leask. There is plenty of room for more extended cultivation here. Crossing by the ferry, we come to Mr. Dunlop's place. He has a small patch of five or six acres of cotton planted in December. The plants are very fine for their age, but we fear they will be found to yield a small crop in consequence of being so very late.

Higher up is Glen Almond, where Mr. Palmer grew cotton some few years ago, here, also, is plenty of cotton land.

We cannot leave Mr. Dunlop's without giving a word of thanks for his kindness; indeed, his name appears a household word at every place we visit. Many a poor and weary traveller has found shelter and food under his humble but hospitable roof.

From the drift, we pass up the valley along the flat lands of Mr. J. W. Turnbull. Here are some scores of acres lying idle which might be turned to good account. The scenery is very picturesque; steep banks thickly wooded on both sides the river, the trees dipping their waving foliage in the roaring torrent.

Some five miles brings us to Salt Pans valley. Here the Umkomanzi ceases to run through deep close banks; the country opens wider, and is not so rough and broken. Salt Pan's valley, or Zout Pans Vlei, as named by the Dutch, from a large pit covered with a crust of salt. The taste is as near like common salt as possible. Indeed for years the natives were accustomed to collect the salt and use it in their food. Here is a large flat of some 1500 acres, extending for two or three miles up the river. At the upper end of the flat are about 50 acres of cotton, belonging to Mr. D. Taylor, of Richmond, the owner of the farm. Four acres are ratoons which have already burst well, and promise a heavy crop, although the plants are not large; they are loaded to the ground; two-thirds of the pods lying on the surface. About twenty-five acres is new land in a very rough state; the plants look well, though, but are not so thickly podded as the rest. The horse hoe is used on this estate—in fact, is never allowed to rest, except in very wet weather. The land is a deep loam, and the flat, one large field of tambooti, where the plough has not disturbed it. Mr. Taylor expects to get about fifty bales from his land; the return from the new land will be small, but will be made up by the ratoons in a great measure. About thirty acres are planted with maize. The Dutch formerly cultivated wheat and maize in this neighbourhood, where they had a large settlement. The flat has sluices cut over a large extent of ground, showing that they were not negligent of the value of irrigation. When the English arrived the inhabitants made a sudden stampede; the kafirs shortly afterwards destroyed their rude mud buildings, and all trace of them was soon gone, except one solitary syringa, the water course, and half-a-dozen graves heaped over



with boulders, now surrounded with blooming cotton trees. *Sic transit gloria mundi.*

On both sides of the river is a large extent of land adapted for cotton cultivation. Mr. White has a small patch on the other side—a grant from Government. He had some six acres of cotton planted in December, in very rough land. The plants look well, but very little cotton may be expected.

Farms Runkelow, and Waterfall, have plenty of cotton flats, but there are no occupants.

A little higher up the river is a small patch of cotton belonging to Messrs. Stanley and Foster—they are off to the diggings, diamonds having more attraction than cotton.

The roads are so bad to many of the farms along the river, that we should not be surprised to hear that many of the planters had left for the Diamond-fields. Several applications have been made to Government to make or repair branch roads, but without avail.

Every one has been crying out for a staple export for the midlands, and now, when the effort is being made, not even a passable road is made, unless it is to open up a farm belonging to a Government servant.

## KLIP RIVER COUNTY.

(BY A RESIDENT.)

The county of Klip River, including the division of Newcastle, is the most northerly electoral district of the colony of Natal. It is bounded on the north-east by the Buffalo River, on the north-west by the Drakensberg, and on the south by the Tugela River. The general outline of the country is that of an equilateral triangle. The portion of the Drakensberg range that forms the boundary to the north-west divides the county from the Orange River Free State, and the Buffalo River separates it from a portion of the Transvaal Republic, and more to the eastward from a part of the Zulu country. The county is situated between  $27\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$  and  $28\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$  S. lat., and  $28\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$  to  $30^{\circ}$  E. long., and contains an area of 3578 geographical miles.

By a proclamation published Dec. 2, 1862, by His Excellency Governor Scott, the county of Klip River was divided into two parts, one being called the Ladismith division and the other the Newcastle division—the latter being of somewhat less area than the former. A spur of the Drakensberg, which traverses the county of Klip River from west to east, divides the division of Ladismith from the division of Newcastle (which abuts on the north-eastern frontier of the colony) in a convenient and natural manner. The division of Newcastle has not yet been surveyed independently, and consequently the precise area has not been ascertained, but it probably contains about 1500 geographical square miles.

## CHAPTER XX.

### LADISMITH DIVISION.

POPULATION.—DESCRIPTION OF TOWN.—PRODUCTS.—CROPS.—CATTLE AND SHEEP FARMING.—HORSE BREEDING.—ANGORA GOATS.—PIGS.—DAIRY FARMING.—CLIMATE.—GEOLOGY.—SCENERY.

This division of Klip River county has been longer settled than the division of Newcastle, and in 1869 possessed a white population of 1219 souls, 659 being males and 560 females. The principal township and centre of trade is Ladismith, which is distant about 150 miles from the port of Durban.

Ladismith is the most advanced of any of the up-country townships, and is favourably situated for commerce, although, should the main road be diverted *via* Olivier's Hoek, as has been proposed of late, it is not unlikely that the Overberg trade of the township will be materially reduced. A considerable local trade, however, will still remain which the central position of Ladismith is well adapted to command, and which, in the natural course of things, will increase as the population of the adjacent neighbourhood augments.

Ladismith is, moreover, the religious centre of the division, several places of worship having been erected in the township, at which religious services are regularly

celebrated, according to the tenets of the various denominations most common in the colony, viz., Church of England, Wesleyan, and Dutch Reformed Churches. A good school for boys has been recently established under the charge of the Rev. W. O. Nownham.

The township contains a considerable number of houses, a Court-house and jail, and laager, several stores, which are generally well supplied with goods, two hotels; and the general aspect is that of a well-to-do community. The town is laid out on the right bank of the Klip River, and the streets are planted with syringa and other trees, and it presents a very pleasing aspect when viewed from the heights by which the town is surrounded. It is the seat of the magistracy for the Ladismith division, and the Circuit and Combined Courts are held there periodically.

The great drawback to the town is the bad supply of water. Although the Klip River skirts the town it has not been found practicable hitherto to divert a portion of the stream through the town. Some years ago an attempt was made to construct a dam or weir across the river, but it was unsuccessful, and although a considerable sum of money was spent the township is none the better for it as regards the water supply, and the inhabitants have still to bring the water for household consumption and other purposes from the river by buckets-full. There is a drift across the river on the main road which is not at all times practicable for wagons, and a ferry has been established in order to avoid the losses and delays which would otherwise result at certain times of the year. The necessity for a bridge over the Klip River has been long acknowledged and one might easily be constructed from the materials existing on the spot on a with moderate distance.

An Agricultural Society has been established, and the shows in connexion therewith have proved very successful and are well supported by the farmers of the division.

The Ladismith Division of Klip River County, is essentially a pastoral and grazing district. There are but few farms upon which agriculture upon a large scale could be carried on. This arises from two causes, viz., the generally strong character of the land, which prevents ploughing, except in small patches; and secondly the difficulty in obtaining a convenient and sufficient supply of water for irrigating land under cereal crops. Nevertheless, on most farms in the division, patches of from ten to twenty acres are under the plough, and in favour-

able situations wheat has been very successfully grown. In fact, most of the wheat consumed in the division, is home produce, and in most years a surplus remains which has gone to feed the Maritzburg market. Despite the difficulties attending agriculture on a large scale, which are so great as to be almost insurmountable, there is yet abundant room for the extension of the culture of cereal crops, but the present inefficient state of the means of conveyance to market, acts as a drawback. With a railway traversing the county, there can be no question that the culture of wheat would be so extended in both divisions that there would be no need for sea-borne supplies. In the year 1869, there were under cereal crops, the following average:—

Wheat .....	923 acres
Oats .....	116 „
Barley .....	36 „
Indian Corn.....	1091 „
Kafir Corn .....	10 „

The produce of the above is stated at—

Wheat .....	3503 muids
Oats .....	595 „
„ hay .....	37 tons
Barley .....	208 muids
Indian Corn.....	3967 „
Kafir „ .....	60 „

The cultivation of tobacco has been engaged in to a limited extent, but with results which justify a more general attention to this valuable article of export. In 1869 the land under tobacco amounted to eighteen acres, and the produce is returned at 9757 lbs., the average value being 8½s. per cwt.

In the Ladismith Division, agriculture is quite subsidiary to stock farming, and the attention of farmers has not been directed to the produce of any article of export. Looking at the disadvantageous circumstances, it is not to be expected that enterprise would be turned to experiments in this direction. Trials have been made here and there, with different kinds of wheat, to ascertain the sort best adapted to withstand the rust, and to afford the best yield and quality, suited for the market, and there experiment has stopped. So far as has transpired, no very great progress has been made even in this direction, limited as it is, and the wheat generally grown is that known as klein corn, which is grown during the dry season, and consequently requires constant attention as to irrigation, while the produce per acre is comparatively

very small—the average being about five muids, or nearly two quarters per acre. This produce, small as it is, is quite equal to the average yield of South Australia, and yet Australian flour competes successfully with our own produce notwithstanding the distance it has to travel both by land and sea, and the duty it pays before reaching the consumers in this colony. Wheat, although one of the most important articles of agricultural produce, is nevertheless, one of the least profitable, as far at least, as this colony is concerned, and without some legislative encouragement, and the improvement in the means of transport, the cultivation is not likely to be greatly extended, although much might be done in that direction to the advantage both of the individual farmer and the colony at large. It is surely an unsatisfactory state of things for the colony to import grain and breadstuffs to the value of £17184 as in 1869, whilst our own corn-growing districts are shut out from the market by the enormous cost and difficulty of carriage. With such unrestricted competition as at present exists, there is no hope for the up-country wheat grower making any deliberate attempt either at the improvement or extension of cultivation, although the capacity of the soil has been scarcely tested.

The capabilities of the county for the successful breeding and grazing of horned cattle, and to a certain extent for sheep also, have been well ascertained. Nowhere in the colony do you find finer cattle, or in better condition, than in the county of Klip River. The breeds, most generally, are of a somewhat mongrel character, but mainly of the Afrikander and Fatherland varieties, with a slight admixture of the Zulu blood. Large and heavy oxen are those which are most in demand for sale to the butcher, and also for farm work. The system being to work oxen during their youth, and dispose of them fat at a later period. No attempt has been made to form a breed or breeds suited for the different purposes of the farmer, the transport rider, and the butcher. The material exists but as yet no Bakewell has arisen in the county, to undertake the task of founding a "Klip River" breed. Nevertheless, the farmers have not been wanting in a certain degree of enterprise in the direction of improving the breeds of cattle, as here and there you will find imported bulls and their descendants. In our opinion, the attempt made to improve, or rather thoroughly acclimatize the native breeds by the means of imported cattle is unscientific, and not in accordance with the well ascertained laws which govern the system of stock-breeding

at home, where the practice has been so successfully carried out by Bakewell and others. The grand principle of selection has not been attended to, and consequently the true basis of stock improving has been neglected. Time and experience will doubtless remedy this defect, and enable our farmers to manufacture cattle, sheep, and horses, in every way adapted to the peculiarities of our climate and locality. As it is it has been found that imported animals and their stock do not thrive so well as the breeds already in the district, and it must be confessed that there is nothing wonderful in this. It is not to be expected that animals whose constitution and habits are so thoroughly artificial, will not bear so total and extreme a change as that to which they are subject here, and as constitution as well as symmetry and other qualities is capable of transmission, so it is to be expected that the offspring of imported stock should be less able to endure the vicissitudes incident to our soil and climate, which are borne so well by the ordinary class of cattle existing in the country at the present time. There need be no hesitation in affirming, however, that for most purposes the cattle found in the upper districts of the colony are of fine quality, and well adapted to our needs, although it must be acknowledged that for the butcher, it is desirable that there should be somewhat less bone, and a greater proportion of meat. In course of time it may be anticipated that this defect will be overcome by a more careful attention to the laws that govern scientific breeding. The number of horned cattle belonging to the white population of the Ladismith division of Klip River County, in 1869, is returned at 27,960 head.

Sheep farming in the Klip River county has been on the increase during the past few years. In some situations, when the veldt and climate are suitable, flocks thrive as well as they could in any part of the Free State. Generally speaking, however, there are specialities connected with soil and climate that interfere greatly with the successful prosecution of sheep-farming. In the winter months the county is inundated with sheep brought into the colony from the Free State in order to have the advantage of our winter veldt and more genial climate, but in the summer these flocks return to their pastures Overberg.

From April to November sheep do better in the upper districts of Natal than in the adjoining portions of the Free State, but the rankness of the grass and the warmth of the climate during summer, are certainly prejudicial to

sheep and induce diseases, arising from a plethoric state of body, caused by the abundance of food and its rich quality. To a certain extent this defect has been overcome by a special system of feeding, which is practicable enough as far as regards small flocks, but cannot be applied in all cases. And to our farmers the course of procedure which involves the minimum of labour, and which is best adapted to the comprehension of their kafir assistants' is to be preferred. Hence it is that it is found more convenient to migrate annually with sheep—taking them in summer to the cooler climate and less luxuriant pastures of the Free State, and during winter bringing them into Natal, where food is always to be obtained in sufficient quantity for preserving the condition of the flocks. As in the case of horned cattle, a breed suited at all times to our circumstances, has yet to be created, and with the attention given to the subject of late years, and the increase of scientific knowledge, a successful result will be arrived at in the course of a few years. Imported rams are found with almost every considerable flock, and a considerable improvement has resulted in the yield of wool in consequence. It is, however, to be observed that these imported rams are not generally direct from Europe, but are in most cases the offspring of males imported into the Cape Colony, crossed with colonial ewes, and consequently better adapted for the *gradual* improvement of a flock than if they had been fine bred sheep direct from Europe.

In the case of sheep, *selection* is as little practiced as with horses and horned cattle, and the progress towards forming a native breed is much slower than it might be were more care bestowed upon the subject.

Angora goats have attracted a good deal of attention of late years, and as it is found that they thrive admirably throughout the year in the Ladismith division, it is not improbable that Angora hair will become a staple export from the district. As yet, however, the majority of the so-called Angora goats are merely bastards, and it will take some time and no little care on the part of breeders to produce that fine quality of hair that is so much in request for manufacturing purposes. A few of the pure-bred rams imported into the Eastern Province of the Cape Colony a year or two ago, have found their way up to Klip River county, and the general aspect of the flocks already shows a marked improvement.

The number of sheep in Klip River county at the close of 1869 was 60,543, and of Angora goats 14,204. It is

to be remarked that the number of sheep and goats properly appertaining to this division is probably much understated in the return, inasmuch as it is taken at midsummer when by far the largest proportion of the sheep belonging to Klip River farmers are away Overberg.

As might be expected from the elevated position of Klip River County, the climate is probably more favourable for the successful breeding of horses, than that of almost any other part of the colony. In consequence of this favourable situation, we find that there are more horses owned in the county of Klip River, than in any other county in the colony. The number in both divisions being given at 4,266, whilst Pietermaritzburg is returned at 2551, Weenen, at 2377, and Umvoti, at 2107. It will thus be seen that a considerable degree of attention is paid to this important branch of farming by the residents in this county. There is yet, however, much room for the extension of this pursuit, but the local demand is so small, and prices are so low for horseflesh, that until the population increases, or fresh markets open for horses, there is but little encouragement for farmers to extend their operations in this direction. It was hoped that the Indian market might have afforded an outlet for superfluous stock, but in consequence of the small amount of attention paid to breeding, comparatively few of our horses are up to the standard for India. Nevertheless, for hardiness, endurance, and general fitness for the work required of them, the Natal horse may be advantageously compared with any breed in the world. Size and symmetry, if successfully combined with his present good qualities, would go far to make a perfect animal. A few farmers have materially improved the appearance of their horses of late years, by the introduction of a superior class of stallions, but it remains to be seen whether appearance has not been attained by some sacrifice of more valuable qualities. Be that as it may, the county of Klip River is especially adapted to the purposes of the horse breeder, inasmuch as it has a far more healthy climate, and better adapted to his requirements than any other part of Natal.

It is scarcely necessary to notice other descriptions of stock, although it is worthy of a passing remark that notwithstanding the excellence of the climate and the cheapness of mealies and kafir corn, so little has yet been done in pig feeding. Only 994 pigs are returned from the Ladismith division, and no bacon or lard appears to have been prepared for sale. Doubtless, the return is defective in this particular, as many farmers, we know, are in the



habit of curing a considerable quantity of bacon for consumption. There is great room for a profitable and extensive export trade to be developed in that article, and the facilities for doing so are so great that it is somewhat remarkable that more attention has not been given to it than appears to have been the case hitherto. Bacon and hams are bulky, and it is probable that the cost of transport acts as a powerful drawback in this as in all other articles of farm produce, which cannot carry itself to market. Klip River is the premier county for butter—165,725 lbs. of that article having been produced for sale in 1869, in the two divisions of the county. Weenen, which stands next, can only show 63,565 lbs., and Maritzburg, 57,287 lbs. Cheese has not attracted much attention, but as it is a somewhat delicate article to manufacture, and requires more time and attention than butter to prepare for market, it is not difficult to account for the neglect with which it has been hitherto treated. Excellent cheese is, however, made by a few of the English farmers, and it is a matter for regret that such a profitable source of income is not more generally attended to. Of wool, the quantity produced was 123,285 lbs. in 1869, and from the favourable results that have attended sheep breeding during the current year, it may be expected that a large increase in the clip will have been realized.

The climate of the Ladismith division is, on the whole, extremely pleasant and salubrious. It is, however, somewhat drier and more subject to hot winds than the Newcastle division, but as these prevail only at certain seasons and are of no long continuance, they can scarcely be considered a drawback on the general good character of the climate. In winter the air, even when the sun is hot, is cool and bracing, and fires in the evenings are by no means unnecessary accessories to comfort.

There is a general want of water throughout the division for other purposes than household use, although it must not be understood that the defect of water is anything like so great as to be a source of inconvenience. Every farm has a spring, or a rivulet, or some natural source of water supply sufficiently copious for all household uses, but there are few farms that have a sufficient and constant supply for the purpose of irrigating more than a few acres of land for winter crops, without the assistance of a dam in which the water is stored.

With regard to the geology and mineralogy of the Ladismith division we have been kindly furnished with particulars by the Rev. George Blencowe, of Ladismith,

who is thoroughly acquainted with the whole county and whose powers of observation are of no mean order. It is much to be regretted that no thorough examination of the county by a competent geologist has been made. Indications of metalliferous veins are to be found in many parts, but as yet no scientific or practical examination has been made. There are, we believe, certain peculiarities in the geology of Natal that are well worth investigation by *savans*, and particularly as regards the carboniferous formation so largely developed in the Newcastle division, that might serve to throw light upon some questions that are yet imperfectly answered by known facts in other parts of the world. A geological survey, conducted without haste and with the care to which it is entitled, would doubtless do much towards developing the natural resources of the colony, and it is to be hoped that the subject will, at no distant period, engage the attention of the Government and Legislature.

The geology of this (Ladismith) division resembles that of the rest of the county and differs entirely from the country below the Mooi River. Here we have everywhere the new sandstone of immense thickness and in undisturbed position, but in all cases covered with trap, except where by water or some other force the surface has been laid bare and the sandstone itself removed, as in many cases occurs to the shale which underlies it. In the range of the Biggarsberg we see the condition of the country undisturbed, and any one who will compare its sides with those of the yet remaining isolated hills up to the Drakensberg, will have no other conclusion open to him but that the whole was once joined, and that what now are valleys have been excavated. The probability that water has been used for this purpose, appears from the almost universal scattering of the broken trap which constituted the original covering, not only on the surface but also in a rounded form in the soil itself. This geological structure, together with its position of propinquity to the Berg, from which it rapidly descends, has caused a continual succession of bold and precipitous hills, which give ever changing beauty to the scenery, and here and there rise to grandeur. Many of the finest scenes of the Abyssinian war, published in the *Illustrated London News*, are equalled or surpassed among the many spurs of the Drakensberg. There is one small valley, about half a mile to the left of the road just after you have reached the top of the Berg on the way to Harrismith, which is

worth going all the way to see. Its width is not more than two miles from crest to crest of hill, its length is perhaps four or five miles, and its depth from 1300 to 1500 feet. But its whole appearance is of surpassing beauty, in this case greatly enhanced by the grandeur in which it is embosomed.

Should our country ever become rich and populous, our various sandstones will supply an inexhaustible supply of material for the mansions of our gentry; but at present they are only the foundations of our wealth derived from the fields and pastures which cover them. The trap is in nearly all cases composed partly of iron ore, but generally in such small quantities as would not pay for smelting. The side of this division next the Biggarsberg contains a few seams of coal, but they are in all cases in such inconvenient situations as to preclude working while we have the other side of the Biggarsberg open.

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## CHAPTER XXI.

### NEWCASTLE DIVISION.

SHAPE.—SITUATION.—COAL FIELDS.—TOPOGRAPHY AND CLIMATE.—NATURAL FEATURES.—HEALTH.—AGRICULTURE.—POPULATION.

The division of Newcastle was erected into a separate magistracy by a proclamation issued December 2nd, 1862, by Governor Scott, which defined the boundaries of the district. The Buffalo River forms the frontier between Natal and the Transvaal Republic, and a line following the course of the Biggarsberg runs between the Ladismith and Newcastle divisions of Klip River County. On the north-west the range of the Drakensberg separates us from the Free State, and a small portion of the Transvaal. To the south the division runs almost to a point at the junction of the Buffalo with the Tugela Rivers. The general outline of the division may be described as an irregular Rhomboid or lozenge-shaped. As we have before stated, in default of a special survey to ascertain the extent of the division, its precise area is unknown, but it may safely be assumed to contain not less than 1500

square miles. About 110 farms of 3000 and 4000 acres each have been surveyed, and are mostly occupied by the owners; and numerous smaller plots of grounds have from time to time been sold by the Government at or above the upset price. It may be assumed, therefore, that the division of Newcastle has been a source of considerable profit to the colonial treasury.

**COAL FIELDS.**—The division of Newcastle differs in very many important particulars from the Ladismith Division of Klip River County. The most important point is, undoubtedly, as regards its mineral wealth. The whole of the Division of Newcastle may be considered a vast Coal field, possessing numerous seams, and many varieties of that most valuable mineral. In addition to coal, it possesses a considerable wealth of iron ore, and, doubtless, a carefully prosecuted search would increase the list of useful and valuable mineral productions of which traces are known to exist in various localities. The Biggarsberg appears to cut off the coal fields from the rest of the colony, there being, as far as I am aware, no seams of coal that can be profitably worked in any other portion of the colony, although traces and indications are found in many places from the coast upwards. In the Newcastle Division the seams are so easily accessible that no mining is required, and the seams are from one to ten feet thick. In some places the coal is found in the shape of anthracite, in others friable and soft; sometimes lusterless and without regular fracture; in other cases almost like jet, and with a cubical fracture: some is very sulphureous, and some in which sulphur exists in only a very minute proportion. In short we have varieties of coal here suited for almost every purpose, and in such quantities as to be practically inexhaustible, whilst its proximity to the surface renders its extraction, for the present, so easy, that the only instrument required to obtain it is a crowbar. As yet, but a very cursory examination has been made as to the extent and number of the seams of coal pervading the Division of Newcastle; but there can be no reasonable doubt that the estimate of the Surveyor General is very far below the mark; and knowing, as I do, that upon almost every farm in the division there is either coal or indications of the existence of that mineral, I cannot but assume that practically our coal fields are inexhaustible.

In the year 1868, the Surveyor General made a cursory survey of some few outcropping seams of coal in various parts of the colony, and addressed a report

thereon to the Government. From this report, it appears, that the only workable seams examined, were those included in the Newcastle Division. The seam at Compensation was only sixteen inches thick, and I presume from the abandonment of the trials that were made some time ago, that the coal was not found to be sufficiently good in quality, or large enough in quantity, to justify a perseverance in mining the deposit. At York the coal was found to be fourteen inches in thickness, and very much contaminated with earthy matters. At Umtata the coal was but three inches in thickness; at Boston Mills, nine inches; at Tugela Valley, eight inches and ten inches; and at Estcourt, and Blauw Krantz the seams were only three inches thick. In the Newcastle Division the seams examined were from the farm Brak Hoek, sixteen inches; Tiger Kloof, four feet; Wilson's, one to three feet; Murray's, two feet three inches; Davels, three feet six inches; Dundee, eight inches, four feet three inches, and two feet; Lennox, four to five feet, and at Condisford, nine inches. These are the only seams reported upon by Dr. Sutherland, but in addition to them there are numerous seams in different parts of the district, some of which exceed in magnitude the large deposit at Dundee. For instance, on the farm Samson's Klip, there is a vein of anthracitic coal, almost free from sulphur, of not less than seven feet in thickness, and, I believe, that two other seams underlie this deposit—one being about six or eight feet below, and the other below the bed of the Buffalo River. On the farms Wykon, De Wet's Stroom, and high up on the Berg, probably 500 to 600 feet above the deposit on Samson's Klip, workable seams of coal are to be found.

