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The - - -  
ROMANCE  
of a  
SOUTH AFRICAN  
MISSION

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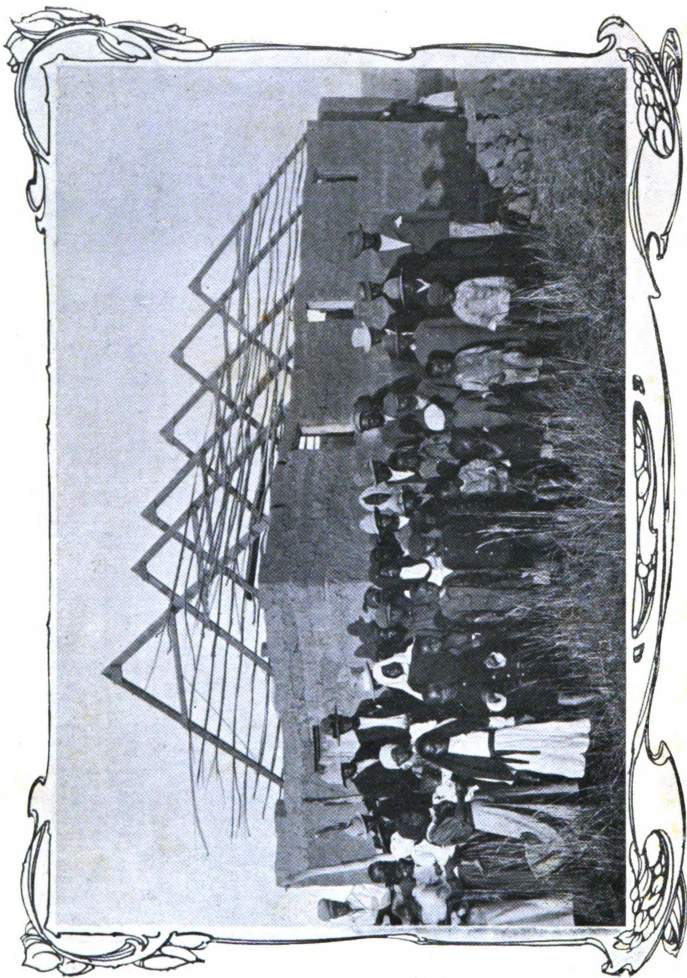
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CONGREGATION AND CHURCH IN PROCESS OF CONSTRUCTION.--page 26.

THE / ROMANCE  
OF A  
SOUTH AFRICAN MISSION, /

BEING AN ACCOUNT OF THE  
NATIVE MISSION OF THE COMMUNITY OF THE  
RESURRECTION, MIRFIELD, IN  
THE TRANSVAAL.

BY  
LATIMER FULLER, M.A.,  
*Priest of the Community of the Resurrection, Mirfield.*



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## INTRODUCTION.

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I do not know how it began ; nor when it began. In fact my clearest recollections are of refusing to think of ordination, to say nothing of being a " missionary."

I fancy too, that if to be a parson was what I used to think it was, I should not be one now.

But as I am one, and as I find the life so full of interest, of adventure and of greatness that I always want to tell people about it and they seem to enjoy hearing about it, I am putting some of it into a book so that other people too may have a share of it.

Years ago when I was a small boy, one of the grown-ups said, as unfortunately they will say—" Well, little man, and what are you going to be when you are grown up ? The man was a clergyman, and I replied that I did not know, but anyway I was not going to be a parson !

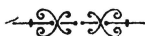
Well, years passed and boy's thoughts became man's thoughts, and I was ordained. After all, there is no profession in all the wide wide world which even touches the priestly one, if somewhere away down in your heart you want to work for God in the world. But even then I was still a long way from wanting to be a missionary ; that was quite another matter. Very soon after my ordination the question came from someone, Are you going out to the Mission Field ? and I had no sort of doubt about my reply. I suppose I thought then much like other youngsters, that London would hardly

## INTRODUCTION.

be able to get on if I went away ; so I was not likely to be keen on burying myself in some unknown and savage land !

All the same, less than ten years later, I was a full-fledged missionary, and all I can say is that I hope to remain one to the end of the chapter.

The Chapters that follow may read rather like "Swiss Family Robinson," but it is happily still true that truth is stranger than fiction.