It will thus be seen that from one end to the other of the Division, a distance of about 90 miles, coal is to be found in workable seams, so little below the surface, that it is only necessary to quarry the coal, at all events for the present, and for many years to come expensive mining will not be required to supply the wants, not only of the colony, but of a considerable export trade, should Durban become a coaling station. As a matter of course, the extent of the deposits would be of little consequence, if the coal found in them were of such inferior quality, as to be practically worthless. Happily such is not the case. The coal is the universal domestic fuel in the Newcastle Division and answers admirably. Indeed were it not for the abundance of coal, we should be little better off than our neighbours in the Free State, where the droppings

of animals form the chief fuel, wood not being generally available. Here within the radius of a few miles from each homestead, mineral fuel can be procured with the greatest ease, and to any extent that may be required, for the mere cost of the labour engaged in breaking it out, and conveyance to the house. As regards its value for smelting purposes, no trial test, so far as I am aware, has yet been made, but I have no doubt that from the non-sulphureous character of some varieties of coal to be found here, that it might be used in the manufacture of a very superior quality of iron from our native ores. As regards its value for steam purposes, there can be no room for doubt after the trials made by order of the Government, on board the "Pioneer" tug, and by Messrs. Crowder and Gavin. I have not the report of the trials made by the Government officials at hand, but I believe I am correct in stating that upon the whole, the experiments were in the highest degree satisfactory as to the value of Newcastle (Natal) coal for the steam marine. The exhaustive trial made by Messrs. Crowder and Gavin, of coal obtained from the farm Dundee, against the English steam coal used for the tug, shows most conclusively that our coal is of undoubted value as a steam coal. The annexed tabular statement will show clearly the points of difference between the two kinds of coal from which an estimate of the relative value of the Natal coal may be formed:—

	Weight of Coal used.	Weight of Water evaporated.	Weight of Coal per hour per foot of Grate.	Water evap. per lb. of coal from 212 degrees.	Pressure of Steam.	Clinkers Weight and Character.	Ash, &c.
	lbs.	lbs.	lbs.	lbs.	lbs.	p. cent free	p. cent
English Coal	171	685	18	4	30 to 40	—	3.5
Natal Coal	108	600	11.2	5.5	30 „ 40	2.91	6.25

The conclusions arrived at by Messrs. Crowder and Gavin were:—

1. That the composition and properties of the coal from the Biggarsberg are those of a steam coal.
2. That the larger proportion of inccombustible matter

found in the boiler trials over that found by assay of the pure coal, appears to arise from careless mining.

3. That the experiments now made render it highly probable that its evaporative power is quite equal to good English steam coal, but that its total evaporative power can only "be ascertained by a trial on a large scale in a multitubular boiler with proper arrangements for preventing loss of heat by radiation, &c."

The comparative assays of the coals used were as follows, and, of course, being on small quantities, allowed of a selection being made in the pieces operated upon:—

ASSAY TRIAL.

	English coal	Natal coal.
Volatile matter.....	36.8	25.20
Coke .....	59.2	68.80
Ashes .....	4.0	6.0
	100.0	100.0

I should think, after the trial that the coal from Newcastle was subjected to by Messrs. Crowder and Gavin, there would be but little room for doubt as to the value of our coal for steam purposes, whilst our every-day experience shows its adaptability for domestic purposes, and the constant use of the coal by the blacksmiths throughout the colony for forge work, is incontestible evidence that for their business it is available. With these facts we can scarcely avoid looking upon the division of Newcastle as having a prospect of becoming one of the most important, if not the most important, portions of the colony, and probably of South Africa. Coal is a better and more lasting basis of national wealth than gold or diamonds, and where that important mineral abounds, as it does here, it requires only time and a railway to show us how vast an amount of "dormant wealth" lies within our borders. I could, of course, say much more on this most important subject, but your limits must be taken into consideration.

Although there is a large quantity of valuable iron ore to be found within the division, no special examination has as yet been made, and I leave that and other mineral productions for future development.

TOPOGRAPHY AND CLIMATE.—The general aspect of the division of Newcastle is hilly rather than mountains. The north-western boundary being the lesser Drakensberg, and the southern and south-western boundaries being the Biggarsberg, as a matter of course give a

mountainous setting to the division, whilst on the east and south-east the Buffalo River forms the limits of the division. As may be supposed, the general lie of the country is a gentle slope to the fluvial boundary; diversified, here and there, by hills of no great height, and composed mainly of sandstone. The central portion of the division is almost entirely open land, rather scantily watered, and only fitted for grazing purposes; whilst the portion lying immediately under the Berg is abundantly watered, and from the general richness of the soil, and the sheltered position it occupies, is admirably adapted for agriculture. It must not be inferred, however, that the central portion of the division is sterile, but simply, that from the greater scarcity of water, irrigation, so needful for the crops usually cultivated during the dry season, cannot be carried out, it is less adapted for agricultural industry than the more favoured portions under the mountains. Hence it is that population hitherto has been mainly concentrated at the upper and lower ends of the division. But, apparently, the day is not distant, when small farms will be scattered over the central portion as well as at the extremities—numerous purchases of small plots of ground having been made of late, by persons wishing to secure the right of grazing their stock over the adjacent Crown lands. It is a question how far such a policy is right on the part of the Government, inasmuch as the small plot is generally selected for the spring or small stream it contains, which would be quite as adequate for the supply of a farm of 3000 or 4000 acres as for one of 30 or 40 acres. By this means the proprietor of the spring becomes, in fact, the lord paramount of a large extent of Crown land for a mere trifle of outlay, and thereby secures to himself the privilege of unlimited grazing ground.

The principal rivers in the division are the Ingoga, the Incanda, and the Ingayanc, all of which take their rise in the Drakensberg mountains and flow into the Buffalo at various points in its course. These rivers are like most African streams, not navigable; but, although rapid and short in their course, they are not mere mountain torrents in summer, and dry in winter, but contain a considerable body of water even in the driest seasons. The banks of these streams are generally of small elevation, and it not unfrequently happens that during summer they overflow, but not to such an extent as to cause much damage.

The division is bare of trees, except in the immediate



vicinity of the Berg, the kloofs of which are generally ornamented with a dense growth of trees and shrubs, of which, in many places, the useful yellowwood forms the bulk. Red pear, white pear, and a few other useful timber trees also are found there, but, unfortunately, a large proportion of the timber the natural forests contained has been cut out, and, in some places, that which is left is only valuable for firewood. A great deal of work by the hand of man, in the way of planting, will have to be done to supply the future requirements of the inhabitants, as our natural forests, originally of small extent, are now on the verge of exhaustion.

I am not aware that there are any prominent natural features, or curious formations, to merit notice, but for all that, the aspect of the district is a pleasant one, and likely to attract the eye of the farmer as convenient for his operations, whilst the lover of the picturesque would find much to engage his attention in the wilder scenery about the mountains. The division is considerably elevated above the sea, and probably in no part is less than 3500 feet, whilst in many portions the height is from 5000 to 6000 feet above the sea level. As a consequence of this height the climate of the Newcastle Division is temperate, although nearly two degrees nearer the tropic than Durban. During the dry season frost is a common occurrence during the nights, but snow is an unusual phenomenon, except on the topmost peaks of the Berg, where it is occasionally seen. On one occasion only during my residence of 10 years in the division, has sufficient snow fallen to whiten the country. At certain seasons strong winds are prevalent, but seldom cause any damage to buildings, although when they occur in the early spring they check the growth of the grass by causing evaporation. We are seldom troubled with hot winds such as are common in the midlands, and generally the air is pure, elastic, and eminently agreeable to the sensations. In fact, the climate of Newcastle is far to be preferred to that of any other portion of the colony, as it is, during the greater part of the year, of a bracing and tonic character, and well adapted to reinvigorate the systems of those who have been exhausted by a lengthened sojourn on the coast.

**POPULATION.**—The population of the division of Newcastle is of mixed origin, as is the case in the Ladismith section of the county of Klip River. The Dutch-Africander element is, however, gradually giving place to the more energetic and intelligent people of European

origin; but still the Boers form the bulk of our residents. According to the census returns for 1870, the total white population amounted to 1070 souls, the males being 100 in excess of the females. There is yet room for a very large addition to our population, and I have no hesitation in saying that no part of the colony is better adapted for the raw immigrant from Europe than the county of Klip River. The wonderful salubrity and temperate character of its climate, the absence of any diseases of an epidemic character, and the general fertility of its soil, point it out as favourable not only for human life, but also for the cultivation of those vegetable productions necessary to sustain life, and afford comforts to existence. The only drawback is the absence of facile means of getting produce to market. We may, however, hope that that point of disadvantage will be shortly overcome by the construction of the system of Railways proposed by Mr. Welborne, and which, if carried out in good faith, will be one of the utmost advantage to the colony at large. Then shall we have not only the means of conveying the results of our agricultural industry to a market with speed and at a low cost, but we shall have the initiation of an enormous manufacturing industry, for which Newcastle, from its great mineral wealth, general fertility, and abundant water-power, possesses all the elements necessary for its successful development. There is no natural obstacle to Newcastle becoming at no distant date not only the granary, but the Birmingham of Natal. With such a small population as we have, however, added to the difficulties of getting to market, progress to any visible extent is not very probable at present. But we may hope now, that in the course of a few years, we shall be able to hear the snort of the iron horse, and witness all the benefits that follow from the introduction of the modern civilizer and developer of national wealth. As regards the salubrity of our climate, it is only necessary to state that, for the past two years, the deaths amongst the white population have been less than *six in the thousand*. The population in 1869 was 991, and the deaths 6; and, as above stated, in 1870, the population had increased to 1070—and the deaths during the year, from all causes, amounted only to the same small number. As the system of registration has been in operation here for some years past, there can be no doubt about the accuracy of the figures, which are sufficient to prove the extreme healthiness of the climate and the excellence of the sanitary circumstances under which we live. Our

population includes people of all ages and conditions, and no exception can, therefore, be taken on the ground that the residents form a class above the average in point of original health and vigour. Some time ago a gentleman came to Newcastle with a view to establish a practice as a medical man. He very naturally enquired "Where is the cemetery?"—and on being answered that no necessity had been found to establish one since the village had been laid out, very readily came to the conclusion that his services were not likely to be in much demand, and in the course of a short time took his leave of the place. It is also worthy of notice that we have had three District Surgeons appointed to the Division, but after a few months sojourn all have left—all hope of making a lucrative practice being vain, owing as much to the general good sanitary state as to the sparseness of our population. The kafir population in the Division amounted to 9395 souls at the close of 1870, from which it will be inferred that no difficulty exists in obtaining labour at moderate wages. As regards the general character of the population, it is excellent. The records of the Magistrate's Court disclose no prevalence of crime, either amongst the whites or the coloured residents. The attention of the magistrate is chiefly engaged in the settlement of cases under the laws affecting masters and servants and petty thefts. Cattle stabbing or stealing is almost unknown, and those disgraceful outrages upon women that are so unfortunately rife on the coast and in the midland counties, have not had any existence, I am thankful to say, within our borders.

**AGRICULTURE.**—The attention of farmers in this division has been mainly devoted to the raising of cattle. Stock-breeding is more easy and more certain in its results than agriculturo. Oxen and horses possess, besides, the great advantage of being able to convey themselves to market. The remarks made as regards cattle in the Ladismith division of the county apply to stock farmers in this division with equal force, but upon the whole, I believe, from the superior quality of our veldt, that the general run of our cattle is finer than in the other portion of the county. But few deaths occur from poverty, even during our severest winters, and although unfortunately we cannot claim exemption from lung-sickness, the mortality amongst cattle from disease is comparatively unimportant. The quantity of stock owned by the white population was as under, at the close of 1870:—

Horned Cattle.....	21,241
Horses .....	1848
Sheep .....	32,222
Goats .....	10,517
Pigs .....	683

The growth of wool has been attended with a considerable degree of success in this division during the last year or two, and our flocks of sheep, although they bear no comparison with the enormous numbers owned by individuals in other parts of the world, are still increasing at a respectable rate. I believe that if sheep farming is to be attended with success in any part of the colony, it is in the Klip River County, where the veldt appears to be more suited to their requirements than in most portions of Natal. Still, I do not think that sheep will eventually continue to attract any considerable portion of attention, but in the present transition state of this portion of the colony they are, perhaps, as profitable a "catch crop," as could be introduced. Horses occupy a small amount of attention, although the climate is favourable and the sickness peculiar to those valuable animals has not raged with any considerable degree of virulence amongst the troops. No great pains have been taken to improve the breeds, and, as a rule, the horses in the division are only fit for domestic use; for, although they are strong and hardy, they require size and appearance to fit them for export purposes. The kafir population owns the under-mentioned stock, viz. :—

Horned Cattle .....	13,480
Horses .....	420
Sheep (kafir) .....	1364
Goats .....	7857
Pigs .....	35

The state of agriculture proper in this division is one that might be very advantageously extended and improved. Only 884 acres are reported as being under cultivation at the close of 1870. It will be easily understood that the efforts of the residents in this direction have been only to the extent necessary for the supply of their own wants. The trouble of conveying such produce to market, and the low prices realised when there, are quite sufficient to account for this state of things; but it is not to be supposed that it is owing to any defect in the soil or climate that this neglect of agriculture is attributable. It is simply that wheat-growing will not pay under existing circumstances, and consequently is

only followed so far as to supply domestic requirements. Under wheat there were 274 acres in 1870, and the produce amounted to 1188 muids, which gives an average produce of about 13 bushels per acre. This, it must be confessed, is a very low average, but it is nevertheless easily to be accounted for. It is the practice of most Boers to sow their wheat and mealie crops year after year upon the same piece of land, thus taking for a long series of years two whole crops off the same spot, and returning very little to the soil in the shape of manure. In my view the fact that, after all the bad farming, the land continues to give even 13 bushels per acre, is proof conclusive of the almost inexhaustible fertility of the soil. A neighbour of mine has, to my knowledge, obtained good crops of wheat and mealies for 10 years past, off one patch of land about four acres in extent, the least yield of wheat being 18 muids, and the largest 32 muids. He is in the habit of manuring once in two years, and certainly pays more attention to irrigation and culture than most of the Dutch farmers are accustomed to bestow. This system is continued until the land is thoroughly exhausted, and then a fresh piece is brought under cultivation.

I think if land will bear such atrociously bad farming as that described for a period of 10 to 15 years, it says something for the intrinsic excellence and fertility of the soil.

Under mealies or maize, 502 acres were in crop, producing 2572 muids—also a low average, and to be attributed to the same cause, aided in no small degree by the wasteful consumption of mealies whilst in a green state. It will be more apparent that this is the case when it is stated that whereas the average produce of mealies per acre under white management is but five muids, the kafirs absolutely obtain six muids to the acre! All other vegetable productions are produced in such minute quantities that it is not worth while to debate upon them. That the climate and soil of Newcastle are adapted to the growth of a great and important variety of valuable export staples, cannot be questioned. Tobacco thrives most luxuriantly all over the division. Cotton might also be grown with advantage, but as the winter is too severe for the plant, it can only be treated as an annual. China grass, hemp, and flax, may each in time form a staple production, as they all thrive abundantly where they have been tried.

Rice is produced to a small extent on some farms, and might be cultivated to the extent of becoming a standard

article, if it should be found that the price would pay the cost of cultivation and of transport. The hop plant and the tea tree are at present being under experimental trial, and as regards the former there seems to be every prospect of success. A considerable number of useful trees and shrubs have been introduced, mainly through the public spirit of Mr. M. J. M'Ken, the energetic Curator of the Botanical Gardens in Durban. Most kinds of Australian trees and shrubs find a congenial soil and climate here, and in the course of time there is no doubt will become quite naturalised, and greatly improve the general aspect of the country.

A good deal of butter is made in the division, the produce of 1870 being stated at 77,810 lbs., which, of course, does not include the large quantity retained at home for consumption. Cheese and bacon have not hitherto engaged the attention of our farmers to any considerable extent, although, from the excellent quality of both articles, they will in time, doubtless, come to be looked upon as a profitable branch of our agriculturists. The quantities returned, as made in 1870, amount only to 2050 lbs. of cheese, and of bacon only 6900 lbs. were made. It is strange that articles of such universal consumption should be so neglected, but, I believe, that with more extended markets and greater facilities of transport many things now regarded as being unworthy of attention will form a source of considerable wealth to the agriculturists, not only of this division, but throughout Natal.

Our produce of wool in 1870 was nearly 50 per cent. in advance of that of 1869, and amounted to 63,415 lbs. It may, therefore, be inferred that the culture of wool is assuming considerable magnitude in its proportions, for until within a few years the number of sheep in the division was very inconsiderable. Sheep do well in certain places all the year round, and the district is a favourite resort for the Boers from the Free State as a winter grazing ground for their flocks.

The quantities of other farm produce are so inconsiderable as not to be worthy of notice.

As regards indigenous products that may at some future day be worthy of attention, may be enumerated indigo of several varieties growing everywhere, the castor oil plant, hemp, and a large variety of fibre-yielding plants, the properties and commercial values of which have yet to be ascertained. I have no doubt, however, that the time will come when many of the native pro-

ductions of the soil will be found of great value, but at present there is an insuperable bar to enterprise in this direction, in the enormous cost of carriage. But few of the raw materials of manufacture will bear an impost of from £7 to £15 per ton—for transport only—after the cost of cultivation and initial preparation for market. The introduction of the Railway system will be of enormous advantage to these upper districts, and will greatly develop enterprise, and, thereby, add greatly to the wealth of the colony, and the prosperity of the merchants. It is needless to argue upon this matter, as the experience of all countries shows that the prosperity of a community is dependent almost entirely upon the facilities that exist for rapid and cheap intercommunication. This can only be supplied to us by a system of railways, as we have no facilities for inland traffic by means of rivers or canals.

**EMPLOYMENTS.**—The population of Newcastle is almost entirely agricultural. On nearly all farms mixed husbandry is carried on, but the principal attention of the inhabitants is directed to stock breeding, for which the climate and pasture are admirably adapted. In commerce but little more has been attempted hitherto than to supply local wants, and the storekeeping interest is consequently limited. In course of a few years, however, it may be expected that a great development will take place in the commerce of the district, the township of Newcastle being well placed for commanding the trade with the adjoining States, and the interior of Africa. Indeed if I might venture to prophesy, I would predict that within the present century, Newcastle will become the most prosperous and busy town in Natal, and the principal centre of trade with the great, and, as yet, little known countries that lie at our back. At present, however, trade is almost entirely local, and the traffic from the interior passes by the town in consequence of the inability of the storekeepers to keep up stocks sufficient to command trade, and supply the wants of their own neighbours. The establishment of the railway will be a certain and speedy cure for this evil, and with the turning of the first sod it may be expected that a new era of prosperity will commence for these upper districts.

**MINES, MINERALS.**—There are no mines properly so-called in the district of Newcastle: all the mining operations at present being open to the sky. Coal is the only mineral that is extracted in any quantity at present,

and that is quarried rather than mined. Ironstone is abundant, and large quantities of titanite iron are to be found in the soil. Traces of gold have been found in different localities, but not to an extent to invite systematic exploration. Agates, cornelians, and some other ornamental stones are found in the streams, but they are generally too fragmentary to be of value. A great variety of sandstones is to be found adapted for building and other purposes. Whinstone also abounds, and from the convenient forms in which it is found, is much used for building substantial houses, as well as for the more common use of kraals for cattle and sheep, for which purpose the stones are merely packed loosely one on another, and form very durable as well as cheap enclosures for cattle, sheep, &c. A hard kind of sandstone is used for making the small millstones used by the Boers' for grinding wheat, but they are generally too soft for that purpose, and cause the meal to be very gritty. Good grindstones are obtainable in some parts of the division, quite equal to the ordinary class of imported stones, and at all events they are good enough for all useful purposes as required by the farmers. Of limestone, the supply is not abundant, but it is found in a nodular state in many places, and as a stalactitic limestone in the krantzies and kloofs of the mountains. For domestic consumption, there is at present enough, but with an increase of population, and a higher class of farming, it is probable that we shall have to import it from a more favoured locality. A white clay, similar to the Cornish China Clay, is to be found in various parts of the division, and will probably be found available for ceramic purposes of the commoner clays, there is a great variety suitable for the coarser kinds of pottery and bricks, and for an excellent quality of tiles.

I am sorry that I am not able to give an accurate geological description of the division. A thorough exploration of the rocks and strata of the district would be of great value, but hitherto none such has been made. It must suffice for me to say that the strata does not indicate that any violent perturbations have taken place since the coal beds were deposited. The inclination of the strata is slight, and in the hills alternate horizontal layers of sandstone and trap are apparent to the most unscientific observer. In a few places traces of igneous action are visible in basaltic formations, and lava, which is generally vesicular, and contains small crystals in the cells. I am not aware that any fossils have been found, or that



the shales of the coal measures have been examined for "medals of the creation;" but abundance of petrified wood is to be found, and doubtless a scientific search would be abundantly rewarded by discoveries of interest and importance.

GENERAL REMARKS.—I have not said anything about the town of Newcastle. The site of this township is on the right bank of the Incanda, or Waterfall River, not very far from its junction with the Buffalo. It is situated on a plain of sufficient extent to allow of its development into a place of considerable importance in the future. Unfortunately, it is not the best site that could have been selected, and it was strongly protested against at the time when it was being laid out by the Surveyor-General. Notwithstanding its proximity to a river of considerable size, there is a great difficulty about the water-supply, and should the town become thickly inhabited, the question of drainage will be fraught with much difficulty and expense, in consequence partly of the small descent of the plain, and partly because of the nature of the subsoil, which does not permit the percolation of moisture to any considerable extent. Even in the height of the dry season the soil is damp, and by digging a few feet water can be obtained. At present, this is a convenience rather than otherwise—inasmuch as, with little trouble, water can be obtained for shallow wells; but in the future, when the population becomes more dense, it is to be feared that the town of Newcastle will prove no exception to the general rule followed by those who have had the duty of selecting sites for towns and villages in Natal. Given a plain of sufficient extent to cut up into erven, and it seems to be quite immaterial to the powers that be whether it be on the top of a mountain or the bottom of a swamp. In the case of Newcastle the latter condition has been carefully sought out and availed of by the Surveyor-General, and the result will be in the future that an enormous outlay will be required for drainage and water-supply which could have been avoided. The Incanda River occasionally overflows its banks, and even penetrates some of the houses that have been placed on the lower grounds. At present but few houses have been erected in the township—probably not more than a score, but a large number of erven (or lots of about one acre each) have been sold, and are held by persons as a speculation. The initiation of a railway, having Newcastle for one of its termini, will doubtless

very materially enhance the value of ground in the township, and will eventually justify the expectations of those who have bought land at low prices in order to sell again when the value is greater. I believe, however, that at present the town is very healthy, only one death of an adult having taken place within its precincts since it was laid out—now some seven or eight years ago. Both the Ineanda and the Buffalo abound with fish, and on the plain in the neighbourhood fair hunting can be obtained, although the quantity of game has very materially diminished of late years, owing to the wholesale destruction carried on by Boers and kafirs for the sake of the skins, which find a ready market in the town. Nuclei of villages and towns have been formed in various parts of the Division, as at Huddersfield, Ermelo, &c., but they are little more than names at present. From its position, Newcastle must ever be the chief centre of trade, inasmuch as several important roads converge in its vicinity, by means of which the traffic of the interior is carried on. Although Newcastle is the seat of the magistracy, no public buildings have as yet been erected, and the greatest possible inconvenience arises from the fact that there is no appropriate building for a jail. No classification of prisoners can be made, and European and kafir prisoners have to be thrust indiscriminately into one small lock-up until the former can be sent to Ladismith. I believe, however, that the attention of the Government will be directed to this and other evils with a view to their being remedied, and I certainly think that the money paid into the Colonial Treasury, arising from the sale of land in the district, should be applied to the public works required. Thus we want new roads—the present road to Newcastle has been so ingeniously contrived that the town can be passed without entering. We want bridges, a laager, and a powder magazine, as well as a gaol and public offices, but not a sixpence has the Government expended out of the large amount of money realised by the sales of erven in the town and Crown Lands in the division, to supply these crying needs. I have been digressing a little here, but as you wish to have a correct picture of Newcastle, as it at present exists, I could scarcely avoid making the remarks I have done.