## CHAPTER I.

---

### **The Mission Begins.**

I WAS busy puzzling out a few sentences of Syriac in our big library when the door opened and Father N. came in with a telegram. The matter in hand was sufficiently important to interrupt our morning silence, so he came to me and said—A cable has come ; we are to start at once.

Three of us were going to South Africa, to the Transvaal, to see if we could found a branch house of our Community ; it was the end of the Boer War, Autumn of 1902.

We spent a month in collecting and packing a small library, in making farewell visits and in winding up affairs in England. It was a queer sensation, that pulling up of roots which had grown so fast and far into the hearts of friends. Then one December day all the Brethren who happened to be in London at the time, met with us in Westminster Abbey for a last Communion, and we three went down to Southampton.

A month later we reached the Transvaal, to be heartily welcomed by our new Bishop of Pretoria.

We knew very little about what we were going to do ; all we knew was that there was much to be done both for our own English people in that country, and also for the Natives, the brown-black races of South Africa. I knew that I was to work among the Black People ; the Brethren were as clear about that as I was.

It may have been inclination, it may have been a sense of duty to Our Lord, it may have been some direct call, but whatever it was, I was quite sure that my work was to lie among the Natives. At Cape Town however I had had a severe shock. As I looked over the ship's side and saw the black men of the country for the first time, in their uncouth ragged clothes, their lazy attitudes, and heard their light but foolish chatter and laughter, I felt a sort of cold shiver at the prospect of living among them. Probably the average European of South Africa never gets beyond that phase, never learns the wonderful depth of character that lies below the graceless covering and therefore his natural dislike of the Native grows and grows.

We were very much "waifs and strays" at first ; there was no special work for us to do, and no house for us to live in. But though waifs, we were very comfortable ones, for the Bishop lodged us in his own big house at Pretoria until they found a little one for us to live in at Johannesburg.

Of course I could not learn much about my future work there, so as soon as I could I went away to live with Canon F. in the midst of his native people in the Location about two miles from Pretoria. Here were several shocks. The native houses were horrible—single rooms made of old tins and corrugated iron on wooden frames : things that you could pull down in ten minutes. The Church was iron with a mud floor, an Altar infested with white ants, and all the work too evidently the outcome of very unskilled builders and carpenters. The first night I was there the white ants came through my floor and filled my Gladstone bag with mud and pro-

ceeded to remove my property piecemeal. The boy who laid the table for meals, swept my room and cooked the food, smelt so horribly that I fled from the room as soon as he approached : and at the end of six weeks' hard work I could not understand a single sentence of what the people said.

But I had learned a good deal. Hours spent in long interviews with discontented congregations, long listening to the complaints of people who had grievances of one sort or another already gave me ideas about native character and native thought ; already my English ways of working were being naturally evolved into ways more suited to native surroundings. It was the first step towards getting below the surface. A native starts so far back in an argument ; while the Englishman grasps in a moment and from a few words all the early stages of some matter that comes for judgment, the native wants to begin at the very beginning and to work right through the matter "from the egg." The Englishman says—oh nonsense, I know all about that, tell me just the last bit, and the native complies but thenceforth knows that the Englishman has no patience or time to attend to him. Or the native is witness in a court of law, and hears an Englishman tell a lie ; he feels that justice demands that he too should tell a lie on his side to balance the other. Again, the native is sure of something ; the white man is sure that he is wrong, and argues the point or insists on it ; the native gives in, but all the time remains perfectly sure of his point.

But it was now time to settle in at Johannesburg, and to begin our own work. Two more were arriving to help us, and while three of the five were to do English

work, Father B. and I were to tackle the Natives. I knew by now a few words of Sesotho, and as it was important that we should also have a second language, Father B. was dispatched for three months to Zululand to learn Zulu.

I asked the Bishop what he wanted us to do, and he gave us a district which was, roughly, a hundred miles long and fifty miles broad, and included all the gold mines of Johannesburg, with their many towns, and stretched down as far as the Transvaal border at Vereeniging; and our first duty was to the mines. The Mines! What extraordinary places they are. Here is a prescription for making them.

Find a dull piece of down-like country with gold in it. Then spoil it; at every half-mile or so for fifty miles put up a couple of enormous iron chimneys like the funnels of huge steamers, only perpendicular and 100 feet high. Round these build iron sheds full of machinery, with engines rattling, chains, bars and bands careering, steam escaping, hundreds of steel rams stamping, din deafening.

Near every chimney pile and pack mountains of broken stone and glistening glaciers of blue-white sand; everywhere little railway lines with trolleys travelling by themselves attached to moving cables; lines of dull tin houses full of Englishmen; enormous stable-yards built round with sleeping rooms full of native labourers. The ground littered with old tins, bits of wire, scrap iron, broken machinery, and here and there a town. Fifty miles of it!

That is the outside. The inner meaning of the mines is far too big a question for any mere book; it

would want a library. But one aspect of it—the question of the natives who work in the mines—may be shown by quoting two universal remarks :—When the ordinary white workman talks about them he calls them “damned niggers” ; when the employer of labour talks about them he says “you are ruining the Kafirs by education,” or “the Christian Kafir is no good.”

If any doubt is expressed about the matter, the retort is always—“young man (and of course one begins at once to feel small), young man, I have been twenty years in this country, and so I must know all about it.”

Don't you think, after all, there may be some truth in the saying that of all fools, an old fool is the worst fool? If a man has been fool enough to go on for twenty years with a bad system and has done nothing to improve it, he must be a pretty bad fool.

But there are some funny things about this education of the “damned niggers.”

It is quite true that a young native who dresses grandly in the latest style, has a smattering of education, and follows the example of the average European as to religion, is a most unpleasant person, and is found in large numbers. It is quite true too that the much more primitive creature who has picked up a few scraps of civilisation is less amenable, less awed by the white man, and therefore from that point of view less useful than the native straight from the heathen kraal.

But ——— Who educates him?

Just follow the man to see what has happened. He was living at home, probably in Portuguese Territory, with his Tribe. There was a hut where his father lived and a hut where his mother lived and a hut for the

children and another to keep their stock of grain in. Round these huts, and connecting them was a sort of stockade enclosing a little courtyard. There he had grown up, seeing none but heathen like himself, and never a white man. Probably he had lived there about eighteen years.

One day he heard his companions talking about a white man who had come to the neighbourhood; how he was offering money to the Chief to allow the young men to go to Johannesburg; was offering plenty of money to all who would go; plenty of money so that they could come back and soon buy the cattle for a wife.

He and a few others went with the white man. They travelled a long way on foot; then they came to a thing they had never seen. Rails and great moving monsters; they learn that it is called "setrane"; it carries them away very fast. They come to towns, houses, trams, people, shops, food, books, clothes, animals, languages, machinery, motors, money, drinks, blows and kicks, such as they had never even dreamt of. Presently the train stops, they are all bundled out, are marched off to a huge courtyard where they find they are to live for the next six months; it is a mine compound. They have begun their education. The education continues as it has begun, only more so; they imbibe rapidly new tastes, new ideas; the old tribal customs begin to lose the power they had, new ambitions, desires for knowledge, desires for independence begin to surge in their brains.

The probability is that by the end of his six months our young man has never even seen a missionary; but when he goes back to his home, he is no longer a "raw"

native, he is educated. Who has educated him? The answer is—The Mines have done it; they are doing it always, to hundreds of thousands; the education they give is very extensive, very forcible and generally as bad a thing for a raw native as ever brain of man could devise.

What ho! my masters, 'tis a weary world! But one would gladly make the best of it and face the inevitable with a smiling grin, if only the men who produce this miserable form of forced education would have the grace to leave the poor handful of missionaries alone when they try to counteract the evil.

Sometimes they propose a remedy; they say, why can't you leave the native as he is; he lives so happily and morally in his kraal; do leave him alone.

This is merely another form of the same old hideous falsehood. Who is to leave him alone? Who is it who brings him to the mines?

And it is easy enough saying—leave him alone, but it was too late to say that twenty years ago! The people who say this are simply behind the times. Don't you remember how you took your first clock to pieces; the wheels came out easily enough. Then you came to the spring neatly coiled away in its brass case. The wise thing was to leave well alone; but you were a boy, and before long the snaky coil jumped up, tore through your fingers, broke the catch and flew whistling across the room. It was too late then to leave it alone. Several millions of natives have drunk in the ideas of Europe, civilization, learning and power; no power on earth is going to stop the growth and expansion of those ideas; it is too late.