I have now given you, very imperfectly, I am afraid, a slight sketch of the county of Klip River and its two divisions. I cannot pretend to have done justice to either, but I feel more particularly that I have not said all that might be said about the Ladismith district. I entertain

the strongest opinion that of all other parts of Natal the County of Klip River is the most suited to immigrants of moderate means. Here they will find land cheap; they will secure fine air, a fertile soil, and a splendid climate. They can rear cattle, horses, and sheep; they can grow as good wheat, barley, and other cereals as in any country under the sun.

As regards tobacco, the success of Mr. H. E. Knight, of Sunday River, shows what may be done. Flax, hemp, and rice can be cultivated without any difficulty.

We have here European fruits in great variety, and not a few that will not flourish in England. I am convinced that the vine might be successfully cultivated with the view to making wine, although it might be some time before the soil and situation best suited for that most capricious plant could be hit upon.

In short, the European immigrant would have but little to *unlearn* in the way of farming in the uplands of Natal, and could set to work at once. I look upon cotton, coffee, and sugar as eminently unsuited to the majority of European immigrants who can have had no experience in their culture and manufacture, and consequently run the greatest risk of failure in fortune and in health, also by a sojourn on the coast before acclimatization is accomplished.

Up here, on the contrary, there need be no risk of capital or health, and a native of the north of England or Scotland will speedily find himself as much at home as amongst his native mountains.

I must, however, now desist, and will only say that I fully endorse Dr. Greisbaeh's statement that the uplands of Natal are the "Paradise of immigrants."

J. S.

## CHAPTER XXII.

### FARMING IN THE UPLANDS.

BY AN UP-COUNTRY FARMER.

The industries of these uppermost divisions of the colony, vary to some extent from the midland districts, as the enumeration which I shall at once proceed with

will show—but many are the same. Cattle-breeding and butter-making are the most common. But the most profitable here is sheep-breeding, in connection with the neighbouring Republic, to which the farmers resort to spend the summer months for equal benefit to the health of both biped and quadruped, on the most elevated plains of South Africa, which almost represent an European climate with regard to temperature, though drier and more bracing; being so conducive to health, that a young man whose life was considered to be in great danger from consumption, after migrating two consecutive summer seasons with his flock, has been quite restored to health. This great change in climate can be effected in a few hours.

As soon as the summer season has passed, down come all those stock farmers to winter in the much milder climate of Natal during the more rigorous months of June, July, and August.

It is said that this change gives length to the staple of the wool, and certainly both cattle and sheep make more growth of carcase.

Next in importance comes a more industrial but less profitable occupation, in wheat growing, and herein lies a difference between those upper districts and the midlands where only a dark coloured grain, called Victoria wheat, is grown. In the Klip River and Newcastle districts, every one, I believe, has abandoned the culture of the Victoria wheat in favour of a pretty white grain called "Klein Koorn," rather harsh to grind, and the Cape wheat, which yields the best white flour, but is more uncertain in cropping, and is consequently less extensively cultivated. The farmers generally limit their wheat cultivation to about twenty to thirty acres for want of sufficient water for irrigation, but those who draw their supplies from rivers, and not from pumps on their farms, can cultivate a much greater extent of land if it lie so low that the water taken from such a source can be made to run over it. An instance of this sort is met with near the Little Tugela river, where a very enterprising colonist with an immense amount of labour and skill, brought a large stream of water a great distance, being enough to irrigate over 100 acres of land, and to drive a corn and threshing machine. The result of this laudable enterprise will soon be shown in large crops of wheat to be dragged about eighty miles over a heavy road by ox wagons, travelling at a rate of barely three miles per hour.

Oats which do not mature in the lower districts, come to perfection here, and by many are preferred for seed to those imported. Another source of income which cannot be classified with the foregoing industries, is in coal, which I am informed brings an income of about £50 per annum to the owner, who gets his money for the article by a very easy process. The coal is found in a spruit where a wagon can be driven close up to it, and by paying 5s. for a load, any one can go to work and fill his wagon. The owner has only to grant the permit and pocket the money. The grantee fills his wagon, and drives it 120 miles or more to Maritzburg, when it is sold to the blacksmiths, and many householders, for domestic use.

After mentioning only these few occupations, what a necessity is shown for a railway! It appears to me that sericulture could be practised here with material advantage, as many farms are thickly populated with kafirs, who render certain services for the privilege of their occupation. Silkworm rearing can only profitably be carried on with cheap and reliable labour, and here it is in many instances. The kafir girls might be employed for about 2s. 6d. to 3s. per month, and a blanket worth 3s., just so long as the season for attending to the worms lasts, and then go back to their kraals again. So the sericulturist would not have to pay for continuous labour when it is not required. The mulberry grows like a weed everywhere, and the insects kept merely for amusement, appear to be very healthy. The tedious labour of tending would not be felt by these girls, who are accustomed to tedium in most of their occupations. Many farms, as I have said before, are occupied by kafirs, but a great many are not, so the industry could not be general, but where it might be carried on, I believe the labour would be the cheapest in the world, not excepting India or China. But on the other hand we must bear in mind that our labour is inferior to that of the Chinese, French, or Italian, in organization and good management, so that all the various occupations should be approximated to proper division of labour, and superintendence both in-doors and out-doors, is essential, since kafirs generally take no pride in their work and idle time away as much as they can. Still, with good management on such farms where the command of cheap labour is almost unlimited, sericulture on a somewhat large scale should be profitable if the rearing of millions with proper appliances can be judged of by the specimens of thousands kept simply for amusement.

Where gardens are situated below a constant stream of running water, as most are in these up-counties, vegetables of all sorts thrive remarkably well, especially the large onions which cannot be grown in some parts of the colony. Grapes come to perfection most years, if trained on the wall of a house having a north-east prospect, and sheltered from the blighting north-west, or interior winds, but the vines planted in open ground are subject to rust. Gardening without the means of irrigation, generally speaking, is heartless work in this, probably the driest, district in Natal, as regards the atmosphere, but for springs and streams perhaps the most favoured.

In almost every county in this colony there is a fair proportion of open and bush country, but the land is very different in some respects. The bush country of the upper districts excepting in small spots where homesteads are fixed, and where there are small plots of alluvial deposit, is composed of shaley and stoney ground, so arid in appearance that one wonders where the bush or shrub, rather than trees, can find soil enough for nourishment, and that part of the country is notoriously the driest. Indigenous trees, excepting the camel thorn (acacia) and those growing along the banks of the river (which are mostly bare of trees), grow in kloofs having a southerly aspect, and where moisture is driven from springs rising in the hills above them. From my observation I cannot understand the theory that tree planting attracts moisture, as it happens here that the bush land is the driest, and where timber grows there is high land of hills and mountains having, in the writer's opinion, a greater attraction for rain than trees have. Although the bush cannot be classed as trees, the shrubs have limb and leaf the same, and the few feet difference in height surely can have but an inappreciable influence on the upper atmosphere.

Having so far to convey their produce, the farmers naturally complain of the bad state of repair the roads are kept in, and yet it is contemplated opening out about 50 or 60 miles of new road which would require to be kept in repair, but most likely would be in the same condition as the main road is or worse. At all events it is certain there are more roads already than the Colonial Engineer's Department can manage to keep in decent order. We do not want more bad roads, but a railway to develop the earthly treasures lying so much to waste here, but so useful to neighbouring countries, such as the Cape, Mauritius, Aden, and India. The railway in point of time would, of course, bring the diamond-fields

within comparatively easy reach of the port, and find employment in heavy traffic like coal, corn, wool, as well as passenger traffic. So much has been written and talked on this subject, that a bare reference to it here must suffice.

Travelling from Durban to the Drakensberg, we remark that no river is crossed during the first fifty miles or so, as the Umgeni allowing for its devious course and sinuosities, runs parallel to the road, but through such a rugged and difficult country that its valley, if valley it can be called, is frequently unapproachable. After we begin to cross a river which is immediately before Maritzburg, we cross one at every stage of about twenty miles until we come to the Drakensberg. These rivers have all their sources in the Drakensberg, and run with no sluggish current. Water here and there is taken from them for the purposes of irrigation and of a few corn mills. Were the colonists more wealthy than they are, and not wanting in enterprise, this valuable water power always running to waste, might be made available for many purposes. A dense white population would necessitate the utilisation of the rivers, both for irrigation and manufacture, but it would require wealth, energy, and enterprise, like that of Australia or America to make this colony what it ought to be. Such a result would be brought about, by taking the first important step, bringing to light the coal, and making the utmost use of the productions already developed and before alluded to.

A great deal of ingenuity on the part of our early settlers (the Boers) is shown in leading water out of these rivers, which have mostly high banks. Every natural facility is applied, and enough water obtained for the purpose in view is taken with astonishingly inexpensive work, which could not possibly be accomplished without a great deal of forethought. So with their dams or reservoirs constructed to contain a large body of water at very little cost. A dam which took our attention was constructed across a valley with a long earth wall lined with stones. A provision was made against accidents which large reservoirs are often liable to. When the water is comparative low and the dam shallow, the wall is thin and not carried so high as the other part across the middle where the water is deep, by about eighteen inches, and beyond this is a waste water course as usual in such works. Should an overwhelming flood come at any time, the first part of the dam wall to give way would be the

lowest and thinnest, which would allow an immense body of water to escape, and save the heaviest work—the lighter work washed away could soon be renovated. Nothing is more simple or effectual, but it is not every engineer who not having seen the plan, would think of adopting it. Many boers have an especial talent for this description of hydrostatics, and always with a view to cheapness and economy. Ingenuity is also shown in their ox wagons, so simple in construction, and adapted for all sorts of roads—and often for no roads at all. After mentioning these traits in their character, we have little more to say with regard to their inventive genius. To do as their father did before their day, appears to be the rule, and generally speaking, for self interest, a very good rule too. There is nothing experimental about it, consequently nothing to risk.

Very little more is to be said about these upper districts, of little value (excepting perhaps as regards coal) in themselves, but of great importance in connection with the Free State, when between them the summer and winter seasons are so tempered, that for comfort and health, it is doubtful if such a favourable climate can be found within the same small space in any other part of the world.

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## CHAPTER XXIII.

### CONDITIONS OF HEALTH IN NATAL.

BY J. E. SEAMAN, M.D.

Health is a subject of such paramount importance in a semi-tropical climate that it becomes advisable to follow, as far as circumstances permit, those laws of Hygiene which experience has shown us the wisdom of observing. The principal matters which require to be regulated with a view to the preservation of health by the European are diet, exercise, clothing, condition of dwelling, place of residence, and habits of life. A *dietary* to be wholesome and nutritious, must contain a combination of nitrogenous and non-nitrogenous elements, together with vegetables known to contain a free acid, or such an acid in combination with potash.



In Natal, the staple of diet used by the natives is maize, which may be said to contain both elements. What the potato is to Ireland and oatmeal is to Scotland, are mealies to Natal. This mealie meal or porridge, mixed with milk, forms a nutritious and suitable adjunct to the dietary of European children in the colony. An abundant supply of good food adapted to the powers of digestion is essential; but frequently the European, oppressed and debilitated by the warm weather, takes animal food in excess, under the impression that it will "strengthen" him, whereas this too abundant use of meat often increases debility by causing dyspepsia and general derangement of the digestive organs. A light, nutritious regimen is necessary; and as eggs, milk, maize, fowls, beef, mutton, &c., are plentiful and cheap, the European settler will experience no difficulty in selecting a wholesome and nutritious dietary.

Another important accessory to health is *exercise*. In hot climates, the demand upon the lungs for the combustion of the carbon and hydrogen of the blood being diminished, bile is liable to be formed in increased quantity, part of which passing into the intestines doubtless tends to prevent congestion of the lungs, and part being absorbed into the blood tinges the conjunction and, in extreme cases, creates a sallowness of the skin. Strong exercise in the open air by calling the lungs into activity, and promoting a more thorough combustion of the carbon and hydrogen of the blood, lessens the necessity for the formation of bile, rapidly removes symptoms of indigestion, and restores the natural clearness of the complexion.

*Clothing* of a light and suitable texture, adapted to the climate, is also desirable. As the secretion from the skin is increased by the high rate of temperature, it is advisable to wear a thin merino or flannel vest next the body. By the omission of this precaution in adults or young children who perspire freely, a chill may arise from the moist under-clothing, which causes the blood to be injuriously thrown upon the membranes of the alimentary canal, and is thus productive of diarrhoea or catarrhal affections, which, however, readily yield to proper treatment. Although *coup de soleil* is of rare occurrence in Natal, it is essential to protect the head as much as possible during the summer season. For this purpose light pith helmets, or felt hats covered with a puggari or turban, are usually worn and found to be efficacious.

The *condition of dwelling* is an important consideration; and it should be borne in mind that whilst a house requires to be well ventilated, it should also prove an efficient protection against the out-door heat. A high-pitched roof, without parapets, is most serviceable. The verandahs should be broad and so arranged that they may be closed by sliding when necessary. The rooms of the house require to be large and lofty, with ventilators over the windows, and fan-lights over the doors. Iron is usually found to be a good material for the roof; and provided the rooms are sufficiently lofty and the ceilings boarded, it does not materially increase the heat. Lightning conductors of an approved character are indispensable in a country where thunderstorms are of frequent occurrence and severity during the summer season. When there is a free choice, a gravelly or concrete soil and sloping ground are to be preferred to a clay soil and low, level site. A tenacious clay soil, a rich alluvium, or a dry surface soil with water at a short distance beneath, should be avoided, but especially the flat banks of rivers or streams, or the flat base of hills, as well as marshy spots and the neighbourhood of stagnant water. The worst combination of site and soil is a flat, rich, alluvial deposit between a hill and a stream. Such spots are the favourite haunts of continued fevers as marshes are of agues. In England, a south aspect is to be preferred to all others, but in Natal, the opposite is desirable. A north or north-easterly aspect possesses several advantages, as a house thus situated will be in a great measure sheltered from the heavy rains and winds prevalent during the season of spring. When such shelter is not afforded, it may be obtained by plantations, which should in no case be so near the house as to obstruct the free movement of the air, or to endanger the foundation of the building by the growth of roots.

A good supply of clear, colourless spring-water, and a supply of rain-water, amounting to at least ten gallons per head per diem, are great desiderata. As intestinal worms (*Oscarex Lumbricoides* and *Tenia Solium*) are somewhat prevalent in the colony, and proceed possibly from impure water, it is highly necessary to be careful in this respect, and for drinking purposes a charcoal filter will be found of service. Health, however, in Natal, as in other countries, is greatly dependent upon *habits of life*; and those which chiefly militate against it are dissipation, intemperance, irregularity in the time

of taking meals and rest, and want of personal cleanliness. It not unfrequently happens that Europeans suffering from the depressing influence of the hot weather, resort to stimulants as a means of sustaining their energies. No habit is more pernicious or detrimental to the health. The practice of daily ablution of the whole body, if persevered in, will be found a sufficient invigorative in the most relaxing season, by people of ordinary health, whilst it must be borne in mind that the habit of taking alcoholic stimulants will only aggravate the reaction which in all cases must inevitably follow.

The climate of Natal is in itself an extremely salubrious one; and especially suited to individuals suffering from emphysema, chronic bronchitis, asthma, and all those affections of the air passages and lungs, in which previous experience has shown that the patient suffers severely in winter, and is comparatively well during the summer. Chronic rheumatism, gout, and calculous disorders are also much benefited by a residence here. Those epidemic scourges of Europe—cholera, small-pox, and typhus fever—are at present unknown. In certain marshy localities remittent and intermittent fevers occasionally appear; and the obvious preventive will be found in the drainage of the land and the cultivation of the soil. To the European seeking a mild and temperate climate, Natal presents peculiar advantages. As a winter residence, it is, perhaps, unsurpassed; for whilst the moderate fluctuations of temperature during that season little exceed that of the milder parts of England, it has the additional advantage of a dry atmosphere, combined with the attraction of bright, clear, genial days.

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## CHAPTER XXIV.

### THE CLIMATE OF NATAL.

(AFTER A YEAR'S EXPERIENCE OF IT.)

Escaping from the discomfort of a sea voyage would make even a desert island pleasant in contrast with the "prison with the chance of drowning" one left: so that first impressions on landing in Natal are, or might be, very different to those which would permanently fix

themselves in the mind of a resident. From being unduly pleased with the novelty of a place one is apt to pass into the opposite extreme and be unjustly severe on the shortcomings you discover. The writer once had the audacity to discourse with an Irish nun on the beauty or rather ugliness of Dublin, which she maintained was the most beautiful of cities, naively confessing she had never seen any other by which to form a comparison. And for him who only knows an English climate, it would be equally presumptuous to judge of, as it would be impossible to describe, this climate of South Africa; even those who may have wandered over Europe in its best season, will fail to remember many spots where as brilliant a sky was linked with a temperature so enjoyable! Baden Baden is perhaps the nearest approach to it, though here in summer you have daily showers which cool the air, and in winter, the day through is more like an English summer morning. Nothing reminds one of winter, but you pass with changing but perennial flowers from one kind of summer weather to another, finding ample relief in the variety, but never knowing those chill dreary days when it seemed an effort almost beyond you to leave the warm couch and begin the day's labours. The climate we live in is an integral part of our happiness if not of ourselves, and the keen enjoyment of existence induced by the one I am describing, would be a set off for many a discomfort; fortunately the discomforts do not exist though ladies complain that kafirs are neither as handy nor understand English as well as English servants would. The lover of beautiful scenery will here find forest glades, in the cool shadows of which he can wander to his heart's content, and lose his way more than perhaps is pleasant, whilst those who fancy mountain heights, bare and rugged, can meet with them too in a day's march—not snow clad heights like Switzerland, though these exist some 150 miles inland, but mountains like Ben Nevis in summer time, where you get well cooled and thoroughly tired on the hottest days. Every garden of Eden has a serpent in it to mar the perfect happiness, the worst half of creation might otherwise have found, and truth compels me to state that delightful as the walks are in fine weather, still, when it does rain, the roads, which are ill cared for, and formed of stiff clay, become endless puddles in which you sink ankle deep at every step, if you do not fall down in the slippery mass; neither are there inns at every short interval, so that you may find you have a better appetite for the meal

and further to walk for it than you bargained at starting. This is perhaps an advantage as the meal itself may require a little Spartan sauce to make it acceptable. Gas lamps there are none, and here and there you find your course arrested by spruits, pools, or rivers, which you must jump across or wade across as best you can, thanking your stars if no alligator makes his breakfast off you meanwhile. As I write the wind whistles and drives sand against the window panes like some dusty English day in March, but it is just as much warmer as in March we wish it was, and there is a scent of orange flowers borne along on the breeze, so what wonder that few who have enjoyed this climate ever leave it for any other, and enjoying it myself, why should I not dare to write my thoughts, though—like those glowing Italian landscapes which, judged by the leaden skies of old England, look improbable or even impossible—to my former self and to strangers they must needs seem too highly coloured to be true.

Such are the impressions made by this climate on one like myself in perfect health; and although writing from hearsay is not quite the same thing as recording your own experiences, it will hardly be fair to quit the subject without alluding to the invalids and weakly people who come here. No epidemic can be said to be very prevalent, except "Natal fever," which is here used to express laziness. Indigestion is rather a common ailment; but considering that many people eat two and three meat meals per day, and ride instead of taking hard exercise, the wonder is that it is not more common. The Army Returns show that this and the Cape Colony are the two healthiest of the stations, and the numbers of English people who have come out here in search of health, and apparently found it, seems to point to the same conclusion. There are two very different climates to be found here suitable for different and even opposite temperaments. The climate of the Coast is moist, with no wide range of heat, the greatest summer heat being  $89^{\circ}$  to  $93^{\circ}$ , and the winter seldom giving a lower than  $42^{\circ}$ , though occasional frosts are not unknown. Further inland, some 150 miles, the extremes of heat and cold may be met with, accompanied by a very dry atmosphere, which seems peculiarly suited to consumptive patients. In fact, in the early stages of the disease a residence in this region seems a certain cure, whilst those arriving in the later stages find the disease arrested, and remain in health so long as they remain in the country. The mistake too

commonly made by persons in England is that they remain at home too long, and arrive at Natal in too exhausted a state to continue their journey to the dry air of the interior, and thus are forced to remain in the damp coast air, which in such cases is not favourable to recovery, though for the early stages of consumption it is.

These things can hardly be too widely known in England, where so many victims yearly die; and coming from a disinterested traveller living near the region he recommends, and not in it, and well able to judge of the truth of the statements he hears, these particulars may be more interesting, and carry more weight than if recorded by a merely professional pen, for which, like Queen Elizabeth and the dancing master, so many have a suspicious aversion.

I will here record a fact which may give the clue to a reason for the cures thus effected. The air is so dry that meat freely exposed to it becomes encased in a hard dry skin, formed by the drying of a thin layer of flesh, and in that state will keep for months as fresh as the day killed. Whether a similar action may not take place on the lungs, I leave to those who may be more anxious to explain the fact than to take advantage of it. The climate of the middle district, intermediate between the two I have described, is intermediate also in character—a bright stimulating sun that recalls to one's memory the Swiss mountain air.—In this region lies Maritzburg, the ostensible capital of the Colony; but the traveller who would expect to find the prosperity and signs of activity he associates with the idea of a capital, will be disappointed, as it is less bustling than the sea-port town of Durban, where he first lands; but, nevertheless, it will suit many whose health would not be improved by the air of the Coast, and who do not wish to go further into the interior. Bright's disease seems commoner here than in England, but to judge by the look of the people, liver disorders are not much more so; and as one fact is worth any number of opinions, I may mention that very old people are *common*, and there is a German living near Pinetown, who remembers Frederick the Great, and has attained the age of 109, and still walks about and enjoys the very enjoyable climate which here makes it worth while to live so long.

As I am writing this a friend has unexpectedly returned. He had been here twelve months, never intending to stay, but after two months' stay in England, the memory of the climate he had left was too strong to be resisted, despite the sea voyage.

## CHAPTER XXV.

### HINTS TO EMIGRANTS.

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THE following practical suggestions are put forth for the benefit of persons who may have determined to make Natal their home.

Before and above all other necessities which the emigrant ought to have are these, namely :—

- A stout heart and a strong untiring arm.
- A temper prepared for disappointment, and determined to make the best of things.
- A judgment unwarped by prejudices, delusions, or vain expectations.
- A conviction that the land before them is no paradise, and that in the new life they are to lead hard work, frugality, and perseverance will be as necessary to success as they are elsewhere.
- A spirit of caution and a readiness to be advised by the experience of older colonists.
- Sober habits and simple wants.

These qualities will stand a man in better stead than large capital and vast appliances. Both have been greatly sacrificed in Natal during times past, for the want of them.

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Intending settlers cannot be too much on their guard against advertisements in English journals from private individuals, offering land for sale, or homes in the colony for young men,

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The emigrant cannot do better than arm himself with letters of introduction to colonists of standing—and leave all definite arrangements to be made here. Farms should never be purchased before enquiry and inspection on the spot.

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Young men often emigrate in the belief that colonists will be glad to give the board and lodging in consideration of their services on the farms or plantations. This is a mistake, as unless the young man knows something of farming, his is of no practical use for some months, and a payment is generally required.

Emigrants can proceed to Natal either direct by sailing ships, or by the lines of steamers calling at Cape ports. The former make the passage in from sixty to eighty days, and the rates of them are £25 first class, and £15 second class. Passengers proceeding by steamer have to pay £38 17s. and £26 5s. respectively, and to transship at Capetown. The voyage in this way takes about 42 days, including stoppages at Madeira, Capetown, and Algoa Bay. It is possible that steam communication *via* the Suez canal will shortly be established. If so this will be the pleasantest route to Natal.

On this point see advertisements. The voyage to Natal is a fair-weather one as a rule, and is scarcely ever attended by disaster.

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Before leaving England, the emigrant should register himself at the office of the Colonial Land and Emigration Commissioners, 8, Park Street, Westminster, who are empowered to offer free grants of land on the following terms:—

A settler with £500 capital, or an annuitant of £50 a year, will receive a land order for 200 acres, with a 400 acre reserve.

A settler with £250 capital will receive a land order for 100 acres, with 200 acres reserve.

A settler with £100 capital will receive a land order of 50 acres, with 100 acres reserve.

The reserves will be purchaseable at 5s. an acre, at any time within the first five years.

Coast lands, but without any reserve, will be allotted at the rate of one-half of the above land orders, to the three classes of capitalists.

A settler with a competent knowledge of farming, and means to support himself and his family until he can raise his crops, will receive a land order for 50 acres, to which a reserved commonage will be attached, in localities where this is practicable.

Grants for the respective land orders will not be issued till after two years, and then only on proof of continuous occupation of the land during eight months of each year.

Assistance, not exceeding £10 per statute adult, will be given to all settlers selected and sent out by the Emigration Agent.

Pasturage licenses will be issued for land in class A, terminable at the end of each year.

Applicants for leases of pasturage lands in class B. before 1st January, 1870, will be allowed a pre-emption over their runs at 5s. an acre, but will not be allowed to purchase less than the whole run.