The mines at Johannesburg alone, in these twenty years, have been sufficient to unhinge the whole native mind of that great sub-continent; they have moved natives to and fro every year at the rate of some 15,000 a month; they have poured out hundreds of thousands of pounds to do it. You cannot sow such a storm without reaping something very like a whirlwind.

That great expanse of work was part of what the Bishop wanted us to look after.





## CHAPTER II.

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**Gold Mines.**

**W**HAT we wanted were Teachers, native Teachers. As soon as we were settled into our house at Johannesburg we began to wander about and ask questions; evidently there were a good many Church Natives on the mines, if we could only get at them, but what can you do when you don't know the language! So we wanted native Teachers to help us.

We found one, Matthew; then we found two more, Titus and Stephen. Titus was lame, but most willing and hard-working; later on, sad to say, he developed a form of leprosy. Besides these three there was a fourth, Apollos. They had all been Christians for many years and were well spoken of by the Europeans who knew them. There were two small iron rooms in our yard which had been used as store rooms during the war. These four men came to us and slept in one and had their meals and lessons in the other, for they had come to us on the understanding that we would house, and feed and teach them, while they would teach us their languages and help us to preach to the heathen on the mines.

Their English was fragmentary, and they were quite unable to get any idea of what we mean by grammar; this was largely due to the fact that all the South African languages are very different in formation and grammar from ours. They have nothing in the way of gender; there is no distinction of "he" and "she" and "it."

There is no change in the verbs for different persons ; and the changes of words take place by means of altered beginnings instead of altered endings. And then, when you are just thinking that you have grasped the way in which adjectives are used or numerals, you are suddenly pulled up with a gasp by your native teacher telling you that you have used the wrong form for " six " or " seven," because in that particular sentence the numeral is in the past tense ! So our progress in learning was slow.

On Sundays we went to the mines ! We went early, about eight in the morning, because on Sundays all the mine " boys " have a little native beer (yoala), and when they have drunk that the whole compound becomes too violently jovial for open-air services.

This is what happens. If it is a warm day, there are natives walking about everywhere ; if it is cold they stay in their rooms with big fires burning in braziers. We arrive at the entrance to the compound ; generally a big double yard gate standing open ; just inside on a stool sits the native compound policeman, with a knob-kerrie and a whip (sjambok) in his hand ; he is the servant of the European Compound Manager, and his business is to keep out traders and to preserve order ; sometimes he has orders to keep out preachers also, and then we have to go and call on the Compound Manager and secure permission to preach in the compound.

Inside it is a great open courtyard, square, or oblong, with continuous rows of rooms along each of the four sides, all opening into the yard. Sometimes there are also rows of trees ; generally in the middle stands a building which is the kitchen, where all the porridge



THE RAW KAFIR.—page 12.



and vegetables are cooked by steam ; well cooked too ; meat is served out generally twice a week, raw.

Everywhere in this great courtyard you see groups of men. Here half a dozen lying in the sun, wrapped up in their brown blankets asleep. There three or four sit smoking round a fire burning in an old tin ; you watch them a moment and can hardly believe your eyes ; they smoke cigars with the lighted end in their mouths ; why, I don't know, probably because they find it nice and warm ! There again by the door of one of the rooms a couple are hard at work ; they have a flat stone, a bit of iron for a hammer and a quantity of horsehair and brass wire. They are making bangles such as are universally worn by men, women and children. A little further on seven or eight have made a square of little cup-like holes in the ground and are playing a most complicated game with little stones. Another group have another fire, but they are cooking their Sunday meat by hanging it in gruesome chunks all round and on the embers ; when it is sufficiently charred, they will eat it. A curious assortment of old tins tied together with leather thongs, with pieces of wood across them, you soon learn to recognize as a group of native pianos. However the place is quiet enough, and we take our stand at a spot which is fairly clean and commands a good view ; we wear cassocks and surplices, and we have with us a tall wooden preaching Cross as a sign of our Faith.

As our first hymn sounds through the compound a chance native here and there gets up, slowly walks to where we are and stands in front of us ; as the hymn goes on more and more gather round, some bringing old

tins to sit on; some in European clothes, but most in their waistcloth only, and by the time the hymn is finished there may be as many as a hundred, but more usually twenty or thirty.

Then we start preaching. Not an easy matter, for our words have meanings which they do not have for the natives; we speak of God, of Heaven, of God's Love, of God's Laws. All these things have little meaning for them. We speak with a horrible European accent, say in Sesotho; the Sesotho is translated sentence by sentence into Sexosa; the Sexosa into, perhaps, Segwamba; for it is seldom that those who listen can all understand one language; this makes it hard enough, but there are soon other difficulties; there is a bang and a thump from the corner and you know that the pianos have begun: six men with a sort of drum stick in each hand start to belabour the pianos, and we perceive an evident unsteadiness in the congregation; we hold on however and the music subsides, but almost before we can take warning and draw to a close a terrific yell comes from a distant doorway; a wild looking creature with shaggy white headdress and long horns, loins girt round with strange hairy skirt, with spear and shield in his hands rushes forward with frenzied dance and hideous yells to stamp and leap in front of the pianos; in a moment he is joined by a second and before long there are twenty dancing natives stamping, shouting and yelling till the perspiration runs off them in streams, and the congregation moves off to the dance while we proceed to another and a quieter mine.

But more commonly we get safely to the end of our service and then begin to find out who is who; here is a

“boy” who comes up to show us a card he has got; the card is signed by the Bishop of Lebombo and sets forth when the man was baptized, confirmed and so on; we tell him where is the nearest place to get his Communion and where he can join a Class if he wants to go on learning; another will come up with a book only; he wants to show that he has learnt to read; his book is a New Testament in Sesotho and he comes from Canon Widdicombe at Thlotse; another one turns up with a fine certificate from Grahamstown setting forth that he has been appointed Catechist—three years before, very likely—by the Bishop of Grahamstown; he is promptly told that here is a grand chance for him to be an evangelist, by helping us to preach to the mine boys. Half a dozen in another place will stop to say that, please, they do want a school; cannot we send them a teacher; then we do our best to arrange for a class to be held in one of the compound rooms. And so it goes on; along fifty miles, every Sunday, in dozens of places we meet these men, of all kinds, with their many needs and their determination to learn.

But we soon found others also. These hundreds of thousands of men who are for ever coming and going, are not the only natives on the Gold Reef or Rand; everywhere, where there are Europeans, villages or towns, there are also many native servants and native families; these stay all their life in one place; it is their home; and so we found many who were members of the Church, but they had no Churches to worship in, no schools for their children, no clergy to shepherd them. When they found us they were delighted; they found us generally by means of Matthew, Titus, Stephen and

Apollos. Now you have come, they would say, we shall find help, we will build churches, we will have schools.

But before long we found that things were not so easy as they seemed. One congregation worked hard, collected £80 ; we were ready to add to it £70, carpenters were ready to build, but we could get no site allowed us for the Church anywhere near where the people lived, for all that ground was under the control of the Gold Law. Month after month we had to hold our services in the street, in tiny huts, anywhere we could ; the people began to despair of anything being done. At last a kindly intentioned white man who held some mining "claims" on this land gave us leave to build. The following day the carpenters were at work ; in three days the roof was on, and we had for the first time a decent wood and iron Church. Just as we were about to begin to prepare it for use, a peremptory letter arrived from the Department of Mines informing us that we were contravening the Gold Law. We explained and protested innocence, and begged for permission to go on, but the only reply was a second letter instructing us to remove the building at once. We did not know what to do, and so we did nothing. And gratefully we add that the Department also did nothing ; that was in 1903, and the Church still stands ; but it may be removed any day.

By slowest degrees we expanded our work ; here we managed to buy an old stable already licensed, and converted it into a Church ; there we got leave to erect a building on the condition that we would always move at a month's notice ; in another place we managed to use a bit of an old compound ; in yet another we were able to hold services in an old machine room.



We never had enough money, as all that was available was the rather meagre collections of the native congregations, and the profit we made by selling Church books in the native languages. The end of the month, when payments were due, was a constant nightmare, and by the middle of 1904, the strain of work had pretty effectually finished one of us, and he had to go and recruit in Natal for six weeks.