Immigrants are allowed a period of twelve months after their arrival in the colony, for the selection of their lands.



*Classes A and B, above referred to:*

## RENTAL OF PASTORAL LANDS.

Immigrants possessed of adequate knowledge and means, will be allowed to hire 1,000 acres of Crown Lands, suited for pastoral occupation, at a yearly rental of 1d. per acre. The land thus let will be distributed into two classes, of which one (Class A), will be nearer to the townships or settlements; and the other (Class B), more remote.

Class A will be let on annual license, renewable at the pleasure of the Colonial Government, from year to year.

Class B will be let on lease for eight years, and both classes are subject to the conditions of actual occupation and stocking (the stocking referred to, will be required to be one sheep for every five acres, or one horned beast for every 25 acres), and the rent is to be paid each year in advance.

The above regulations apply to immigrants coming to Natal provided with land orders from the Colonial Land and Emigration Commissioner, and also from the Cape Colony, with land orders from any of the agents there; but British subjects who may arrive from any other country in which there is no Emigration Agent for this colony, will likewise be entitled to the same privileges as those who are possessed of land orders, provided they comply with the foregoing established regulations, and apply for their grants within a period of three months from their arrival in the colony.

As a rule it is better for an emigrant not to burden himself with over-many belongings. If furniture is brought, it should be light, strong and durable. Tools and implements too often prove unsuited to the country, and wants of this kind, as indeed of all descriptions, can be best supplied at the local stores and warehouses. If money is spent in this way, it will probably be spent to better purpose in the colony.

This is a subject, however, concerning which much must be left to the particular circumstances of each individual. If an outfit be cheap, compact, and serviceable, it will not be regretted; if it be costly, cumbrous, and ill selected, it will prove but a burden.

On reaching Natal the emigrants may have to pay 10s. per head for boating charges from the outer anchorage, should the vessel not cross the bar at once. 10s. 6d. has also to be paid on each gun barrel, and all guns have to be registered. No customs' duty is charged upon personal baggage, but a slight inspection has to be gone through.

A line of railway, two miles long, takes passengers up to Durban, where the emigrant can make his selection

from one or other of the many hotels and boarding-houses in town. The rates at these establishments range from 3s. to 7s. per diem.

Immediately on arrival the emigrant should visit the Immigrants' Aid Office, situated near the Railway Station. This office has been established by public liberality and enterprise for the following purposes:—

The Immigrants' Aid Office is established for the purpose of fostering and encouraging Immigration to Natal by promoting the interests of Immigrants.

The Office is constituted of subscribers throughout the Colony of Natal, under the presidency of the Mayor of Durban.

The business of the Office will be conducted by a Committee of Twelve Residents of Durban, under a Chairman, elected from themselves, with the assistance of a salaried Secretary. Six Committeemen shall retire by lot annually.

Annual subscribers will be entitled to one vote, at the election of the Committee, for each sum of One Guinea they may respectively subscribe.

The expenses of the Office will be defrayed from the Subscriptions of Members.

All services rendered by the Office to Immigrants will be rendered gratuitously.

Members of Committee will be prohibited from influencing Immigrants in any transactions in Trade or Land wherein such Committeemen have any personal interest, and the Committee shall have power to call on any of its Members for a statement and full explanation of any transaction between such Committeemen and any Immigrant, and to take such action with respect thereto as may seem just.

The Office shall be open daily.

An Extraordinary Meeting of the Subscribers shall be convened whenever a requisition in that behalf, signed by Ten Subscribers, shall be lodged with the Secretary.

The Duties of the Office towards the Immigrants shall consist:

- (a.) In advising them as to their passage and outfit, and the cost thereof, and the probability of obtaining employment on their arrival in the Colony.
- (b.) In receiving them on their arrival, affording them all useful and necessary information, and advising them as to the best, cheapest, and most expeditious way of furthering the object of their immigration.
- (c.) In informing them where suitable accommodation may be obtained in Durban, Pietermaritzburg, and other parts of the Colony, and the charges.
- (d.) In receiving and forwarding their letters, in communicating with their friends, and in rendering such similar services as may be required by him.
- (e.) In communicating with Planters, Farmers, and other employers of labour, with the view of procuring immediate employment for Immigrants.
- (f.) In doing such other matters and things, within the purposes of the Office, as may from time to time be found advisable and expedient.

The directors of this institution are presided over by the Mayor for the time being, and consist of gentlemen of the first local standing. The emigrant is sure of disinterested advice and kindly serviceable aid on all points connected with his future operations. It is needless in fact to add more by way of advice as to his movements; all the information he can seek being obtainable so much more fully and precisely through this office. Although only established in February, 1871, a large number of new settlers have been provided with employment, or advised as to the choice of land, occupation, &c.

In all colonies there are a number of unscrupulous men on the look out for newcomers, and prepared to prey upon their ignorance and verdancy. Their specious representations and plausible proposals have shipwrecked many a young settler. Emigrants should listen with cautious ears to all such casual acquaintances, and depend more upon the counsel of experienced and influential men. The Immigrants' Aid Office is especially designed to save people from the danger of being misled or misinformed, and from its constitution, the interests of those who make use of its agency are in the safest and best possible keeping.

In our advertising pages will be found the London offices of banks represented in the colony, and through which money can be remitted, and financial operations conducted.

The London offices of the London and South African Bank of British South Africa, and the London and Westminster Bank, as agent for the Natal Bank, all transact business with this colony.

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## CHAPTER XXVI.

### FROM NATAL TO THE DIAMOND FIELDS.

*(By Our Special Commissioner.)*

A SUDDEN START.—TO MARITZBURG.—ESCORT.—COLENZO.—THE DRAKENSBERG.—HARRISMITH.—THE FLATS.—BETHLEHEM.—THE DIAMOND FIELDS.—LIFE THERE.

#### The Start.

The telegram settled it, Sir. All the way from Natal to Bloemfontein for one hundred rixdollars (£7 10s.)

within a day and a half's reach of the modern Golconda (I'm tired of El Dorado), was an opportunity not to be let slip by your *alter ego*, who's somewhat horse-in-the-mill life necessitated change of scene, for health's sake. When it is added that the conveyance was an almost new Paarl-built Cape omnibus, drawn by eight mules, or, more correctly, by two horses and six mules, and the driver, President Brand's coachman, it is surprising that I had only one fellow traveller, a young Hanoverian on his way from the Australian colonies to his brother who is Sheriff of the Winburg district in the Free State. A more comfortable conveyance and more careful "whip" could not be found, and our Jehu, Linder Herzenburg, added to his qualifications a disposition in every way civil and obliging. He had an assistant driver. If all this had been made properly known, and there had been time, I could have formed a little party for the trip, but it was after 3 p.m., on the 23rd May, before I could prepare, having only at ten o'clock that morning decided to start next day. For an old stager, however, (albeit out of practice) little more than warm wraps and a Napier outfit—a square of soap, and a toothbrush—are necessary therefore all the more easily got together.

#### Leaving Durban.

MAY 24, 1871.—Leave the Berea toll bar, by Welch's bus, at 7 a.m., and reach Maritzburg at 5½ p.m. (54 miles). The weather being delightful and the company agreeable, the journey would be, were it not for the dust, which at times is suffocating, all that could be desired. The number of wagons we met on the road with wool, skins, and produce is very great.

#### To Mooi River.

MAY 25.—Up betimes expecting to start at 7 a.m., but it is gunfire before we are fairly under way, up the old road over the Town hill. Our team having had a good rest after their journey down from Bloemfontein, seem fresh enough, and the day being as fine as could be desired, we start in excellent spirits. An hour's toil brings us to the top of the hill, from which a good view is obtained over the more circuitous Zwartkop valley road on the left. At 11.10 a.m. we pass Riet Spruit and reach Howick (67½ miles from Durban) at 11.55 a.m., which is our first stage. The Umgeni being low and having so often viewed the Falls under more favourable aspects, we pass the time at Westray's comfortable hostelry, where our two drivers are introduced to the delights of the gal-

vanic battery, which astonishes them somewhat. Leaving Howick at 11.55 we notice on the right near the top of the hill a fine flock of sheep. The atmosphere being, as usual at this season, extremely hazy, the Karkloof and other ranges are only dimly seen. At 12.50 p.m. we are again on the road, and at 2.55 make our easy second stage in the veldt. At 3.30 we inspan, and a quarter of an hour after brings us to Hond Bosch Rand (30 miles from Durban), where Sergeant Curry has built an excellent hotel. About 4.45 one of our two horses knocks-up and is unharnessed, apparently overdriven. He staggers and is led off the road on to the grass, where he falls and in less than five minutes dies. We tie his mate to one of the shaft mules, and at 6.50 p.m. reach Whipp's at Mooi River (95 miles from Durban), one of the coldest spots in the colony, and to-night is no exception to the rule. The young May moon is very advantageous for travelling. The Mooi River is here crossed by a neat iron bridge. Sixteen years having elapsed since we last travelled this route, we can only lament the comparatively few changes noticeable in that long interval. Howick township has much improved, and with its little church, and homesteads surrounded by trees, has a pleasing appearance contrasted with the dry grass, great patches of which, indeed, are already burnt off most of the way along the road. The present Hond Bosch Rand Hotel is five miles nearer Howick than Turton's was, the only trace of the latter being five gum trees, the only green thing there visible. Off the road, of course, there are many new settlers, especially about Mooi River, but we see nothing of their farms.

#### Estcourt.

MAY 26.—We start at 8 a.m., at and 10.15 outspan at a spruit, where several kafirs ride past us on horseback, downward bound. At 11 a.m. we are again on the trek, and by 12.35 p.m. cross the substantial iron toll-bridge at Bushman's River, paying 1s. 6d. toll (114 miles from Durban). Estcourt has much increased since we saw it last, and we here meet with several old friends. The worthy Resident Magistrate, our old friend, Mr. John Macfarlane, we regret to find confined to the house by indisposition. Mr. Woods, of the excellent hotel at this place, appears to be doing a thriving business. The white Court house at a distance has a somewhat imposing appearance, and the new offices just built by Mr. Nickson will form a useful adjunct. We here attempt to supply the deficiency in our team, and after some delay

succeed in buying a couple of horses, a bay and a blue. For the former we pay £7 5s., and for the latter give one of our mules and £3 10s. in cash. Our driver not speaking a word of English our Dutch is in requisition, which, having lain dormant since 1856 (and then being principally confined to buying and selling) is of a most composite character, English, German, French, and Kafir words being occasionally interlarded. At 2.45 p.m. we leave Bushman's River, and are soon over the steep hill where the scenery begins to improve, the road from Mooi River having been very monotonous. It has been too hazy for us to get a peep at the Drakensberg, which hereabouts, in clear weather, shows its rugged peaks and descends in grassy spurs Natalwards. We soon reach the thorns, and by 5.25 p.m. outspan at Maeduling's (Blauw Krantz—127 miles from Durban), where we pass the night in the wagon—we won't say sleep, for it is rather cold, and we were not exactly prepared, having expected to reach Colenso, nine miles further on.

#### Colenso and Dodds'.

MAY 27.—It is 7 a.m. before we get off and 9 before we reach Colenso (133 miles from Durban). There we breakfast at the British Hotel, where Captain Dickenson is very attentive to travellers, and is the most gentlemanly landlord on the road, having served some years with his regiment in India. We take some personal interest in this district, which was the one we selected on first coming to the colony, 19 years ago, and where we had a thriving business, having purchased the only house then at the drift, now down. It is to us the township was indebted for its name (Colenso), given when the Bishop of Natal first came to the colony, before his fame became world-wide. At 10.15 a.m. we leave again, find the drift easily fordable, and soon reach the Kliphoekte, on the high road to Ladismith and Overberg, whose stony roughness reminds us of old days, when we employed a gang of Makkatees to make its passage at all easy for wagons. At 2.15 p.m. Dodds' excellent Hotel (Klipspruit—453 miles from Durban) is reached, where Mrs. Dodds (Mr. D. being at the diamond fields) makes us quite at home. At 3.50 p.m. we again start and eventually bring up for the night at Mrs. Dovey's, Sandspruit, (formerly Dodds'—171 miles from Durban). It is now 7 p.m. and very cold.

#### The Drakensberg.

MAY 28.—Thus far the weather has been lovely, the dust the only drawback. On rising this morning there is

a cold breeze from the mountains, which freshens by the time we inspan, at 7 15 a.m., increasing as we ascend to the Berg, until at Smidt's Good Hope, (175 miles from Durban) it becomes half a gale, not only the dust but small pebbles being driven into our face. This, the last house in Natal, we reach at 8.30, and enjoy a capital breakfast. Mr. Fyvic, Inspector of Roads, is here, and this reminds us how agreeably surprised we have been to find the Natal roads in such excellent order all the way through. We have only had to use the riem-chain twice. The trap has no other break. At 10.30 a.m. we leave Good Hope and anon find ourselves ascending the Van Renen pass of the famous Drakensberg, when we dismount and follow our trap the whole way on foot, rude Boreas pouring on us, out of the ravines to our left, the rudest blasts we have felt this many a day. The cold too, is intense, but we enjoy the splendid view as much as the haze will permit, and though we have occasionally to cry "bellows-to-mend," reach the top in perfect ease and safety. Trees are found growing in the ravines quite to the top of the Berg, where we take a last lingering look at our beloved Natal, and at 12 a.m. rejoin our conveyance, which is now in the Free State, (say 181 miles from Durban).

The road up the much maligned Drakensberg is now in splendid order, without really one steep pull. We have no hesitation in pronouncing it as little difficult to ascend as the old Town-hill at Maritzburg. As easy, we were going to say, but that, as most people know, won't apply to travelling in this part of South Africa. The last homesteads in sight as you approach the confines of Natal are those of Mr. Van Renen (an intelligent member of the Free State Volksraad), Mr. Boast (son, probably, of one of the original York settlers), and Mr. Piet du Plessis, Jan's son, formerly of Blue Bell Farm, near Colenso. There are Ladismith, Newcastle and many old friends scattered about we would gladly have looked up had time permitted. The district is undoubtedly one of the best in the colony for general farming operations, and, with a large and thriving community. As yet, it seems as if the settlers object to be in the direction of the trunk road of the colony, or that the direction of the road objects to passing very near the homesteads, so few are visible as you drive along. The consequence is that travellers can form no estimate of the progress that we know is being made, and might with truth say that the county could not possibly have a more appropriate name than it

has, viz., "Klip" (stoney), as, with rare exceptions, the only crops visible from the road are crops of stones. In places the veldt is still fair, whilst the cattle, horses and sheep, as usual, look sleek. Altogether, the latter portion of the journey through Natal is strikingly picturesque, hill and dale following one another in rapid succession, hemmed in by immense mountain ranges of most fanciful shapes, affording ample scope for reflection. The winding course of the road, now scarped out of the side of some hill, and anon intersecting the valleys, as seen by the aid of the setting sun, yields light and shades that would have delighted the heart of a Turner; whilst the more sober plains arrest the eye, and would have excited a Wouyermann. Then, when the bright young May moon lights up the scene, followed by "darkness visible," the grass fires glare as it were from a thousand hills, and the contrast is very striking. Riding thus along in the cold, silent night, the mind ever active, how thought succeeds thought—thoughts of the past, the present, and of the future—pass on with rapidity unknown to sober, every-day, common-place life. In this age of progress is there no inventive genius who can perfect a composing machine, by means of which thoughts can be committed to paper? In journeying thus by night it has often occurred to us it might be accomplished. If, instead of being stretched on poles, an electric wire be coiled within a reasonable compass, and be arranged so as to mark narrow strips of paper as in use at the telegraph offices, the thing could be perfected. We make a present of the idea, being satisfied that there is really something in it. If the electrical arrangement can be dispensed with, and simple springs be substituted, it would, of course be all the better.

#### Looking Back.

Near Sunday's River we passed Coward's wagons, with an iron punt and a boat for the Vaal River. In the distance the wagon containing the punt (which latter was bottom up) looked like a travelling store, having on top a tented cover, with steps up behind. The intention is to build a wooden bridge on the iron punt, and thus obtain a large carrying capacity. A glance down on Natal and along the magnificent Drakensberg range, with its Mount of Sources (Giant's Castle) 10,000 feet in height, does more than aught could to convince the mind of the vast upheavals of the earth, and the inundations by successive and tremendous floods which have occurred. On



the one hand you have the high tableland of the Free State, broken off abruptly in places into deep chasms and sheer precipices, often like a wall, occasionally wooded—truly a magnificent sight, with numerous intervening grassy slopes or spurs descending at right angles into Natal. It is as if in ages gone by Natal had been one huge inland sea, of which the Berg formed the banks. Once on the top, the contrast between the almost dead level of the Free State and the broken country stretching away at your feet as far as the eye can reach, is most striking. Another noticeable thing is the clearness of the atmosphere above, and its haziness below, which more or less always exist. But for this haze the scene would be still more enchanting.

#### In the Free State.

May 28th.—The road by Van Renen's, about 5500 feet above sea level, after leaving the Natal boundary, soon after crossing the Berg, is as level as a bowling green; turf-like, and in fine order at this season. All the grass having been newly burnt off gives the country a very sombre appearance. The course to Harrismith at first is a little west of north, shortly turns to west, and skirts the rugged outline of the Drakensberg on the left, through which an occasional peep is still to be had into Natal. Our first outspan is at 1 p.m., on undulating ground, having in view Van Rensberg's kop, a tortoise-shaped mountain, Platteberg, and to the right of Platteberg, a smaller lion-shaped eminence. The *tout ensemble* as seen from this spot is very striking—hills, dales, and flats forming a grand amphitheatre. Shortly before outspanning, we pass the stones marking the graves of the family of the Pretorius', who were at this spot attacked and killed by the Basutos in the war of 1865-6.

At 1.46 p.m. we inspanned, and found the road good until Sterkspruit is reached—rather a bad drift. At 3.15 p.m., reached Wilge River (which, though not a wide stream, often causes detention to wagons in the rainy season) and outspan at Munger's new accommodation house on the Natal side (195 miles from Durban), leaving again at four. The drift has been considerably improved, but is still too steep to make the pull out pleasant. Platteberg appears as if almost close in front of us, but Harrismith lying on the opposite side, it has to be rounded, and a tedious round it is, occupying until 6.10 p.m., when we pull up at Spilsbury's hotel (207 miles from Durban). The drift, and mud holes in places, are very

bad all the way; a road party, however, paid for by Harrismith subscriptions, is putting them in better order. We saw nothing in Natal so bad as these places are. It surprises us to learn that kafir labour in this district is so difficult to obtain, and that people mainly depend on Natal for their supply.

#### Harrismith.

May 29th.—At Harrismith—rested all day. The township consists principally of one long street, and contains about one hundred houses—some nice residences, but many of them in a dilapidated condition. There are several places of business here, which drive a good trade in wool and skins, Durban being their outlet. It has the usual Dutch Church, Court House, Market Square, and water furrows. It has been blowing most of the day, and to night inky black clouds surge up from the eastward, with a little rain. It is also bitterly cold. Having several friends here, the time does not at all hang heavily. Hear there are footpads abroad in the neighbourhood who have eased some travellers of their loose cash. Pleasant, but wrong (if true), seeing we left home without a firearm or other means of defence of any kind. Remember reading somewhere of the snap of a pipe case having stooed somebody somewhere in good stead on some occasion or other. Happy thought. Having one that gives a loud report, resolve to try it if opportunity arises, and test its usefulness in that line.

#### Amongst the Antelopes on the Plains.

May 30th.—At 6.49 a.m. we leave. Clouds, mackerel sky, air cold. Take the left hand road to Bethlehem. There is another road straight on by Bowes' drift at the lower end of the town—the better, perhaps, of the two in summer. At 8.45 a.m., outspan, after crossing a stream, where we have our first evidence of game. Whilst here, Mr. and Mrs. Clark come up in their travelling ox wagon (a kafir servant leading their loose horses) and after a pleasant chat, proceed on their way to Harrismith. They had left Zuringkrantz the day previous, and outspanned for the night at Eland's River. At 9.30. a.m., inspan and soon afterwards come upon our first game—four blesbucks and a dozen spring bucks. At 11.20 a.m. we cross Eland's river (21 miles from Harrismith), by a very nasty sandy drift, with banks twenty feet steep, and at 12.35 outspan. We had previously noticed a wagon outspanned, towards which a whiteman with a gun was making, accompanied by two dogs. Aasvogels and crows

here in great abundance, denoting slaughter among the game, of which we are now in the thick. On the way this morning we intercepted about 1000 bucks crossing the road within shooting distance, in single file—a very pretty sight. They appeared as if about to charge down upon us, but on seeing the trap, wheeled suddenly round, first at a trot, then going off at full swing. While we are outspanned, there are numerous blesbucks grazing quietly all around us at comparatively close ranges. Further away the veldt is literally thick with wildebeeste (gnus). The springbucks are especially fleet, and difficult to get at, the blesbuck and gnus not so much so. The gnu may be described as of a tawny blackish colour, about the size of a donkey, a head large in proportion to the body, mane of long bristly hair, horns bent like those of the buffalo, only smaller. At first sight the animal has a formidable look. The bulls generally separate a little from the herd, for which on being disturbed, they make; it is therefore best, unless you can get near enough for a broadside, to walk aside a little in advance on the line they will have to pass to regain the herd. We had many chances of a shot from the box seat, but on foot never succeeded, with the time at our disposal, in getting anywhere within range. In galloping up a slight ascent we have often come suddenly on large herds of bucks before they were aware of our proximity. At 1:15 p.m. inspanned again, our friends the blesbucks still in company, their "weather eye" on us no doubt—probably scouts. At 3:10 p.m. passed two wagons outspanned near swampy ground, and what looked in the distance like a hovel; business game slaughterers very likely, for in this district many of the boers have no other ostensible means of existence. In fact, in a couple more years they will scarcely have left a wildebeeste alive, if destruction goes on at the rate it is now doing. Perhaps after all it may not be an unmixed evil when the game is annihilated, for then these men must turn to some other industry. Some of them off the road on the game flats, lower down a little than where we now are, live in great wretchedness, in miserable hartebeeste huts perhaps. If you off-saddle at their places and want food, the chances are you are given wildebeeste flesh. Ask for bread, they have none; mealies or corn, none; salt, none. In a word, game flesh is as potatoes were in Ireland, the sole reliance of the district, and producing not dissimilar effects. To such an extent is this the case, that we believe many of them draw from storekeepers the necessa-

ries of life in advance, to be paid for in skins, to obtain which they have to shoot the animals before they can deliver them. 3.50 p.m. farmsteads, cattle, and cultivation on right hand side—country more broken, and a road here at right angles to us, right and left. A flock of sheep and goats, without any herd, are making their evening track homewards. A young man on horseback accompanied by two dogs in the opposite direction. The same remarks as previously made in passing through Natal, applies to this portion of the Free State—the farmsteads and the roads avoid each other. Even where houses are, cultivated ground is very limited in extent. The grass in the Free State we notice, is very different to our own, being much shorter, and growing in tufts, a great deal being of a red, curly description. The country is new to us, or travelling would be very monotonous; immense rolling plains; not a house, tree, or other sign of civilization; not even a kafir hut—such a contrast to Natal—for hour after hour; and the mountains days ahead or away altogether from the trunk road, which is very good and seems generally to run across the centre of the plains. 4.50 p.m., outspan—farmstead on our left, some distance off. At 5.20 inspan, and a quarter of an hour later it rains; progress but slow, one of the mules showing evident symptoms of distress. He is unharnessed and tied with his mate to the two wheelers. About 6.30 he gives out and drops, when we outspan, and the poor brute is soon dead. The rain falling fast, we make all snug for the night, being not far from Leibernberg's vlei, formerly Hiscock's, somewhere near where the new Olivier's Hoek road branches off to the left. At Harrismith it was very amusing to hear the discussion on the relative merits of the two routes. The Bethlehemites stoutly contending for the superiority of the Hoek road, and the Harrismithonians the contrary. Having only travelled the one, we are unable to judge between them. Rain through the earlier part of the night, and very cold.

#### Bethlehem.

May 21.—Morning fine. At 7.10 a.m. left Leibernberg's vlei, the very worst drift we have yet seen, in crossing which great care is required, the drop being several feet from the bank into a perfect bog, at a considerable angle. The wonder is our polo did not snap off short. This stream and Eland's river last named, are in wet weather occasionally impassable for a few days on a stretch, but soon run down. Arrived at Bethlehem at 8.10 a.m., where we did ample justice to a very excellent

breakfast at Boyce's hostelry. The oxen have been dying here lately in large numbers, partly from a new disease apparently, partly from eating the poisonous tulip, which is here more plentiful than pleasant. The curious thing is that while in flower the plant appears innocuous. Bethlehem is a small trading station which was much exposed to attacks from the Basutos during the war, from the effects of which it has not recovered. Mr. J. Peel has a store here. Horse stealing is very prevalent, and the town has the reputation of possessing several white inhabitants without any visible means of honest subsistence. Yet they live, and that well.

From the number of ruins about the town, its name might be now aptly changed to Nineveh. There are a good number of well-to-do farmers in the neighbourhood. In a stroll by the river side we notice some moss and heather-like plants, which forcibly recall one's native moors, and involuntarily one's thoughts speculate on the chances of ever re-visiting the home of our youth. Simple as such circumstances are, what memories they awaken!—taking the mind back to happy days, gone for ever. Who, at some juncture such as this, but has had a whole life pass under review in a few moments' space of time, as it were, like a dream? Happy he to whom the past recalls no regrets. 11.5 a.m. leave Bethlehem, which is surrounded by heights and distant picturesque mountains. 1 p.m., a farmstead and orchard on left; pass two Boer wagons, accompanied by mares, horses and cattle. 1.50 p.m.—Outspan after crossing spruit, on the banks of which are resting two white men, quietly smoking, their rolled blankets, and other swag, by their side. Walking back to them, we learn they are on their way from Maritzburg to the Diamond Fields, on foot the whole distance (400 miles). At night they take shelter, when they are able, at the farmhouses nearest the line of road. 2.30 p.m.—Inspan, just before which we went down to the stream to see a wagon cross that we had passed on the road, in which was an unprotected female. Seated inside near the front, she had lying across her knee a gun, no doubt loaded, ready for any emergency. The two men already referred to having already trudged on ahead of us, it is not flattering to think that our own apparition on the banks of the stream should lead to such a hostile display. We said nothing, however, but, like the sailor's parrot, perhaps, thought a good deal nevertheless. It may be that the Harrismith rumour of footpads being abroad had reached that female,

and made her suspicious. We only hope we shall bear her no malice. About 4 p.m. we rather abruptly round some hills, Kafirland at our backs, and appear as if leaving the direct road, now turning to the right in a sandy lane. Soon we reach a drift (which has evidently been improved), on the bank whereof is stuck the lid of a red (Geneva) case, on which is written "toll." Standing at the door of a house near by, on the left, are a man and woman, who watch us pass but make no sign. Neither, however, do we. The man deserves a shilling from passers-by for the improvement he has here effected, but of course it is optional with travellers, as the Free State has not adopted tolls, the roads and drifts being allowed to take care of themselves. Far be it from us to suggest any such imposition—tolls, we mean. 4:40 p.m. —Hiscock's, Sand River (245 miles from Durban), where we are to remain for the night. The hotel here is kept by a son of the late Jno. Hiscock, formerly of Natal, who established himself first at Liebenberg's Vley. We are made very comfortable, but fear the present incumbent is not long for this world, poor fellow!

FROM BLOEMFONTEIN TO THE FIELDS.—FROST.—  
FIRST IMPRESSIONS OF DUTOITSPAN.—DIGGING  
DESCRIBED.—OLD NATALIANS, &C.

Arrived at Adamanta.

Left Bloemfontein by post-cart, on Thursday, the 8th June, at 3:15 p.m. Pleasant ride to Wolf's house—a four hours' drive—and proceeded in the dark after an hour's stay and a cup of coffee. Night bitterly cold, with frost. As the mules would not keep the road, we had to wait (without outspanning) for the moon to rise. About three next morning we reached Vandermerwe's, and outspanned—leaving again a little before six o'clock. Cold (in the cart all the time; no bed) intense, and moustaches were small icicles. At 8 a.m. reached Boshoff (72 miles), leaving again at 10. About 11, outspanned at Cornelius Coetze's for an hour, and then struck across country. 1:30 we reached Piet Swart's, and at 2:10 p.m. outspanned at Krege's dam for a quarter of an hour or so. Passed through the most volcanic gorges I ever saw. Shortly before four got our first view of the now famous Dutoitspan, Bultfontein, and Alexanderfontein Diamond Fields, which, from this point, look like a stretch of tents, at least a mile in length, glistening very prettily in the sunshine, on the sides of a gentle slope. At 5 p.m. we drove

into Canvass Town, passing a section of pits (Dutoitspan) and turning a corner, pulled up at Benning and Martin's large hotel, which floats the largest Union Jack on the Fields, looking on to the Market Square. On the opposite side is the celebrated Parker's hotel, and two billiard rooms. He flaunts the star-spangled banner, whilst next door, the Prussian Eagle flutters in the breeze. Dismounting, we entered the bar, and in answer to our enquiry whether we could be accommodated, are told: "Yes, we can give you a good feed, and a shake down up there [the iron supports to the iron roof]; our place is not furnished yet, and our bedsteads have not arrived." We soon, however, managed to get into the good graces of Mr. Martin, who kindly gave his own bed to us—a remarkable instance of good favour which we heartily appreciate. The hotel is under a large galvanized iron roof, and, when completed, will contain bar, parlours, and dining saloon—the bed-rooms opening into the latter as on some of the steamers, and as comfortable quarters as need be desired. We can confidently recommend this hotel to anyone visiting the Fields. Having still an hour's daylight, we took a stroll through this wonderful canvass city, of, say, a month's growth. I find it a difficulty in attempting to convey to the reader my first impressions. What struck me most was the number of females and children. To understand the place it must be seen, but I will give the best reflection of it. Strolling across the Market Square, I reached a dam where people are taking water *ad libitum*. These dams are vleis banked round and protected by rubble stones. Observing a stream of men, women and children descending from the pits on the rising ground before us, with picks, shovels and sifters, we ascended, and found ourselves in the midst of the Bultfontein and Alexanderfontein mines. This we did not know until afterwards, for to us these two fields and Dutoitspan appear to form one vast camp, so little are they defined.

#### First Impressions.—A Dig.

Next morning we were out with the sun, and by breakfast time, 9 a.m., had traversed Dutoitspan proper, and noted the work in progress. It is truly wonderful, and the wonder is the simplicity of the thing. In the midst of and close to us, we see in between thousands of wagons, tents, Cape carts, canvas, wood, and oven burnt brick erections, that the work of diamond finding is being steadily pursued. Let us follow the process throughout with the reminder that the work is diametrically different

to that pursued at Pniel, Hebron, and the older fields. There the gravel has to be carted to the river bank to be washed. Here no carts are employed there being no river, and water in the dams is scarce, so much so, that in less than two months they will be dried up. Wells, however, are being sunk. All that are considered the best claims have been taken up, and I estimate there are at the present time of writing, 8000 men, women, and children, on the three farms. Having paid your first month's license in advance (10s. per month) you are entitled to make out your claim, the dimensions being 30 feet by 10 feet. With your pick you run your lines, and in each corner place a wooden peg. It was in this operation that Mr. Tebin turned out with his pick two diamonds! Having thus caught your hare, you remove to one side the red sand (Berea like) but alluvial, surface, keeping a sharp look out for what may turn up. The best plan, it seemed to me, was to clear the surface for 10 feet forward and so on, leaving terraces in order the more easily to throw up the stuff. You very soon have to begin work with the pick. Having bottomed your first shaft, the steps are broken down in succession. Bucketting is the most expeditious operation. You soon reach the lime formation (in which a few diamonds are obtained, perhaps) varying from nine inches to three feet in depth, and if it prove shaley, many will not go on, so rarely does that subsoil yield any result worth the trouble. The richest finds have been where the lime rests on a stiffish, red, clayey subsoil, in which the diamonds are embedded. In general, however, the lime lies on a greenish, crumbly, sulphureous, ashey substance, with mica intimately intermixed, where the most diamonds have been found. In some cases the subsoil is interspersed with veins of a flakey substance, of a darker colour and crumbly, as well as a lighter coloured substance of the nature of soap stone somewhat, only it breaks out crumbly too. Before sending up your stuff take care to break it up well and turn it over (in the way masons break up lime) lest you miss the small diamonds, which, by the way, often are lost to sight, and were there any Chinese on the fields, the tailing for these would prove a payable field to them. These tailings are now greatly in the way of working. On the surface the sifting takes place, which is done according to the fancy of the miner, the sieves varying from the round corn sieve, to square, oblong, and coffee roaster shape, commonly termed cylinders, on the fields. Two upright stakes are fixed in the ground, to which one end



of the sieve is loosely secured by rope or reims, the sieve being swung by the hand. In some cases I noticed a double sieve, which performs double duty by one movement of the hands. The larger diamonds, as a matter of course, are detected in this process, the debris being placed on the small tables, which also vary according to taste, say from a kitchen dresser to an ordinary iron plate. Some sit on a stool or chair, others recline to this work, which is called sorting, and simply requires a quick eye. The gentler sex are the best experts.

Imagine yourself then, gentle reader, seated *al fresco* at your own dining-room table "groaning" under "gravel" (the table, not the operator), instead of "replete with every delicacy of the season" "seraper" in hand, "spectacles on nose" (if near sighted), goggles if a windy day. Your "mate" or it may be your "intelligent Zulu," keeps your table supplied, and you patiently sort away. Sorting is simply drawing the gravel towards you on the table, and seraping it off on to the ground. The "seraper" may be of any material, about six inches long by about three inches broad. Light iron predominates, some, however, use wood, and I have seen a yoke-skey used. On some tables I noticed also a beater or rather crusher for breaking up the lumps, about the size of a large hand-scrubbing brush. Happy is the man if by noon, say, he has found a stone of anything over a carat, as was the case with a friend at whose table I squatted a long time without any result. Adjourning for lunch to another friend's tent close by, friend No. 1 soon rejoined us with a very nice little stone that had turned up soon after I left.

#### Local Aspects.

Being Saturday, and a half holiday, the busy bees come out of their holes, and many devoted the rest of the day to attending the auction sales which are held at Dutoitspan; no less than four nights of the hammer being busy from 2 p.m. until dusk. Mr. Rothshild (formerly with Messrs. Esembe, Gladstone & Co.) is a veritable "George Robins of auction renown." Auction sales are something like diamond hunting, a lottery—some articles fetching long figures, others going at "an alarming sacrifice." But, to revert to our mutton,—the miners, rather—though my friend, Mr. Riley, of large Californian, Mexican, and other mining experience, (of whom more anon), objects to my applying the word "mines," alleging they are not, and that there is no diamond-mining in the world—the process simply being that of "digging." The most striking

feature in one's rounds is the number of fair daughters of Eve and children one sees busily at work. On the line of road you meet man and wife, he with pick on shoulder, on the way to their claim. At yonder table sit mother and daughter; at another, brother and sister, or it may be two sisters, aged, perhaps, ten to twelve years, busy sorting away. In some instances (Boers) father, mother, sister and brother may be seen earnestly scanning their pile of gravel. By 2 p.m. I had completed the round of the three fields, and fear much loss of precious time to the miners (whom I always found ready to give me an audience and impart information) has been debited to my account. Some are too intent on their work to take heed of passers-by; others, on the contrary, are glad to chat the while. The number of Boer families is striking, yet, being in their own country, I do not know why it should so strike me. They keep a good deal together at the mines, but a less exclusive community could not be found on the surface of the globe. A lucky find, no matter by whom, is lustily cheered by all within hail. Descendants of peers and peasants here jostle each other in the most matter of fact manner conceivable. At Dutoitspan, you have your Dutch quarter, and Natal Street definitely known, the Cape Colonists and others being mixed "promiscuous like."

#### De Beer's.

What precedes relates only to the Pan and Fontein fields. Yesterday morning I walkod over to my son's party's tent, at De Beer's two miles from Dutoitspan, but adjoining Bultfontein, from which I now write. Hitherto it (writing) has been performed under difficulties, as you will perceive by the scrapes in black and coloured pencils and ink, and in haste, and sometimes amidst no end of talk, diamonds as a rule, being the topic, interlarded with warm discussions as to the relative merits of the Cape Colony. After dinner off roast mutton (3d. 4' 1b, brought to your tent in a cart! most things are moderate prices) we took a stroll, looking in on Capt. Harford, who has a very comfortable camp, and showed us the three small diamonds that had fallen to his lot. The "big diamond" *everybody is looking for* (a second Koh-i-noor) is still to come. Met, also, Mr. Deas and Lieut. Campbell, who has a fine camp near Major Dartnell's, and other Natal friends. Mr. C.'s wagon represents six rooms, by a canvas arrangement, a very excellent plan. De Beer's was opened the first week in April, and up to Saturday last has turned out a far better average of stones

—large ones especially—than the other adjoining mines. My statistics, as yet, must be taken as approximate, for no two people you meet agree. I must go to headquarters to-day, and endeavour to elicit reliable data. My present calculation is, that the average finds to each man here last week were far in excess of that elsewhere. De Beer's is pleasantly situated on a raised plateau, and studded with camel thorn, which makes it far pleasanter than the larger places, especially as at present probably there are not over 500 people. Our camp is very simple, consisting of three tents and a wagon, enclosed by a thorn fence, which we enjoy immensely. Not a word about the digging yet; that has to come, and may darken the roseate hue everything, so far, bears. About eleven last night one of our party came in reporting that one Best had made good finds just across De Beer's line, on Bultfontein—a new spot. This morning early we prospected, and, liking the appearance, marked out four claims. Had breakfast, and walked over to the Hopetown Company's office at Bultfontein (2½ miles)—Webb and Co.'s—who bought the farm, where we paid 10s for each licence and 6d each for registration, signed the Diggers' Rules, and so took part in

#### A New Rush,

for whilst we were pegging out our claim, loads of fellows followed suit. As I find the post is closing, I must defer my conclusions on the position of affairs to a future opportunity, I may start to-day for Pniel. The thing just amounts to this: No one without fixed employment, yet having money enough to keep him for twelve months, and to carry him back, need hesitate. Of course it is a huge lottery, the prizes rare, but most get something and, at all events, the work is light, the climate healthy, and, to me at any rate, the life most enjoyable. How many there are in England, with £300 to £500 to spare, who would be delighted with the trip?

The following is Mr. Vause's corrected time table from Durban to Bloemfontein:—

1871—May		HOURS.	MILES.
24	From Durban to Maritzburg .....	8·30	54
25	{ „ Maritzburg to Rietspruit .....	2·15	13½
	{ „ Rietspruit to Howick.....	·45	
	{ „ Howick to Curry's .....	2·20	
	„ Curry's to Mooi River .....	3·	16
26	„ Mooi River to Bushman's River.....	3·50	19
	„ Bushman's River to Blaauwkrantz.....	2·40	13

1871—May		HOURS.	MILES.
27	„ Blaauwkrantz to Colenso .....	2'	9
	„ Colenso to Dodd's (Klipspruit) .....	4'	17
	„ Dodd's to Sandspruit .....	3 10	18
28	„ Sandspruit to Good Hope .....	1.15	4
	„ Good Hope to summit of Drakensberg .....	1.45	} 20
	„ Drakensberg to Munger's, (Wilge River)...	2.14	
	„ Munger's to Harrismith .....	2.10	12
30	„ Harrismith to Eland's River .....	3.46	} 45
	„ Eland's River to near Liebenberg's Vley ...	4.45	
31	„ Liebenberg's Vley to Bethlehem .....	1'	5
	„ Bethlehem to Hiscock's (Sand River) .....	4.55	20
June			
1	„ Hiscock's to Zuringkrantz .....	1.25	8
	„ Zuringkrantz to Du Preez's.....	1.55	31
2	„ Du Preez's to Winburg .....	4.55	21
8	„ Winburg to Klein Vet River .....	1'	} 30
	„ Klein Vet River to Groot Vet River .....	.30	
	„ Groot Vet River to Lombaard's .....	3.20	
	„ Lombaard's to Grobler's .....	1.35	
	„ Grobler's to Dr. Krause's .....	.55	
	„ Dr. Krause's to Modder River .....	2.35	} 30
	„ Modder River to Rhenoster Spruit.....	.30	
	„ Rhenoster Spruit to Bloemfontein .....	2.15	
		81.25	397½

Bloemfontein is miles or a day's drive from Dutoitspan.

## THE GREAT CAMP AT COLESBERG KOP.

(By a Digger.)

DECEMBER, 1871.

New Rush or Colesberg Kop is situated on the farm "Vooruitzicht," commonly called "De Beer's," and is about three-quarters of a mile westward of De Beer's Kopje, and two and a half miles north-westward of Dutoitspan.

When this famous field was "rushed" in August, 1871, upwards of 1000 claims were marked out, some of which were abandoned, being beyond the reef; [and even many of the claims on the western side of the kopje, because of the paucity of finds, have since been abandoned] Between 600 and 700 claims are being worked at the present time, many of which are divided into halves, quarters, and eighths, and some into minutor divisions. Taking the number of workable claims at 700, and the number of workmen to each claim at 10, we get 7000 as the number of diggers—whites and blacks—on this field.

No field has yielded diamonds in greater quantities than Colesberg Kop. Already, thousands of gems have been unearthed; and, new as this field is, many individual diggers have found, not their twos, fours, or tens, but their hundreds of diamonds. Almost every claim yields more or less; but the richness of some claims is almost beyond belief. Numbers of diggers find from four to twelve diamonds per day. I can safely say that two-thirds of the diamonds found on the inland fields are the produce of Colesberg Kop.

The distribution of luck is more proportionate on Colesberg Kop than on any other field; even Dutoitspan when in its glory could not show the same number of lucky men as this field. Three-fourths of the claim-holders are in prosperous circumstances, and the remaining fourth find sufficient to pay expenses.

This field is laid out with greater regularity than any other. Between every two rows of claims is a roadway 15 feet wide. There are 24 rows of claims, and 12 roadways. All the roads run parallel to each other. The "stuff" is conveyed from the claims in carts, hand-barrows, and wheel-barrows to the sorting places beyond the reef. By this method the claims are always freed from rubbish, so that every portion, excepting the road, can be worked. Not so on the other inland fields, where, having no roadways, the digger is forced to sort on one portion of the claim, and in course of time accumulates heaps of rubbish, which cannot be removed, leaving only a small portion of the claim workable.

The deepest sinking is carried on at Colesberg Kop. Some have dug as deep as 60 feet, and have found diamonds from the surface downwards. I heard it mentioned, but cannot vouch for the accuracy of the statement, that one of the diggers had dug as deep as 90 feet, when he struck water, and is still finding diamonds. At what depth diggers will cease finding diamonds, no one can tell.

A new feature in diamond digging is, claim-holders dividing their claims into small portions and selling them, for which fabulous prices have been obtained. £1000 have been given for a full claim on Colesberg Kop, and from £250 to £300 for a quarter. Claims, however, that were known to be rich, have sold at rates as high as £475, £700, and even higher for a quarter. Many claim-holders let their claims to diggers on shares. As much as 50 per cent. of the finds is given to the owner of the claim. This is a very high percentage; but it is almost impos-

sible to get a claim to work on shares at anything less than 50 per cent.

No man can obtain a claim on Colesberg Kop to work on shares unless he has at least three or four niggers in his employ. As I said above, the owner of the claim receives 50 per cent. of all finds, the remaining 50 goes to the worker of the claim. Out of the worker's 50 per cent., he has to pay his niggers' wages; for the water they use, and the food they consume; and at the present rate of wages, and prices of goods, very little or no profit will remain in the hands of the worker of the claim. Kafir wages range from 10/ to 12/ per week, (that is, for kafirs hired on the fields); beef and mutton, 6d. per lb.; mealie meal, 20/ to 30/ per muid; water, 3d. per bucket; firewood, £4 to £6 per load.

The camp at this field is the largest on the dry diggings. Thousands of tents of all sizes and shapes are pitched around the kopje. The business portion of the camp is on the eastern side of the field. It is composed of two streets—Upper and Lower Streets. Upper Street is the principal business street, being also the cab (?) stand. It is sometimes called Cab Street. Auction sales are held weekly. There is also a daily market for produce, &c.

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## APPENDICES.

ABSTRACT OF FIVE YEARS' METEOROLOGICAL OBSERVATIONS, MADE AT MARITZBURG, NATAL, BY DR. MANN, F.R.A.S., SUPERINTENDENT GENERAL OF EDUCATION IN THE COLONY.

Latitude . . . . . 29° 30' South.  
Longitude . . . . . 30° 2' East.

*Height of the Observatory (Dr. Mann's Residence, Maritzburg,) above the Custom House Durban,—given by a mean of Eighty Barometric Observations by standard and compared Instruments,—2,093 feet.*

PERIOD OF OBSERVATION FROM 1858 TO 1862.

The mean height of the Barometer for the five years, at Maritzburg, deduced from five thousand one hundred and seventy-five observations was 27·893 inches. The highest reading of the Barometer for the five years was 28·474 inches; the lowest reading, 27·215 inches; and the extreme range for the five years, 1·249 inches. The mean daily fall of the Barometer, between 9 in the morning and 3 in the afternoon, is ·081 of an inch. The mean daily rise between 3 in the afternoon and 9 in the evening, is ·094 of an inch.

These deductions are made from reduced and corrected observations by a standard instrument.

The mean temperature for the five years was 64·6 degrees of Fahrenheit's scale. The highest temperature for the five years was 97·1 degrees, and the lowest temperature 29 degrees. The extreme range of temperature for the five years was 68·1 degrees.

The average rain-fall for each of the five years was 25·45 inches.

The average occurrence of thunder storms for each year of the five years, was 52 times.

The average occurrence of hot winds for each year of the five years, 26 times.

## POSTAL DEPARTMENT.

## DURBAN.

Mails are Received and Despatched as under:—

PLACES.	INWARD.	OUTWARD.	CLOSES.
Alfred .....	Tu Th	W F	1.30 p.m.
Beaumont.....	Tuesday	Thursday	11.30 a.m.
Blackburn .....	Tu Th S	Tu Th S	"
Boston .....	Tuesday	Thursday	1.30 p.m.
Buffalo .....	"	Saturday	"
Byrne .....	Tu Th S	Tu Th S	"
Camperdown.....	Daily <sup>Except Monday</sup>	Daily <sup>Except Sunday</sup>	"
Cathkin .....	Tu Th	Th S	"
Colenso .....	Tu Th S	Tu Th S	"
Dew L'rop.....	" " "	" " "	"
Dundee .....	Tuesday	Thursday	"
Estcourt .....	Tu Th S	Tu Th S	"
Glendale .....	" " "	" " "	11.30 p.m.
Greytown.....	" " "	" " "	1.30 p.m.
Howick.....	" " "	" " "	"
Isipingo .....	" " "	M W F	"
Ladismith.....	" " "	M Tu Th S	"
Mooi River .....	" " "	Tu Th S	"
Murchison .....	Tu Th	W F	"
Newcastle.....	Tu Th	Tu Th	"
Noodsberg .....	Tu Th	W S	"
Nottingham.....	Tuesday	Tuesday	"
Pietermaritzbrg.	Daily <sup>Except Monday</sup>	Daily <sup>Except Sunday</sup>	1.30 p.m.
Pinetown .....	"	"	"
Point.....	Daily	"	9 a.m.
Queensbridge ..	Tu Th S	Tu Th S	11.30 a.m.
Richmond.....	" " "	"	1.30 p.m.
Riet Vley .....	Thursday	Thursday	"
Seven Oaks .....	Tu Th S	Tu Th S	"
Singuasi .....	" " "	" " "	11.30 a.m.
Springvale .....	" " "	" " "	1.30 p.m.
Sterkspruit .....	Tuesday	Tuesday	"
Tongaat .....	Tu Th S	Tu Th S	11.30 a.m.
Umhlali .....	" " "	"	"
Umhlanga .....	" " "	"	"
Umkomas.....	" " "	M W F	1.30 p.m.
Umzimkulu ..	Tuesday	Saturday	"
Umzinto .....	Tu Th S	M W F	"
Verulam .....	" " "	Tu Th S	11.30 a.m.
Weenen.....	Tu Th	Th S	1.30 p.m.
Woodside .....	Wednesday	Wednesday	"
York .....	Tu Th S	Tu Th S	"
Transvaal, viâ Wakkerstroom...	Tuesday	Saturday	"
O.F.State, Dia- mond Fields, parts of Trans- vaal, and Cape via Harrismith	Thursday	Tuesday	"

## STEAMERS' MAILS.

England, Cape Colony, Maur- itius, India, China, Aus- talia, &c.	About the 10th of each month.	About the 20th of each month
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The Durban Post Office opens at 9 a.m., and closes at 3 p.m.