But by then also, the worst part was over. The natives themselves began to respond splendidly. Now and then, of course we came across a bad one, but not often. The good ones were many. Thomas Lutseke was one of these; he had been converted to Christianity in Cape Colony; he was, when we first knew him, working for an engine driver on the mines near Germiston; he was very anxious to have Church services, so on Sundays he spent his time in collecting people together in his hut and reading the morning service in Sexosa and then preaching and teaching. In time he collected enough money from these people to build a little iron Church in the Native Location at Germiston and we added enough to pay for the roof; then he came to us and explained that he must spend all his time in teaching the people, but he had saved a little money and would live on that. He had a little school for the children, and evening classes for the grown up people; he had service for them at sunrise every day and in the evening when they returned from work. When his money came to an end we paid him £2 a month only and he was satisfied with that, although he had always earned £6 a month at his engine work. Then, poor fellow, he fell ill with consumption; he had

a great wish to go back to his old home in Cape Colony, but the very day I arrived with the money for his journey, I was met with the news that he was dead.

As the work grew on the mines, our central organisation of our four Teachers in their two little rooms proved far too small. We were in much doubt as to what to do, but the solution was found when the house adjoining our own in Johannesburg appeared with a notice stating that it was for sale, and the Diocese bought it for Mission work with funds entrusted to them by the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel.



## CHAPTER III.

**Country Congregations.**

**B**Y the time we had fairly realised the hugeness of the work on the Reef, we had also discovered that it was by no means the only work lying before us.

There were already many Church Natives living in the country and waiting for the Church to help them.

Ten years previously they had hoped great things, for the Rev. C. B. Shaw, of S. Mary's, Johannesburg, who had already for some years been building up a native congregation in the town, had begun to pay visits to the country ; but their hopes had been crushed when he was obliged to confine his work to the parish of S. Mary's : from that time they had only had the help of rare visits from Canon Farmer, of Pretoria, and were fast losing hope.

What would you feel like if you only saw your Parish Priest once in three or four years, and only then by travelling some ten or twelve miles on foot ?

So we soon heard that these people wanted us to visit them.

An old native who had once been very tall, but was bent with age and rheumatism, was the first to come to Johannesburg to look for us. He had already been to the Bishop and had been directed to us.

He spoke English brokenly with Dutch construction for his sentences and many Dutch words. He explained how from boyhood he had done nothing but travel about the Southern Transvaal teaching his people the Faith,

how he had now come to take his Father to see the Children; there were many of them and they were waiting.

The following week we began to visit his people; we found, as time went on, more and more centres of Church Life; what could we do to organise this work?

One of the first visits we paid showed one thing clearly—they were able to pay for their religion. The visit was one of three days spent in visiting a chain of four congregations. The people bought European food for their visitor, hired a waggon and bullocks for the journey, made collections at the services, paid the recognised amount for certificates of Baptism, and showed great keenness; at the end of that three days' trek, when their waggon had deposited me at the railway station from which I was to return to Johannesburg, I counted the money which they had given me; it amounted to nearly £7.

Money has a great influence on character. When you have broken stones for a whole day at one and sixpence a day, you relish the supper you have earned. When someone pays me an annual subscription of £500 towards the Mission, I shall know at once that he has proved his fitness to express his views as to how the work of the Mission is carried on. So from the time of that first trek to the country congregations we began to expound to the people this great principle—In proportion as they do their part in supporting the work of the Church, so will they prove their fitness to have their due share in Church Government. Here is the great foundation stone upon which one can build up the people to be good and responsible persons.

Well, we found a strange medley and a queer state of things ; there were men in charge of these many little congregations, generally self-appointed, often hardly able to read or write, never able to do either well ; the people had no Churches to meet in ; no schools ; no unity except the general idea that they were under a Bishop whom they never saw ; no books, for they had all been burnt in the war ; no property, for all their cattle had been commandeered by one side or the other ; they were living not in villages but in little groups of three or four families at the most in one place ; either as "squatters" on Dutch farms and paying for the privilege with half of any corn (mealie) that they grew, or as servants (serfs) of the farmer and bound to give him free labour when called upon to do so ; and yet holding with wonderful tenacity to every bit of Church Teaching that they had, and quite prepared to fall tooth and nail upon any unorthodox teacher who might try to expound false doctrine.

The men who looked after these congregations they called Catechists, and in time of service endeavoured to be decently habited in cassock and surplice ; but cassocks had vanished and the surplices were sometimes so near the vanishing point that only the wonderful solemnity of the black people at times of worship saved us from indecent laughter.