## MARITZBURG.

Mails are Received and Despatched as under:—

PLACES.	INWARD.	OUTWARD.	CLOSES.
Alfred .....	W F	Tu Th	1.30 p.m.
Beaumont .....	Wednesday	Wednesday	"
Blackburn .....	S W F	M W F	"
Boston .....	Sunday	Monday	11.30 a.m.
Buffalo .....	"	"	"
Byrne .....	S W F	M W F	"
Camperdown.....	Daily <small>Except Monday</small>	Daily <small>Except Sunday</small>	1.30 p.m.
Cathkin .....	S W	M F	11.30 a.m.
Colenso.....	S W F	M W F	"
Dew Drop .....	S W F	M W F	11.30 a.m.
Dundee.....	Sunday	Friday	11.30 a.m.
Durban.....	Daily <small>Except Monday</small>	Daily <small>Except Sunday</small>	1.30 p.m.
Estcourt .....	Su W F	M W F	11.30 a.m.
Glendale .....	" " "	" " "	1.30 p.m.
Greytown.....	" " "	" " "	11.30 a.m.
Howick.....	" " "	" " "	"
Isipingo .....	" " "	Tu Th S	1.30 p.m.
Ladysmith .....	" " "	M T W F	11.30 a.m.
Mooi River .....	" " "	" " "	"
Murchison .....	W F	Tu Th	1.30 p.m.
Newcastle .....	S W	W F	11.30 a.m.
Noodsberg .....	" "	M Th	10.0 a.m.
Nottingham.....	Sunday	Wednesday	"
Piictown .....	Daily <small>Except Monday</small>	Daily <small>Except Sunday</small>	1.30 p.m.
Point.....	"	"	1.30 p.m.
Queensbridge ...	S W F	M W F	1.30 p.m.
Richmond .....	" " "	" " "	11.30 a.m.
Riet Vley .....	Wednesday	Friday	"
Seven Oaks .....	S W F	M W F	"
Sinquasi .....	" " "	" " "	1.30 p.m.
Springvale .....	M W F	S W F	11.30 a.m.
Sterkspruit .....	Sunday	Wednesday	10.0 a.m.
Tongaat .....	S W F	M W F	1.30 p.m.
Umhlali .....	" " "	" " "	"
Umhlanga .....	" " "	" " "	"
Umkomas .....	" " "	Tu Th S	1.30 p.m.
Umzimkulu.....	Sunday	Monday	11.30 a.m.
Urnzinto .....	Su W F	Tu Th S	1.30 p.m.
Vernlam .....	" " "	M W F	"
Weenen .....	" " "	" " "	11.30 a.m.
Woodside.....	Tuesday	Thursday	10.0 a.m.
York.....	S W F	M W F	11.30 a.m.
Transvaal, via Wakkerstroom	Sunday	Monday	11.30 a.m.
O.F.State, parts of Transvaal, & Cape Colony, via Harrismith	Wednesday	Wednesday	"

## STEAMERS' MAILS.

England, Cape Colony, India, China, Australia, Mauritius &c. ....	} About the 11th of each month	} About the 19th of each month.
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The Maritzburg Post Office opens at 9 a.m., and closes at 3 p.m.

## POSTAGE, &amp;c.

Letters in the Colony, from one office to another, are prepaid by stamps at the rate of 1d. for every half ounce or fraction thereof. Unpaid, or insufficiently paid letters are charged double. Letters containing value must be registered.

Consignees' Letters are free at Durban and Point, but are charged 1d. per  $\frac{1}{2}$  oz. at every other office.

## POSTAGE TO ENGLAND.

Per Mail Steamer about the 20th of every month each letter 1s. per  $\frac{1}{2}$  oz. Newspapers 1d. each.

Per C.G.H.C. Steamers 6d. per  $\frac{1}{2}$  oz. The mails usually arrive about the end and leave about the 7th of the month.

Ship Letters are charged 4d. per  $\frac{1}{2}$ -oz. to the United Kingdom.

Fine for deficient postage one rate additional.

## CAPE, MAURITIUS, INDIA AND AUSTRALIA, LETTERS AND NEWSPAPERS.

For every letter not exceeding  $\frac{1}{2}$  an oz. - - 6d.  
Exceeding  $\frac{1}{2}$  an oz. and not exceeding 1 oz. - - 1s.

Increasing 1s. for every oz. or fraction thereof.

For every newspaper sent to the Cape Colony and

England	-	-	-	-	-	-	1d.
Do.	do.	do.	Mauritius	-	-	-	1d.
Do.	do.	do.	India and Australia	1d.			
Do.	do.	do.	do. do., via England	2d.			

Postage per Overland Mail for Cape Colony, Orange Free State, Transvaal, &c.,—6d. per  $\frac{1}{2}$  oz. or fraction thereof, and if not properly stamped letters will be opened and returned to the writers.

Letters and papers are posted to the Diamond Fields per Overland mail, every Tuesday, at 6d. and 1d. respectively. Addresses cannot be too plain. For Colesberg Kopje, and the dry diggings generally, it is best to add "*via* Bloemfontein and Dutoitspan."

Letters to Foreign Countries sent through the United Kingdom are charged by the quarter ounce, and vary in rate from 9d. to 2s. 11d. per single post. Books may also be sent by the same route at moderate rates.

The above rates cover all charges upon such letters and newspapers from the places where they are posted to the places where they are directed. Soldier's letters are uniformly charged 1d. to wherever directed.

REGISTERED LETTERS must be posted at least half an hour before the closing of the box for the mail by which they are to be forwarded. The charge of 4d. for registration to England—or elsewhere, 6d.—must be paid, not in money, but by affixing to the letter a stamp or stamps to that amount.

LATE LETTERS.—Letters may be posted for the inland mails one quarter of an hour after the closing of the box, by affixing 6d. in stamps extra.

NEWSPAPERS.—Newspapers published within the colony are free. Foreign newspapers upon which oversea

postage has been paid within the Colony, may be re-posted and delivered as above, free.

#### COLONIAL BOOK AND PATTERN POST RATES.

Books and Patterns or Samples posted and for delivery within the Colony must be prepaid as follows:—

For every packet not exceeding 2 ozs. in weight - 1d.  
 Do. exceeding 2 ozs. and not exceeding 4 ozs. - 2d.  
 Do. exceeding 4 ozs. and not exceeding 8 ozs. - 4d.  
 Do. exceeding 8 ozs. and not exceeding 12 ozs. 6d.  
 Do. exceeding 12 ozs. and not exceeding 1 lb. 8d.  
 increasing 2d. for every additional four ounces, or fraction thereof.

A packet may contain any number of books, almanacs, maps, or prints, any quantity of paper, vellum, or parchment (to the exclusion of letters whether sealed or open); and the books, maps, papers, &c., may be either printed, written, or plain, or any admixture of the three.

Every book packet must be sent without a cover, or in a cover open at the ends or sides.

No such packet must exceed two feet in length, and one foot in width and depth.

No packet of samples or patterns is to exceed 24 ozs. in weight, or 24 inches in length, or 12 inches in breadth or depth. Any packet exceeding the above weight or dimensions will not be forwarded.

The postage of all packets must be prepaid by means of postage stamps.

#### BOOK PACKETS TO THE CAPE COLONY, ORANGE FREE STATE, AND TRANSVAAL.

Books and publications for the above places must be fully prepaid, or they cannot be forwarded.

The rate of postage payable in Natal on all book packets transmitted to the Cape Colony, Orange Free State, or Transvaal, will be as follows:—

For a packet, not exceeding 4 ozs. ... .. 0s. 3d.  
 Do., exceeding 4 ozs. and not exceeding  
 8 ozs.... .. 0s. 6d.  
 Do., exceeding 8 oz., and not exceeding  
 16 ozs. ... .. 1s. 0d.

and so on, increasing 6d. for every 8 ozs or fraction thereof.

All book packets which have been prepaid in Natal, will be delivered free of further charge at the seaports of the Cape Colony, but if thereafter to be forwarded by post to any of the inland towns of that colony, they will be subject to an additional rate of postage, to be paid on delivery.

#### BOOK AND PATTERN PACKETS TO GREAT BRITAIN.

The rates of postage, *via* Cape of Good Hope, are as follows:—

For a packet not exceeding 1 oz. in weight ... .. 0 1 s. d.  
 Do. exceeding 1 oz. and not exceeding  
 2 ozs. in weight ... .. 0 2

	s.	d.
Do. exceeding 2 ozs., and not exceeding 4 ozs. in weight ... ..	0	3
Do. exceeding 4 ozs., and not exceeding 8 ozs. in weight ... ..	0	6
Do. exceeding 8 ozs., and not exceeding 12 ozs. in weight ... ..	0	6
Do. exceeding 12 oz., and not exceeding 16 ozs. in weight ... ..	1	0

increasing 3d. for each additional 4 ozs., or fraction thereof.

In the event of a packet being posted altogether unpaid, such packet will be forwarded to its destination charged with double the amount of book postage.

Every packet of patterns, or samples, forwarded as such, must in all cases have the words "Pattern post," or "Sample post," written or printed on the address.

#### BOOK PACKETS TO OTHER COLONIES.

Book packets may be forwarded to the British Colonies through the United Kingdom, at the following rates of postage, viz. :—

Not exceeding 4 ozs. - - - -	0s. 6d.
Above 4 ozs. and not exceeding 8 ozs. -	1s. 0d.
Do. 8 ozs. ditto 1 lb. -	2s. 0d.
Do. 1 lb. ditto 1½ lb. -	3s. 0d.
Do 1½ lb. ditto 2 lbs. -	4s. 0d.

if by ship direct from Natal at the rate of 3d per 4 ozs., and to the undermentioned colonies, say:—Canada, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward's Island, Newfoundland, Bermuda, British West Indies, Falkland Islands, Gibraltar, Gambia, Sierra Leone, the Gold Coast, and Malta.

Book packets may be forwarded through the United Kingdom to other places at rates varying from 2d. to 8d. per 2 oz. not exceeding 2 lbs. each in weight.

#### MONEY ORDERS.

Issued at the Post Offices at Maritzburg, Durban, and Ladismith, in sums not exceeding £25, at the following rates :—

For any sum not exceeding £1 - - -	£0 0 3
Above £1 and not exceeding 2 - - -	0 0 6
Do. 2 ditto 3 - - -	0 0 9
Do. 3 ditto 5 - - -	0 1 0
Do. 5 ditto 10 - - -	0 1 6
Do. 10 ditto 15 - - -	0 2 0
Do. 15 ditto 25 - - -	0 2 6

Money orders must be applied for at the post offices at Maritzburg, Durban, and Ladismith, half an hour before the departure of the mails.

Money orders must be presented for payment within two calendar months from the date thereof, or a new order will be necessary for which a second charge will be made.

If not presented within twelve calendar months from the date thereof, they will be forfeited.

On the United Kingdom:—

Not exceeding £2 -	-	-	-	-	£0	1	0
Above £2 and not exceeding £5	-	-	-	-	0	2	0
Do. 5	ditto	7	-	-	0	3	0
Do. 7	ditto	10	-	-	0	4	0

No Money Order is granted for any higher amount than £10.

## CUSTOMS DEPARTMENT.

### CUSTOMS' DUTIES.

(UNDER LAW No. 1, 1867.)

#### Schedule A.

Ale and Beer—in bottle and wood	6d. per gal.
Beads	£6 per cent.
Candles	1d. per lb.
Cheese	1½d. per lb.
Coffee	6s. per cwt.
Cotton Blankets or Sheets—single, or in pairs or pieces	£15 per cent.
Dried Fruits	1d. per lb.
Guns and Gun Barrels	10s. each barrel
*Gunpowder	6d. per lb.
Jackets or Coats of Blanketing or Baize, &c.	£15 per cent.
Kafir Picks and Hoes, or pieces of Iron convertible into them	6d. each
Pickles, Sauces, Bottled Fruits, Jams and Jellies, Potted Fish and Meats	£6 per cent.
Picks and Hoes (not Kafir)	6d. each
Pistol and Pistol Barrels	5s. each
Salt Beef and Pork	£10 per cent.
Sugar (not refined)	3s. 6d. per cwt.
Ditto (refined and Candy)	12s. "
Spirits,—not exceeding the strength of proof, and so on in proportion for any greater strength	6s. 3d. per gal.
Sweetened Spirits, Cordials, &c.	6s. 3d. per gal.
Tea	6d. per lb.
Tobacco—unmanufactured	£2 2s. per cwt.
Do. manufactured	1s. 6d. per lb.
Do. Cigars	4s. "
Wine—in wood or bottle	2s. per gal.
Woollen Blankets, Baize, or coats of the same, and Rugs	£15 per cent.
Goods, Wares, and Merchandise not enumerated, not prohibited, and not free of duty	£6 per cent.
Foreign Reprints of British Copyright Works	£20 per cent.

\*Imported only by, or with the permission of, the Colonial Government.

On every Home Consumption Entry (from bond) in addition to the Customs' Duties thereon, a further charge of  $2\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. on the total amount of duty is payable.

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DUTY FREE (EXCEPT REGISTRATION CHARGES).

Schedule B.

Animals, living. Agricultural Implements, exclusively used as such.

Books and Music, printed; Maps and Charts—except reprints of works protected by the English Copyright Act, or prohibited to be imported. Printing Presses and Type.

Bread Stuffs. Fresh Fruits and Vegetables. Bricks. Fire Bricks.

Casks. Staves for Casks. Heading for Casks.

Coin and Bullion. Coals, Coke, and Patent Fuel.

Diamonds. Flour and Meal. Grain of all kinds.

Grain and Gunny Bags and Bagging. Guano and other manures. Salt.

Hoops and Hoop Iron. Pig Iron. Ice. Rice. Peas, Beans, and Pulse of every kind.

Lime. Roman and Portland Cement

Slates for Roofing. Tiles.

Machinery—for the manipulation of Sugar, Cotton, Flour, Arrowroot, Oil, Coffee, Bricks and Tiles, and for sawing Timber. Railway Carriages.

Provisions or Stores of every description, imported or supplied for the use of Her Majesty's land and sea forces, or for the Colonial Government.

Seeds, Bulbs, and Plants, and Specimens of Natural History.

Uniforms and Appointments, imported by and for the use of Her Majesty's Civil, Military, or Naval Service. Vacoa Bags and Wool Bags made up.

Wines and Spirits, imported or taken out of bond for the use of the Lieut.-Governor, and for the use of Her Majesty's Military Officers serving on full pay in this Colony; and also for the use of Her Majesty's Navy—subject, however, to such regulations as the Collector shall think fit to make.

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REGISTRATION FEES.

Schedule C.

Flour, Meal, Rice, Grain, Peas, Beans, each bag or barrel	...	...	...	...	...	2d.
Bricks, Tiles, Slates, Coals, Coke, Patent Fuel, Pig Iron, Cement, Manure, Lime, Salt per ton	...	...	...	...	...	1s.
Machinery, Agricultural Implements, and all other Free Goods, not specified by preceding tariff, at the option of the Collector, per ton	...	...	...	...	...	1s.
Or, per package	...	...	...	...	...	6d.

## ARTICLES PROHIBITED TO BE IMPORTED.

## Schedule D.

Books, Drawings, Paintings, Prints, and Photographs of an immoral or indecent character. Coin—base or counterfeit.

## EXECUTIVE COUNCIL.

His Excellency Anthony Musgrave, C.M.G., Lieut.-Governor, Commander-in-Chief and Vice-Admiral, and Supreme Chief over the Native Population; His Honour Walter Harding, Chief Justice, and Judge of the Vice-Admiralty Court; Lieut.-Colonel Thos. Miles, 75th Regiment, Senior Military Officer; Hon. D. Erskine, Colonial Secretary; Hon. J. Bird, Acting Colonial Treasurer; Hon. M. H. Gallwey, Attorney-General; Hon. T. Shepstone, C.M.G., Secretary for Native Affairs.

## LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

Official Members:—The Hon. the Colonial Secretary, the Hon. the Acting Colonial Treasurer, the Hon. the Attorney-General, and the Hon. the Secretary for Native Affairs.

Elective Members:—Speaker, Walter Macfarlane, member for Weenen County; R. E. Ridley, C. Barter, for Maritzburg County; W. Field, for Durban County; J. N. Boshoff, R. Mellersh, for Klip River County; J. T. Polkinghorne, for Victoria County; J. C. Boshoff, for Umvoti County; J. W. Akerman, J. W. Turnbull, for Maritzburg Borough; John Sanderson, Harry Escombe, for Durban Borough.

## HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS.

J. P. Symons, Auditor.  
 P. C. Sutherland, Surveyor General.  
 F. S. Berning, Reg. of Deeds and Distributor of Stamps.  
 P. Paterson, Civil Engineer.  
 G. Rutherford, Collector of H.M. Customs.  
 Geo. C. Cato, Acting Port Captain.  
 F. Becker, Postmaster General (absent). E. F. McGill, acting.  
 L. Mason, Immigration Agent.  
 T. W. Brooks, Act. Superintendent of Education.

## JUDICIAL.

W. Harding, Chief Justice and Judge of the Vice-Admiralty Court.  
 H. Connor, 1st Puisne Judge.  
 H. L. Phillips, 2nd Puisne Judge.  
 J. Hathorn, Master.

G. J. P. Shepstone, Secretary to the Chief Justice.  
 J. A. Brickhill, Interpreter.  
 R. C. Visick, Clerk to Master (absent); G. Macfarlane  
 (acting).  
 A. Mesham, Registrar.  
 C. Wolluter, Clerk to Registrar.  
 M. Reid, Messenger and Usher.  
 Capt. F. Elton, J. Rorke, Capt. A. B. Allison, Go-  
 vernment Agents on the Zulu Border.

## RESIDENT MAGISTRATES.

Pietermaritzburg, J. Bird.  
 Durban, H. J. Meller.  
 Klip River, G. A. Lucas.  
 Victoria (Inanda), B. Blaine.  
 Ditto (Tugela), J. H. Williams.  
 Umvoti, J. W. Shepstone.  
 Weenen, J. Macfarlane.  
 Upper Umkomas, A. C. Hawkins.  
 Alexandra, W. J. D. Moodie.  
 Newcastle, M. Osborn.  
 Alfred, H. C. Shepstone.

## CUSTOMS.

G. Rutherford, Collector of Customs and Comptroller of Navigation Laws; Edwin Lee, Clerk and Warehouse Keeper; Geo. Rutherford, jun., Second Clerk; G. Macfarlane, Third Clerk; W. Wood, First Landing Waiter, and Searcher; J. O'Mahony, Second ditto; F. Upton, First Locker and Tide Waiter; J. Brickhill, Second ditto; C. Spradbrow and R. Leslie, Boatmen and Watchmen.

## BEREA ROAD TOLLS.

	£	s.	d.
For every coach, chaise, carriage, wagon, cart, or other vehicle, drawn by eight or more horses, mules, or asses, or twelve oxen or upwards . . . . .	0	2	6
Ditto, if drawn by six horses, mules, or asses, or eight oxen, and not exceeding ten . . . .	0	2	0
Ditto, if drawn by four horses, mules, or asses, or six oxen . . . . .	0	1	6
Ditto, if drawn by two horses, or four oxen . . . .	0	1	0
Ditto, if drawn by one horse, or two oxen, or other animals . . . . .	0	0	6
For each steam-engine, or other vehicle drawn or propelled by other than animal power . . . .	0	10	0
For each cart, truck, or other vehicle attached to the before-mentioned engine . . . . .	0	2	0
For every saddled horse, mule, or ass . . . . .	0	0	6
For every velocipede or other like vehicle, excepting children's carriages . . . . .	0	2	6



## NATAL RAILWAY COMPANY'S TIME TABLE.

### SUMMER SEASON.

<i>Market Square Station to Point.</i>		<i>Point Station to Market Square.</i>
7.30 a.m.		7.45 a.m.
9.15 a.m.		10.30 a.m.
12.— Noon.		1.— p.m.
2.15 p.m.		2.45 p.m.
4.15 p.m.		4.45 p.m.

<i>Market Square to Umgeni.</i>		<i>Umgeni to Market Square.</i>
8.— a.m.		8.45 a.m.
11.— a.m.		11.30 a.m.
3.15 p.m.		3.45 p.m.
5.— p.m.		5.30 p.m.

### WINTER SEASON.

<i>Market Square Station to Point.</i>		<i>Point Station to Market Square.</i>
7.30 a.m.		7.45 a.m.
9.15 a.m.		10.30 a.m.
12.— p.m.		1.— p.m.
2.— p.m.		2.30 p.m.
4.— p.m.		4.30 p.m.

<i>Market Square to Umgeni.</i>		<i>Umgeni to Market Square.</i>
8.— a.m.		8.45 a.m.
11.— a.m.		11.30 a.m.
3.— p.m.		3.30 p.m.
4.45 p.m.		5.15 p.m.

## PORT AND HARBOUR DUES.

Under authority of Proclamation, dated 21st November, 1859, the following rates are charged by Government for Pilotage in or out of the Harbour of Port Natal:—

Vessels from 50 to 100 tons	... £2
"    "    100 to 200    "	...    3
"    "    200 to 300    "	...    4
"    "    300 to 500    " or upwards	...    5

Vessels in ballast to pay half the foregoing rates.  
Shifting berth in harbour at half the foregoing rates.  
Detention of Pilot on board, per diem, 10s.

### TOWAGE BY STEAM TUG.

Vessels under 150 tons	... £10
"    from 150 to 250 tons	...    12
"    "    250 to 300    "	...    14
"    above 300 tons	...    15

### LIGHTHOUSE DUES.

Under Law No. 13, 1868, on all vessels entering inwards at Port Natal, 2d. per ton up to 500 tons register, and 1d. per ton for every ton over 500 tons.

## OMNIBUSSES.

- From Durban to Maritzburg.—Daily. }  
 „ Maritzburg to Durban.—Daily. } Sundays  
 „ From and to Pinetown.—Daily. } excepted.  
 Maritzburg to Harrismith every Wednesday (in corre-  
 spondence with the mail carts to the Diamond  
 Fields).  
 Sehenk's passenger wagons to the Diamond Fields leave  
 about the beginning of every month.
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## CONSULS, &c

- G. C. CATO, for America, Sweden, Norway, and Denmark,  
 G. DENTZELMANN, for the German Empire.  
 A. W. EVANS, for the Netherlands.  
 WALTER PEACE, for Portugal and Belgium.  
 T. FINDLAY MUIRHEAD, for the South African Republic.  
 G. C. CATO, Lloyds' Agent.  
 E. P. LAMPART, Agent for Liverpool Underwriters' As-  
 sociation.  
 T. FINDLAY MUIRHEAD, Agent for Glasgow Under-  
 writers' Association.  
 R. H. GOBLE, Agent for Tyne, Wear, and Topsham Clubs
- 

## GAME LAW.

From 15th September to 15th April, inclusive, it is unlawful to kill certain birds.

From 15th August to 30th November, inclusive, it is unlawful to hunt or kill certain four-footed game.

During any part of the year it is unlawful to kill cer-  
 in animals.

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## APPENDIX.

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IN commencing our review of the past most eventful year, we give the first place, as usual, to matters

### POLITICAL.

The mail which brought the tidings of our late Governor's recall, also brought information that Lord CARVARVON had disallowed the WELBORNE Railway Bill, and succeeding mails gradually disclosed the course of subsequent negotiations, by which it has come to pass that a limited system of railways is now being constructed by Mr. WELBORNE's contractors, Messrs. WYTHES and JACKSON, on account of Government. Different in principle though this plan is, it was unanimously accepted by the colony, as offering the only feasible chance of securing immediate action. The need of railways was so great, and the weariness of disappointment so extreme, that any proposal which might ensure rapid construction, would have been accepted. The new plan had, moreover, this special advantage: that although the agency of a company was dispensed with, and the cost would be much greater to the colony, the lines would be carried out by the same eminent contractors, and under the same surveys, that had been secured through Mr. WELBORNE's instrumentality.

Notwithstanding certain outcroppings from the late rebellion, peace and order have been maintained throughout the colony, without disturbance or difficulty.

#### THE NATIVES

betray no increased disposition to work, and the greater independence of their tone and manner is probably due chiefly to their advance in wealth and numbers. At their own homes they are exhibiting certain auspicious signs of improvement. Ploughs are more and more being used by them. This fact represents an industrial and social revolution. Men drive and direct the plough, the women hoe and pick the fields. Every plough that is bought and worked, therefore, means so much more labour got out of the kafir male population. The larger area of ground that can thus be cultivated, adds in proportion to the productiveness of the country. The kafirs are also investing more largely in wagons, and it is quite a common, though to us an incongruous, thing, to see a transport wagon drawn up outside an ordinary kraal. It should now be the part of Government to encourage this tendency towards innovation, which is chiefly discernible among the native tenants of private lands, who necessarily live in closer contact with white settlers. Too many of the locations have been sealed books to civilising influences. One of Sir GARNET WOLSELEY'S wisest measures was to recommend the construction of roads into the locations, and to order that one be immediately made into the swarming depths of the inaccessible Tugela Valley. When this is done, and magistrates are sent to reside in these strongholds of barbarism, and facilities are held out for the establishment of stores, smithies, and schools, a rapid change may be looked for in the domestic condition of our natives.

## OUR FOREIGN RELATIONS

have not attracted much attention during the year. Soon after Sir GARNET WOLSELEY'S arrival he received a message from CETYWAYO, the King of the Amazulu, greeting him "as a fighting man, like himself," and asking what might be the meaning of the ships of war and other martial movements in Natal. The Administrator made a becoming reply. Some anxiety has been felt at times regarding the relations of the Transvaal and the Zulus. The former sent out a large armed and mounted force, with three field pieces, about the middle of the year, with the avowed object of taking part in the installation of the new King of the Amaswazi. This large tribe lives just beyond its old enemies the Zulus, and the Transvaal Government wished it to be understood that they would not allow any future interference with the former people. No further result followed this military demonstration, but great dissatisfaction was expressed by the British residents of the Republic, at being ordered out, on what appeared to be a purposeless expedition, and without further provision being made for the sustenance of so large a force.

### THE TRANSVAAL.

has been in a condition of suspense pending President Burgers' return from Europe, where his fluent tongue has succeeded in winning the sympathy of more than one nationality for his little known republic. There is reason to believe that during his absence the old fashioned "dropper" party has regained some ascendancy. The changes that have taken place in the administration have not improved the position of the present government. Mr. BUCHANAN'S resignation of the Attorney-Generalship has inflicted a loss upon the country; although Mr. SWART, the Secretary, has done his best to fill the gap by performing double duty. We understand that the Boers, properly so-called, view with great disfavour the influx of new officials from Holland, to the exclusion of men of the soil. The President's success in arranging for the commencement of a line of railway to Delagoa Bay is to them

no matter of congratulation, as it signifies the inrush of population, the crowding up of farms, and the gradual elbowing out of the earlier settlers, or of such of them as cannot exist on a less area than six thousand acres to a family. But notwithstanding governmental apathy, the internal developement of this magnificent territory goes on. Farms are in increasing request there; stock is multiplying; land is rising in value; stores are springing up everywhere, and the towns are fast advancing in populousness and importance. Cobalt is already mined in considerable quantities, and several movements are afloat for utilising the other mineral resources of the State. The President, since his return, has entirely succeeded in winning the assent of the Volksraad to his progressive plans, and the support of the Boers to his administration.

#### THE GOLD FIELDS

afford a singular instance of non-advancement. Gold is still found there by individual diggers in considerable quantities. Nuggets of good size up to 9 lbs. weight have been found, but population remains stationary. There are probably fewer people on the Blyde River and at Macmac than there were a year ago. Experienced diggers say that a large community only is wanted to develop the true riches of the district, but the "rush" fails to take place. In this respect the experience of the Gold Fields is wholly different from that of the Diamond Fields. This is the more strange because the country is incomparably superior to the country near the Vaal. Near the Blyde River there is every natural charm; near the Vaal there is none. Society seems to jog on quietly enough in the land of gold. Dr. JOHN SCOBLE, an old Natalian, now rules as Commissioner there, and our fellow colonists are generally in the front. There is no lack of merchandise, and the surrounding farmers keep the camp pretty well supplied with fresh provisions. The discovery of a rich quartz reef, with which the year closed, is perhaps the most hopeful indication we have had to record. From Marabastad we get very meagre tidings. In May last Mr. ROCHE arrived on a special mission, and in October Colonel WEATHERLY also came out. Mr.

BURTON has relinquished connection with the enterprise, and it is understood that difficulties with the machinery have prevented the full development of quartz-crushing enterprise there. While upon this theme we must allude to the irreparable loss the cause of gold exploration has suffered by the untimely death of Mr. THOMAS. BAINES in May last. That intrepid traveller and patient observer was on the point of starting on a journey to the "Northern Gold Fields," in Matabililand, when death overtook him. His book and map remain as a lasting memorial of the work he had accomplished.

#### THE FREE STATE

has been so quietly prosperous that there is little to be said about it. The wearisome negotiations with the British Government in regard to the ownership of the Diamond Fields, bid far now to be soon brought to a final settlement. Lord CARNARVON'S studious recognition of the rights of the Republic have done much to remove the recollection of past asperities. Mr. FOUDE'S report has also had a mollifying influence. President BRAND is now more popular than ever, and his word is law throughout the country. The recent review of 700 armed and mounted burghers was an event of special interest, and reflected credit upon the patriotic enthusiasm of the Republic. The wealth gathered at the Diamond Fields, and shorn from the backs of their multitudinous flocks, has given the farmers more money than they know what to do with. Land has consequently advanced in value as it has advanced nowhere else in South Africa, and the demand for farms upon which to plant grown up children offers no probability of abatement.

During Sir GARNET WOLSELEY'S reign here most friendly messages were interchanged between him and the neighbouring magnates. Colonel COLLEY visited Pretoria, and Major BUTLER, Bloemfontein, and they produced a very favourable impression at both places. Whatever arrangements may be made for a federal union of South African states the friendly relations which Natal holds towards all her neighbours cannot fail to have good effect.

## GRIQUALAND WEST.

has had, like this colony, changeful and troublesome times during the year. It is not our purpose now nor our need to describe them. The disturbances begotten by the persistent misrule of the SOUTHEY Administration, by its interference, extravagance, and assumptions, led to the arrival of the troops from Capetown, and the consequent submission of the natives. Mr. SOUTHEY's and Mr. CURRIE's removal soon followed, to be quickly succeeded by the advent of the Administrator, Major LANYON and the Special Commissioner, Colonel CROSSMAN. Matters are now all quiet there, discontent has subsided. The agitators have been let off with a reprimand, and the affairs of the Government and the territory are being carefully investigated. By the purchase of the farm upon which Kimberley stands, for £100,000, the complications caused by separate and rival interests have come to an end, and the enforcement of economy in administrative expenses will enable the government to undertake large schemes of public improvement.

In respect to its own particular class of enterprise, Kimberley is in a better position than it was. A year ago the mine—that wonder of the world—was full of water, digging was all but suspended, and business of all kinds stopped. Since the arrival of a hydraulic engineer, and the use of powerful machinery, the mine has been cleared of water, and digging has been vigorously renewed. There seems to be no bottom to the mine, and no limit to its yield of precious stones. Digging is now a much costlier and more complex process than it was when the surface of the ground only was scratched, and the price of good claims has gone up to fabulous figures. Trade is more active at this little spot, with its mushroom town, than at any other point on the continent south of the equator. £1,600,000 worth of imported goods are consumed there annually, and the transport of them costs £300,000. It is impossible to say what the yearly yield of diamonds may be, but it is estimated that during the five years since 1870, the aggregate value has been twelve millions sterling. In consequence of the cheaper transport



obtainable from Eastern Province ports our commercial connections with the Fields have been greatly reduced, and threaten almost to disappear. It is scarcely to be expected, however, that the present low rates of carriage ruling from East London and Algoa Bay can be long maintained. Drought will come, pasture get scarce, disease will break out, there as here, and sooner or later, traffic will flow into new channels. Be that as it may, the continued prosperity of Griqualand West, belies the prognostics of the despondent, and is a boon to the whole of South Africa.

#### GRIQUALAND EAST.

Ere this year is out we shall doubtless have to write of this district as an integral part of the Cape Colony. The appointment of a British Resident there was the first step towards annexation. There have been more meetings during the year between Adam Kok, with his councillors and the representatives of the Cape Government, the last being that in which Mr. PROBART took part. On this occasion the old chief repeated the old story, and the very true one, of neglect by the Colonial Government, while he and his people were holding their own as pioneers against the tribes around, and struggling with all the difficulties of a new settlement, and of interference and appropriation on our part, as soon as they had established order and improved the country. Nevertheless he was grateful enough for the pension allowed by the Cape Government, and for the help given in adjusting the conflicting land claims of settlers in his territory. And just as the year was dying out, he went, too, the victim of a sudden accident. We can cordially echo all that so many correspondents have said in praise of this worthy old man, who through good report and evil report, through dangers many, and difficulties untold, succeeded in keeping his people up to the level of an orderly christian community, notwithstanding the darkness of their skins, and the savage influences besetting them around. Now that their hereditary Captain is gone, and that, according to his own con-

fession, there is none of his own race to succeed him, the way is clear for the definite extension of British rule over the Griqua people.

#### PONDOLAND

is little by little veering in the same direction. One after another the minor tribes of Kafirland Proper have placed themselves under the Cape Government. The Tambookies are the last who have claimed the privileges of British subjects. The Galekas, their old neighbours and enemies, will soon follow, and the Pondos will be driven by sheer stress of necessity and example to follow suit; while a country rich in metals and in timber, will thus be added to British territory.

#### ZULULAND,

according to the last accounts, was at peace. There have been one or two large military gatherings during the year. On one occasion it was reckoned that from thirty to forty thousand armed warriors must have been assembled. Cetywayo has established so perfect a system of military organization, that the whole manhood of his people bear arms. Rifles and powder are now obtained without the slightest difficulty at Delagoa Bay, and the latter is made in the country. The former are bought at £2 10s. to £3 in Zululand, although in Lorenzo Marques they can be got for £1 4s. Powder is 1s 4d. per lb.; at any rate we have seen invoices of large quantities sold by European dealers at that price. It is said that large numbers of guns find their way into the country through Natal. Nevertheless, we hear that the Zulus themselves are tired of the military system that is kept up, especially when it takes no active direction. Once or twice a collision with the Transvaal has seemed imminent, if not inevitable; and a contest with that Republic was openly discussed and decided on at a conclave of the nation, held in October. The cause of war was founded in the encroachments made by Boer farmers upon the disputed territory, so often urged upon the Natal Government by Cetywayo. The Zulus are naturally anxious to have a shield of British territory

between the Transvaal and themselves; and it is to be regretted that the Home Government has not authorised the assumption of authority over this tract. We have just received information, on the best authority, that matters now wear a very peaceful aspect, owing principally to the remonstrances and representations of Mr. SHEPSTONE, Secretary for Native Affairs. It is to be hoped that in the adjustment of our political relations, the permanent pacification of Zululand and its people will be provided for. Trading in the country has been kept up vigorously, and labourers from the territories beyond have been passed through, under the new arrangements, without difficulty.

#### DELAGOA BAY.

It would be an omission to leave out any reference to President Marshal M'MAHON'S award, by which the right of Portugal to the entire seaboard of this capacious bay was established. In Natal no other decision was expected. It has had two good effects. The Portuguese authorities at Lorenço Marques have been encouraged to make more vigorous steps for the improvement of that port and town, and at a complimentary dinner given there, the present very intelligent Governor delivered himself of the friendliest and most large-minded sentiments in regard to the relations of England and Portugal. It has also opened the way to possible negotiations for the purchase by England of a port which would be of far more value to her politically than it can be to Portugal. President BURGERS had succeeded in securing the ratification by the Lisbon Cabinet of the provisional convention, granting to the promoters of the projected railway to the Bomba mountains certain territorial and other concessions, and had thus been enabled to raise capital enough among Portuguese investors to make a commencement of the line. In a political point of view this work will be of great importance, while the impetus it must give to colonisation, agriculture, and mining enterprise in the districts traversed, will react beneficially upon all the surrounding territories. The Portuguese capitalists may have done a risky thing, as regards their own in-

terests, in advancing money upon the security of lands in an unoccupied country, but they have the consolation of knowing that they have given life to an undertaking which will do more than schools or missionaries for the civilisation of South East Africa.

#### POPULATION.

From the 1st of January to the 31st December, 1,808 souls arrived and 1,031 left the colony, leaving a gain of 777. Among these incomers were a good many creole settlers from Mauritius, an island whose overcrowded area is destined to send us a continuous stream of immigrants. More than a hundred Chinamen have come from thence, and although their advent caused a species of small panic amongst the artisans here, the demand for workmen is such, that the fact does not appear to have disturbed the conditions of the labour Market. The Legislative Council has recommended that £10,000 be spent in giving free passages to certain classes of emigrants, to be approved, without nomination here, by the agent in London. An agricultural settlement of about eighty families is to be formed at Weenen, and certain preliminary measures taken, in order to secure lands near centres of population and lines of traffic, upon which to place agricultural settlers. Owing to delay in assenting to the Coolie Loan Bill, no Indian immigrants have arrived since May; but the present year will witness the introduction of about 4,000 more. The addition of nearly 450 troops to our garrison, and the expected arrival of more, must be regarded as a substantial increase to the strength of the European population, as well as to its consuming capacity.

Neither

#### EDUCATION, NOR RELIGION,

can be said to have evolved any new features during the year. No new schools of any consequence have been opened, and the old ones have pursued the even tenour of their way. Mr. R. RUSSELL's very complete and efficient inspection of all the schools in the colony, in behalf of Government, has supplied what has been for years a great want, and done already much good.

The results are set forth in two able reports, only one of which, an abridgment of the other, has been published. He recommends payment by results, the adoption of standards, on the home system, and the establishment of boarding schools. It is understood that this question will be submitted to the Legislature next session, and it is high time that something was done to put the scholastic institutions of the country upon a comprehensible, as well as efficacious, footing. Referring to the churches of the country, we may say that there has been a pleasing absence of ecclesiastical discord or discussion. Different religious communities have lived at peace amongst themselves and with each other. The Roman Catholic Church has welcomed a new head in the person of Bishop JOLIVET, who brought with him a party of priests and nuns, who have established convent schools in both Durban and Maritzburg.

The development of Good Templarism, briefly and better designated as sobriety, is one of the most satisfactory facts of the year. There are so many weak natures to whom drink proves a tyrant and a curse, that all lovers of health and order must welcome the success of a cause which encourages habits of temperance, and enjoins abstinence on its members. The opening of ten lodges, and the enrolment of nearly a thousand members, together with the erection in Durban of a spacious hall for the accommodation of the Order, are manifest signs of prosperity. Other benevolent orders also flourish. Freemasonry—despite its opponents—makes steady way, and has, in both towns, its handsome temples. The Oddfellows are steadily advancing in numbers and strength, and the Foresters attract more and more recruits. In Maritzburg, the Natal Society—our oldest literary institution—has undergone a revival of interest. Able lectures have been delivered by distinguished men, and a bazaar on a very large scale is to be held next May, for the purpose of raising funds for the erection of a Library, Museum, and Lecture Room. In Durban there has been less activity in this direction.

So equable a year has seldom been experienced even by the oldest resident. With the one exception of the

freshet which flooded the Umsundusi River, and did some injury in Maritzburg, a purely local visitation, there have been no elemental disturbances of a serious or disastrous character. The winter was singularly fine and pleasant, and left the most agreeable impressions upon the minds of Sir GARNET WOLSELEY and his companions. The spring, too, set in early, and as the summer has been moderately wet, with a good deal of hot "growing" weather, the season has been a most favourable one for agriculture. Some severe thunderstorms have visited the country, but none proved destructive last year. During the early part of the summer a few very hot days were experienced. We append a summary of the rainfall compiled from tables given in the *Colonist* and other sources:—

TABLE OF RAINFALL.

	Sea Cow Lake Vic. Co.	Southburn Victoria Co.	Botanic Gardens, Durban.	Craigie Burn, Alex.Co.
1871 . . . . Total	27·18	36·22	—	—
1872 . . . . „	48·20	56·71	—	—
1873 . . . . „	40·30	40·48	42·22	31·4*
1874 . . . . „	52·40	52·37	53·80	56·8
1875 . . . . „	†9·23	43·02	54·78	52·6
Mean for 5 years, Southburn, is . . . . .				43·63
„ 4 „ Sea Cow Lake . . . . .				42·02
„ 2 „ Botanic Gardens . . . . .				48·06
„ July, 1873, to June, 1875, Lower Umkomas . . . . .				52·20
Mean for 2 years, July, 1873, to June, 1875, At Sea Cow Lake . . . . .				41·02
At Ottawa . . . . .				43·45
At Botanic Gardens . . . . .				47·28
At Craigie Burn . . . . .				52·20

\* For six months.

† First six months.

## STATISTICAL NOTES.

The following Statistical abstracts compiled from the Blue book for 1874, supply the latest trustworthy information to the end of that year, but we may observe that the agricultural items are largely below the fact, especially as regards sheep and wool.

## STOCK.

*European.*—Horses, 13,788; mules, 597; horned cattle, 125,767; wool-bearing sheep, 250,378; Angora goats, 32,973; other goats, 25,069; pigs, 8,183; donkeys, 241; sheep, not wool-bearing, 803. *Native.*—Horses, 9,655; horned cattle, 375,387; sheep, not wool-bearing, 50,475; goats, 172,965; pigs, 3,134.

## ANIMAL PRODUCTION.

Wool, 778,173 lbs. (very incorrect return); butter, 261,675 lbs.; cheese, 17,147 lbs.; bacon, 240,972 lbs.

## AGRICULTURE.

Acreage of *European* Crops. — Wheat, 1,678½; Indian corn, 14,909½; kafir corn, 849½; oats, 4,157½; barley, 142; beans, 159¾; buck wheat, 28; sugar cane, 7,027; coffee, 4,174; arrowroot 249; tea, 2; cotton, 114; millet, 44; cayenne pepper, 10; china grass, 1; tobacco, 107½; common potatoes, 693½; sweet potatoes, 580½; vegetables and fruit, 981; turnips, 28½; onions, 7½; mangold wurtzel, 4; pease, 26; oil nuts, 52. Grand total, 36,372½. Acreage of *Native* crops.— Indian corn, 90,669¾; kafir corn, 34,277½; common potatoes, 8238; sweet potatoes, 1822½; sugar cane, 1116; coffee, 12¼; mandombys, 1025; pumpkins, 800; tobacco, 21. Grand total 140,985¼. The natives of Durban County also produced 51,250 lbs. of mandombys.

## POPULATION.

*Whites.*—9990 males, 8656 females, total 18,664. Of these, 3,259 are inhabitants of Maritzburg, and 4,129 inhabitants of Durban. *Coolies*—6,787. *Natives*—281,797, being an increase on the number shewn last year of 1,902. Grand total—307,241, to an area

of 20,212 square miles. Marriages, 952 ; births, 3,749 ; deaths, 1,226 ; increase to population by births over deaths, 2,523. These last figures refer only to whites, and are below the actual facts.

#### CRIMINAL.

Offences reported : Against the person, 893 ; cattle, stabbing and stealing, 95 ; against property, 603 ; other offences, 5,104 ; total, 6785. Summary convictions, 5,752 ; commitments for trial, 163 ; convictions in supreme, circuit, and criminal courts, 106. Acquittals : In inferior courts, 861 ; in the superior courts, 6. Nationality of prisoners tried in higher courts, Kafirs, 91 ; Europeans, 14 ; Indians, 5 ; others, 4. Decrease in convictions on preceding year, 25·4 per cent. There has been a large increase in the number of cases of cattle stealing and killing by natives, and cognisable at these courts ; and while the number of cases reported is almost the same as on the preceding year, the number of persons committed for trial has been almost double.

The following tables reveal this :

	1873.	1874.
Reported .....	94	95
Committed .....	42	79
Indicted .....	41	65
Convicted .....	30	59

Daily average of prisoners, 402 1-3rd. Imprisonment : For five years or more, 23 ; one year or more, 344 ; more than three months, 21 ; three months or less, 1,821 ; men, 1699 ; women, 100 ; juveniles, 22. This number includes all prisoners belonging to Langalibalele's and Putili's tribes, who were temporarily detained in gaol until sent to Maritzburg.

#### INSTITUTIONS.

Libraries, reading rooms, mechanics' and literary institutes, 5 ; agricultural societies, 5 ; benevolent societies, 2 ; Botanic Gardens, 2 ; Law Society, 1 ; Acclimatization Society, 1 ; Natal Rifle Association, 1 ; Natal Coast Rifle Association, 1 ; Natal Society, 1 ; clubs, 4 ; Immigrants Aid Office 1 ; hospitals, 2 ; lunatic asylum (temporary), 1 ; gaols, 7.



## EDUCATIONAL.

There are 89 boys' and girls' schools in Natal. Number of scholars on the roll, 1733 males, 1240 females, total 2973. Ordinary attendance 2249. Government grant in aid £3079. Voluntary contributions £10,822 3s. 5d. In 1873 the Government grant aid was £4880, and the voluntary contributions £10,590, the number of scholars being 2836.

## ECCLESIASTICAL.

There are 139 churches and chapels or congregations scattered throughout Natal, thus distributed among different communions: Church of England, 30; church of Province of South Africa, 21; Roman Catholic, 2; Dutch Reformed, 2; Scotch Presbyterian, 5; Congregational Independent, 11; Wesleyan, 27; Lutheran, 20; Dutch Presbyterian, 4; Free Church of Scotland, 2; American Congregational Mission, 14; Norwegian Mission Lutheran, 1.

## PASSENGERS.

The approximate number of passengers arrived at Natal during the year is as follows:—By steamers, 1,519; by other vessels, 289. These numbers do not include 850 military.

The number of passengers departed by steamers is 949, and by other vessels 82.

## TONNAGE.

Statement of Tonnage Inwards and Outwards for the eleven years, 1865 to 1875, inclusive.

Year.	Tonnage Inwards.	Tonnage Outwards.
1865	37,866	37,947
1866	26,142	25,627
1867	26,625	26,288
1868	26,872	24,507
1869	26,022	25,041
1870	23,881	24,005
1871	26,363	27,085
1872	35,637	33,954
1873	53,273	53,457
1874	64,156	62,128
1875	69,484	67,743

IMPORTS AND EXPORTS OF THE COLONY OF NATAL FROM  
1843 TO 1875.

IMPORTS.		EXPORTS.	
Year.	£.	Year.	£.
1843	11,712	1843	1,348
1844	41,141	1844	11,387
1845	40,591	1845	10,400
1846	41,598	1846	17,142
1847	46,981	1847	14,376
1848	46,204	1848	10,866
1849	55,921	1849	11,991
1850	111,015	1850	17,106
1851	125,462	1851	21,187
1852	103,701	1852	27,845
1853	89,434	1853	36,458
1854	112,492	1854	43,661
1855	86,551	1855	52,073
1856	102,512	1856	53,562
1857	184,549	1857	82,496
1858	172,832	1858	100,587
1859	219,917	1859	103,966
1860	254,987	1860	139,698
1861	402,689	1861	119,299
1862	499,469	1862	127,288
1863	473,333	1863	158,565
1864	591,686	1864	220,267
1865	455,206	1865	210,254
1866	363,305	1866	203,402
1867	269,580	1867	225,671
1868	317,432	1868	271,949
1869	380,331	1869	363,262
1870	429,527	1870	382,779
1871	472,444	1871	562,109
1872	825,252	1872	622,797
1873	1,011,465	1873	651,028
1874	1,121,948	1874	770,034
1875	1,268,838	1875	835,643

REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE OF THE COLONY OF NATAL  
FROM 1846 TO 1874.

REVENUE.		EXPENDITURE.	
Year.	£.	Year.	£.
1846	3,095	1846	6,949
1847	6,640	1847	9,051
1848	9,268	1848	10,400
1849	14,331	1849	19,104
1850	39,112	1850	30,956
1851	29,338	1851	33,600
1852	27,158	1852	24,876
1853	28,636	1853	29,119
1854	30,532	1854	31,632
1855	33,310	1855	28,020
1856	34,602	1856	33,826
1857	43,780	1857	36,438
1858	43,991	1858	59,532
1859	50,082	1859	47,128
1860	77,480	1860	73,002
1861	107,465	1861	113,460
1862	98,086	1862	83,886
1863	119,042	1863	94,033
1864	151,049	1864	137,979
1865	105,747	1865	142,818
1866	94,884	1866	126,067
1867	96,780	1867	118,328
1868	95,762	1868	117,255
1869	114,810	1869	117,009
1870	126,293	1870	117,009
1871	125,628	1871	118,657
1872	180,498	1872	132,978
1873	208,086	1873	182,224
1874	247,259	1874	245,939
1875	260,271	1875	306,412

Custom's Dues, Port Dues, Land Revenue, Hut Tax,  
Excise Duties, and Transfer Duties.

First nine months of 1875 (exclusive of Crown  
Agents), £181,166 9s 1d,                      £192,893 11s 2d.

## ESTIMATED TRAFFIC ON THE NATAL RAILWAYS.

	Tons.	Mileage.	Rate.		Amount.		
			s.	d.	£	s.	d.
North Coast	} 10,000	20	4	3,333	6	8	
Line		20	6	5,000	0	8	
South Coast	} 5,000	10	4	833	6	8	
Line		10	6	1,250	0	0	
Pietermaritz-	} 10,000	77	2	6,416	13	4	
burg Line		77	4½	7,218	15	0	
		77	6	9,625	0	0	
Corn in Natal	20,000	60	2	10,000	0	0	
Durban to Point	100,000		5 0	25,000	0	0	
Passengers.							
Passenger traffic	100,000		5 0	25,000	0	0	
<i>Newcastle and Overberg—</i>							
Traffic	} 10,000	77	2	6,416	13	4	
		77	4½	14,437	10	0	
		77	6	19,250	0	0	
Gross Receipts . . . . .				£133,781	5	0	
Deduct working expenses 54o/o				72,241	1	6	
Estimated net profit . . . . .				£61,539	7	6	

## THE TRADE OF THE YEAR

has, like the weather, been marked by no special vicissitudes. There has been no crisis; there have been no great failures. So far, the collapse of credit experienced in England has not reacted here. A quiet, if a rather depressed, tone has pervaded the twelvemonths. The fall in the prices of wool and hides, and indeed, of produce generally, has impaired speculative confidence, and tended to subdue enterprise. Competition is so keen in the interior now, and Cape houses work, in one or two respects, at such distinct advantage over Natal firms, that a decline of a penny or two in the price of our chief export staple means the loss of all profit to the merchant who buys.

And yet, in spite of this drawback, the account we have to give is a more satisfactory one than a year ago we ventured to foreshadow. Contrary to common expectation, the extraordinary relief to transport experienced in the early summer of 1874 has continued all the year. Although the winter was dry, it was favourable, as regards pasturage, and a very early spring caused the usual stoppage of traffic to be far less inconvenient and injurious than it generally is. Instead, therefore, of a falling off in our up-country trade, and our chief up-country exports, there has been substantial and steady advance. The road was never more crowded with wagons than during the last six months, and rates of transport were never steadier, at a moderate figure, than they have been. Unfortunately for us, our competing neighbours in the Eastern Province have had a like and even a far more favourable experience. For some time past rates to Bloemfontein and Kimberley, from Algoa Bay and East London have ranged from 13s. to 19s. per ewt. In Natal they have never fallen below 21s. @ 25s. Upon heavy goods this difference represents of course a handsome profit; and it is not to be wondered at that it is becoming a common thing for Natal houses at Kimberley to be supplied by way of Algoa Bay. Natal, in fact, has been nearly elbowed out of the Diamond Fields trade—of which at first she had a monopoly—by Cape competitors, and

simply, we believe, by these reduced rates of traffic, the result of cattle in splendid condition, and of a very complete organisation of transport appliances.

Nor is this the only result of competition. The Diamond Fields have become a centre of supply for the surrounding territories, and outlying markets, such as Bloemfontein, Boshoff, Potchefstroom, and Christians, are flooded with goods from Kimberley.

Such being the simple fact, we deem it a matter of congratulation that the Trade Returns for 1875 are as satisfactory as we think our distant readers will admit them to be, after digesting the following figures, which we have summarised from the *Gazette*:—

#### SHIPPING.

In 1875, 196 ships, with an aggregate tonnage of 69,484, arrived, against 173 ships, and 64,316 tons, in 1874.

In 1875, 192 ships, with a tonnage of 67,745, left the port, against 160 in 1874.

Of the arrivals, 57 came from England; 10 from Sweden; 2 from America (U.S.); 66 from Cape Ports 6 from St. John's; 9 from Mauritius; 7 from Calcutta; 11 from Adelaide, S.A; 2 from Inhambane; 22 from Zanzibar and Delagoa Bay; and 1 from Mozambique, Madagascar, Quillimaine, and Gopaulpor, respectively.

In 1874, the arrivals were as follow:—England, 47; 48 from Cape Ports; 19 from Delagoa Bay; 8 from Adelaide; 10 from Sweden; 4 from St. John's; 7 from Calcutta; 4 from Mauritius; 5 from the United States; 10 from Mozambique; 3 from St. Helena; and 2 from Melbourne.

The increase in Cape trade is caused by the large number of coasting steamers now employed. Four boats of the Union Company, and one of the Donald Currie Company, ply regularly along the South-East African Coast. It must also be remembered that these coasting steamers, though nominally employed in the Cape trade, are principally laden with goods from the United Kingdom, so that the 57 direct vessels by no means represent the aggregate of our trade with the mother country.

## IMPORTS.

We shall first give a table showing the items of increase under this head, as regards value.

	1875.	1874.
Ale and Beer .....	£23,868	£20,514
Apparel and Slops .....	109,613	93,915
Cabinet and Upholsteryware ..	19,534	16,446
Coffee .....	34,118	9,662
Cotton—Manufactures.....	98,275	85,246
Grain—Gram .....	265	Nil
Maize .....	8,721	980
Oats .....	3,905	1,560
Peas and Beans .....	211	Nil
Haberdashery and Millinery ..	134,040	101,381
Iron of all sorts .....	56,439	30,410
Ironmongery and Hardware ..	86,062	83,893
Leather—Manufactured .....	70,854	51,057
Linen .....	12,090	9,128
Machinery .....	31,335	25,124
Oilman's Stores .....	18,142	17,909
Saddlery and Harness .....	25,567	25,220
Stationery.....	14,058	10,422
Tea .....	10,474	7,203
Tobacco—Manufactured .....	2,353	1,950
Woollen—Manufactures .....	19,961	15,520

The following are the heads under which there has been a decrease :—

	1875.	1874.
Agricultural Implements .....	£4,959	£11,716
Beads .....	5,720	6,853
Cotton Blankets and Sheets ....	22,592	24,614
Flour, Meal, and Bran .....	33,243	38,099
Grain—Barley and Rye .....	Nil	£44
Wheat .....	£150	1,624
Guns and Pistols .....	24,121	28,316
Gunpowder .....	847	15,140
Rice .....	20,739	23,376
Spirits of all sorts .....	26,401	29,008
Sugar—Refined .....	1,138	1,464
Tobacco—Unmanufactured .....	472	622
Cigars .....	2,783	4,754
Woollens—Blankets and Rugs ..	27,635	33,785
Wines .....	16,772	17,356

Some of these items are very noteworthy. Under the twin heads of apparel and haberdashery, there is an advance of £48,357, or about 26 per cent. Leather goods show a larger proportionate increase of nearly 50 per cent. Piece goods show only a slight increase. Liquor does not appear to have been consumed in much larger quantities, except in the matter of beer, 193,417 gallons figuring against 131,639. Dram-drinking does not seem on the increase; 77,975 gallons having been entered against 76,537. Is Good Templarism or is rum to thank for this? As a great portion of this quantity goes Overberg it is vain to attempt any estimate of consumption. The least satisfactory, or we should rather say the most displeasing, items of increase are under the heads of coffee and maize, two local staples which we ought to produce in quantities more than ample for local requirements. It will be observed that a decrease is visible in blankets and sheets, beads, and blankets and rugs. Considering our large native population for which these commodities are chiefly imported, and its growing wealth, this would be an almost inexplicable fact, as the kafir trade in Natal, and Zululand, is mostly in our hands. We account for the decline, however, in part by the fact that there were heavy overstocks of all these articles when the year began, and in part by a more cheering fact, namely, that the natives are taking much more largely than they have done to the use of clothes, and that the increased importation of "slops" to some extent counterbalances the falling off in rugs and blankets. This is a matter deserving, on all grounds, of the keenest investigation, as we are enabled thereby to form some general conclusion as to the general advancement of the natives amongst us and the extent to which they are becoming contributory to the trade and revenue of the colony. The decrease in number of guns imported, from 14,708 to 11,580, is suggestive; but what else can be expected when the doors all round us stand wide open to the trade? The almost entire cessation of importation in gunpowder shows how enormously the Government had miscalculated the requirements of trade in 1874. Let us hope that an



error has not now been committed in the other direction, and that stocks here will not be completely exhausted before further supplies arrive.

#### CUSTOMS REVENUE.

There is little call for comment under this head. In spite of prognostics the Customs' receipts advanced from £109,724, to £114,769. This amount was contributed by duties on ale, coffee, dried fruit, hoes and picks, gin, tea, and ad valorem goods, which last show an advance from £42,763 to £51,152, and yield more than forty per cent of the customs' revenue. Gunpowder has, of course, decreased from £7377 to £247, and there are slight fallings-off in arms, blankets, cheese, Italian stores, brandy, tobacco, cigars, and wine. Altogether we are of opinion that this return gives us evidence of a sound and steady condition of trade, and indicates very little inflation or excessive importation. If trade has not been specially active, it has at any rate been conducted, apparently, upon a fairly solid basis.

#### EXPORTS.

There is only room here for a table of the chief items of increase and decrease. The first are as follows:—

	1875.	1874.
Arrowroot .....	£2,327	£2,226
Butter .....	2,019	963
Feathers—Ostrich .....	4,057	3,138
Hair—Angora .....	1,494	568
Hides—Buffalo .....	£2,248	£1,387
Ox and Cow .....	98,533	81,087
Spirits—Rum .....	4,259	1,391
Sugar—Raw .....	169,815	159,079
Wool—Sheep's .....	389,257	338,036
Gold Dust and Bars .....	28,443	24,710

There are several items of decrease, however, viz. :—

	1875.	1874.
Aerated Waters.....	£75	£153
Animals, Live—Horses .....	25	58
Bones—Ox and Cow.....	91	176
Coffee.....	1,586	3,341
Grain—Maize .....	297	1,243
Horns—Rhinoceros .....	15	237
Ivory .....	8,289	8,580
Saddlery and Harness .....	354	494
Seeds—Indigo .....		705
Skins—Calf, Sheep, Buck, &c..	5,914	24,351
Wildebeeste, Quagga, &c..	41,928	46,337
Tobacco—Manufactured .....	2	304
Wool—Cotton .....	203	1,165
Woodenware and Houses .....	57	452

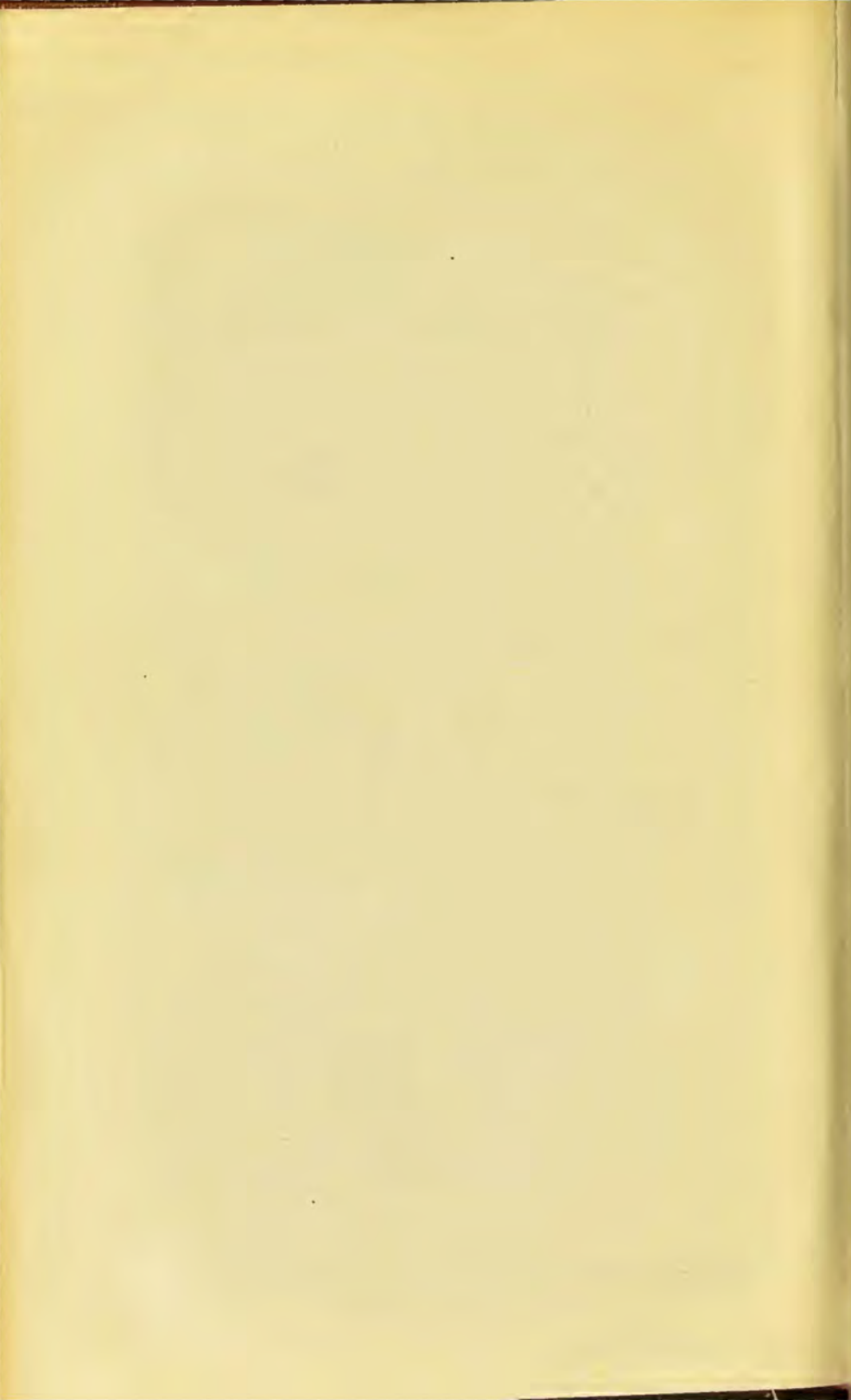
The one fact which, we consider, calls for congratulation here is, that sugar, a strictly local staple, has not fallen off, as might most reasonably have been expected, the quantity shipped being 7,775 tons against 6,832. The present year's figures will, we fear, not reach last year's, but the shipments for 1877 ought largely to advance. Wool has increased, though not to the extent of former years, the difference being represented by an advance of 780,000 lbs. Of our exports of colonial produce, wool forms more than one-half of the whole, although, in point of fact, the great bulk of this staple (like ivory or feathers) is, at present, no more the produce of Natal than gold, which is excepted. It is satisfactory to note, however, the steady increase in the production of Natal wool. Skins show a further decline in number from 222,726 to 193,970. We regret having to report no material development of new industries, or extension of old ones. Coffee, maize, indigo, and cotton, which should be staple exports, have all gone back, while arrowroot, pepper, and preserved fruit have remained stationary. Nothing but railways and immigration will, we fear, give to local industry and manufacture a permanent and sensible impetus.

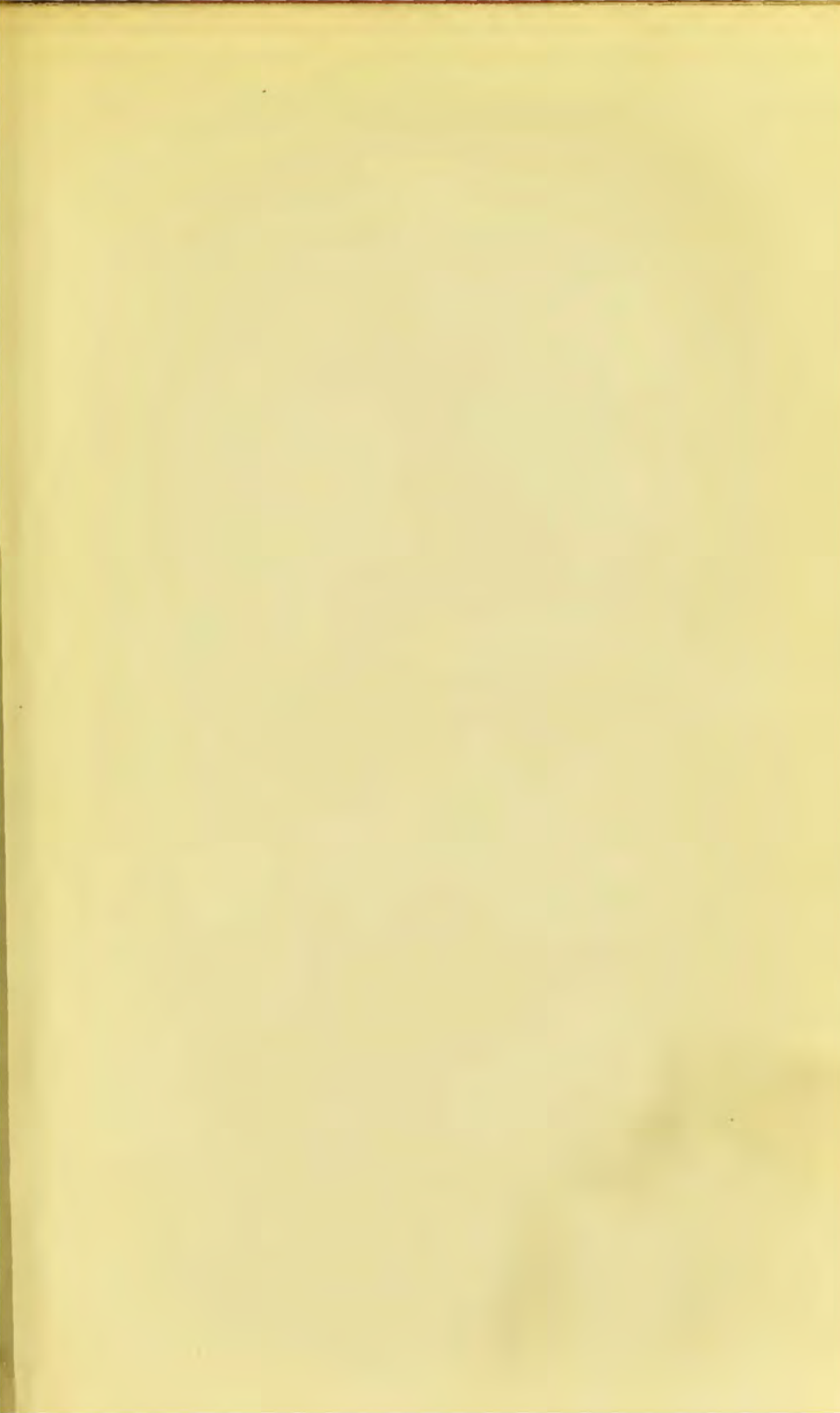
An analysis of this return suffices, however, to show that Natal is not so entirely a mere highway for trade

with the interior, as some of our critics attempt to make out. Picking out those articles that come from beyond the Drakensberg—wool, feathers, hides, skins, and miscellaneous—they make an aggregate of £485,879, but allowing one-fourth of the export of wool, or say £97,314, and £58,535 for ox and cow hides, as home production, we have, at a liberal estimate, £330,030 as the value of exports shipped from extra-colonial territories. This is less than half our shipments, so, that in spite of local depression, want of labour, difficulties of transport, absence of immigration, and diversion of industry to other pursuits, the local industry of Natal creates much more than its commerce brings in for exportation. And if we add the large quantities of home-grown sugar and coffee that are sent beyond our borders, without any record being kept, the difference would be yet greater. Indeed, reckoning these as exports, together with the specie, gold, and diamonds, sent away privately, and of which no notice can be taken, we do not hesitate to say that the exports of Natal during the past year have been close upon a million sterling, and not so very much below the imports of the colony.

We may add in conclusion that the bulk of our trade is still done with the mother country. British imports were valued at £1,076,057; Cape at £59,229; Australian at £33,468; Delagoa Bay at £16,892; Mauritian at £16,513; Indian at £13,746; Swedish at £13,111; United States' at £12,651; and Brazilian at £9497. Of our exports, £578,366 (or two thirds) went to Great Britain; £142,526 to Cape; £4825 to Adelaide; £3877 to Delagoa Bay, and smaller values to Mauritius, St. Helena, and coast ports. The Cape, therefore is our debtor to the extent of £83,297.

It may be set down here as a mark of progress that for the first time the number of vessels in port has on several occasions reached and exceeded thirty.







## IMMIGRANTS' AID OFFICE.

*President*—WM PALMER, Esq., *Mayor of Durban.*

### COMMITTEE—

Mr. R. VAUSE,	Mr. C. DACOMB,
Mr. J. HUNT,	Mr. P. HOPE,
Mr. H. ESCOMBE, M.L.C.	Mr. B. W. GREENACRE,
Mr. J. GOODLIFFE,	Mr. J. P. HOFFMANN,
Mr. WM. HARTLEY,	Mr. J. ROBINSON,
Mr. S. PINSENT,	Mr. D. HULL, Jun., Secretary.

### *First Report to Subscribers of the Immigrants' Aid Office.*

Your Committee, in presenting this their first report, congratulate the subscribers on the results attained. The operations of the year have testified over and over again to the necessity of such an institution at the seaport of the colony.

Your Committee find their efforts stultified for want of funds to push forward with still greater energy the objects of the Office.

The following statistics give an outline of the outworking of the objects, and will show to what extent the Office has been made of use to inquirers during the past year:—

The correspondence consisted of—

Letters received from England.....		12
"    "    Capetown .....		1
"    "    United States (America) .....		9
"    "    Canada .....		2
"    "    Leghorn (Italy) .....		1
"    "    Berlin (Germany) .....		1
"    "    Bloemfontein (O. F. State) .....		1
"    "    Colonial .....		319
		346

Letters written to England .....		32*
"    "    Capetown.....		2
"    "    Sweden.....		4
"    "    America (U. S.).....		3
"    "    Canada .....		2
"    "    Italy.....		13
"    "    Colonial .....		169
		225

It is worthy of note that inquiries have been made by intending emigrants from Canada and the United States of America (countries which are offering large inducements to settlers), and a correspondence is still going on with parties in these countries,

The number of callers at the Office for information may be approximately stated as being—

Applications for Servants.....	32
Seeking Situations.....	102
Other Purposes .....	252
	<hr/>
	386
	<hr/>

Of these, some inquirers represented friends in England, whose movements would depend upon the report of these their pioneers. Some were men of limited means, who made inquiries respecting Government grants, and others were men possessed of capital, and desirous to rent or purchase improved farms.

During the year, the Committee have met for business on sixteen occasions, at which meetings there has been an average attendance of six Committeemen. The business has comprised the consideration of subjects far beyond the limits of a report, and but generally indicated in the minutes of meetings published from time to time in the newspapers. Amongst other subjects may be enumerated the immigration of coolies from India and of native labourers from Madagasear and other districts north of Natal.

The cash account of receipts and disbursements is as follows.—

Dr.	£	s.	d.
<i>Receipts—</i>			
To Durban Corporation—			
Donation for two years.....	21	0	0
To Subscriptions—			
One Subscriber .....	£25	0	0
Two „ each ...	5	5	0
One „ .....		3	3
Eight „ each ...	2	2	0
Thirteen „ „ ...	1	1	0
One „ .....		1	0
		<hr/>	<hr/>
	70	2	0
To Rent—			
Office Sub-let Amount received	5	5	0
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	£96	7	0
1872,			
May 1, Balance brought down ...	£7	4	1
<i>Cr.</i>			
<i>Disbursements—</i>			
By Office Furniture.....		9	19
By Stationery .....	15	0	10
By Rent.....	19	12	6
By Printing and Advertising.....	9	0	3
By Postage .....	5	9	6
By Salary .....	30	0	0
Balance carried forward.....	7	4	1
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	£96	7	0

Audited and found correct: GEO. RUSSELL.



With the greatest economy, the Committee found it necessary to exceed the actual income of the Office.

Liabilities to May 1st .....	£31 10 0
Balance cash on hand .....	7 4 1

Leaving a balance to be provided for from future income of .....	£24 5 11
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The items of expenditure explain fully how the funds subscribed have been disbursed.

The usefulness of the Office has been necessarily impeded by want of funds; and it is to be regretted that an institution essentially of benefit to the whole colony, should not have been more fully recognised and supported. The greater portion of the income of the Office, amounting to £81 12s., has been subscribed in the town of Durban.

During the last sitting of the Legislative Council, a grant of £50 was voted in aid of the Office, and when this sum is received, it will enable the Committee to pay off the present existing liability; but your Committee would urge on the public the imperative necessity of a more liberal support to this Office.

Practically, there is no limit to the usefulness of the Office, nor to the benefit the colony receives from a society of this character, one of whose primary objects is to encourage a steady stream of suitable settlers who will become cultivators of the soil, or will follow some mechanical or manufacturing occupation by which the resources of the country may be more fully developed, and its waste lands turned to account. It cannot be too strongly impressed upon the public that the Office is established simply and solely for the public good, and that its operations are strictly disinterested.

It has been argued by some who would deter settlers from selecting Natal as their future home, that nearly all available lands have passed into the hands of monetary institutions and private individuals, and that the new settler, if he wanted to locate himself on Crown lands, must necessarily go far from towns, remote from markets, roads, or the means of obtaining supplies. This fact, however, only tends to show and to enhance the usefulness of this Office, whose register of properties for sale or lease is of mutual advantage to proprietors and applicants—to those who hold, and to those who seek, land.

Lands at present unproductive to the owner can be registered at the Office free of charge. Such register contains a full description of the land, situation, extent, suitability, &c., so that settlers may at once see where they can obtain lands either by purchase or lease on easy terms with right of purchase.

It will be evident that by the settlement and cultivation of portions of a large block of land, the remainder of the block and all the adjoining lands will be materially enhanced in value.

Inquiries have frequently been made at the Office for assisted passages; and it may be a matter for consideration how far it may come within the province of this Office to renew the system, or some modification of the plan, of assisted emigration, as formerly conducted by the Government.

Six Committeemen retire under Clause 3 of the Regulations, viz., Messrs. J. Hunt, S. Pinsent, J. Goodliffe, B. W. Greenacre, H. Escombe, and C. Dacomb; but these are eligible for reelection.



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