Now a Catechist is a wonderful person.

He would in England be called, probably, a Lay Reader ; but his duties are wide and various.

First he finds a congregation, often his own family and relations ; he gathers them together for services ; it then becomes his duty to get a Church built and he often

makes the bricks, the windows and the doors, makes his own plan and does the building himself ; the women folk and the children cut the grass for the thatch, and plait the grass string which will bind the thatch to the rafters. An axe, an augur, a hammer, and an old saw, all very decrepit, will be the only tools available, but he can use tools which a white man would not look at. When the building is finished, he builds an Altar, and the women plaster the whole place outside and in, and colour the walls white, decorating them with blue, red and yellow patterns. The floor is made of ant hills broken up and stamped hard and is washed, again in patterns, with a wash of cowdung and water. There are no seats, but the Catechist contrives a prayer desk, a lectern, and two or three stools ; collects money from the congregation to buy a Cross and two Candlesticks for the Altar, some cotton material for hangings, and if possible, a bell. Every day at sunrise he rings his bell and people who are near enough meet for morning service ; he visits the congregation, some of whom will live at least three or four miles away ; he teaches the children the Catechism, how to behave in Church, and how to sing hymns ; he shows the people how to find their places in the Prayer Book and to sing the responses in service ; he visits the sick, exhorts the sinners, and buries the dead ; he collects the Church subscriptions and finds out new comers ; he converts the heathen and brings them to the Priest who admits them to a recognized position in the Church by making them Catechumens ; he teaches them then in class for a year, and again brings them to the Priest to be prepared for Baptism ; after Baptism he again teaches them in preparation for Confirmation ; he has three

services on Sundays, and class in the afternoon ; he plows and sows the land during three months, and his wife and daughters hoe it while the mealies are growing ; and in the country, he is paid, for all this, a part of the Church subscriptions which his congregation pay, perhaps £2 or £3 a year. When the Priest visits the congregation, it is the Catechist again who has the babies ready for Baptism with proper god-parents, has ready all particulars of importance to be reported, has a place for the visitor to sleep in and food for him to eat. This is what a good Catechist does in the country. Sometimes they are not good.

But we found everywhere that the people asked for books ; we laid in a small stock, buying prayer books and hymn books and Bibles and Catechisms in Zulu, Sexosa, Dutch, Sesotho and Sechuana. Every time we went into the country we would take half a dozen with us, and they were always gone almost before we arrived, and the people were asking for more. We were thus met by the very thing which has ruined many a Mission—the opportunity for the Missionary to become a Trader. Evidently there was here an opening for money-making, and when you once begin to hesitate between what is good for another man's soul and what is good for your own pocket, you are in very dangerous country. So we had to decide at once how far trading was possible, and we made this our principle—that Trading is only compatible with Mission work so long as the Missionary gains nothing by his trading and so long as it is quite evident to the buyers that all profits are used only to strengthen and extend the Mission.

When we had this clear, we took out a trading licence in Johannesburg as "General Dealers" and were ready to open a shop, should opportunity offer!

But to bind together all these little groups of Churchpeople into conscious union with one another and with the rest of our work and with the whole Church seemed almost impossible. Some of them lived as much as fifty or even sixty miles away from us; many were great distances from their nearest neighbours. It was difficult even to let them know of our visits, posts were uncertain; there was no country delivery of course, and it was a mere chance whether any particular native would call at the nearest post office to ask for letters even once a month. Yet if they did not have notice beforehand that we were coming, the people could not get leave from their masters to leave the farm, nor could they hear of our arrival in time to be present at the services.

The solution had arrived when we began to talk about a Native Magazine. We would write it in Zulu and Sesotho; we would put into it notice of all the places which we should visit during the coming five weeks; we would get advertisements to pay the cost of printing, and we would issue it every month to all the native congregations.

I think we started this with six hundred copies and the size of the magazine was twelve small pages, and it cost about £6 a month. We sent most of the copies by post to the best address we could get for the Catechists and I do not suppose that more than half reached their destination.



But it began to do its work ; many letters written in queerest language began to arrive ; one to ask that the magazine might be written in Dutch only ; another man wrote explaining that Zulu was no good to his people, so we were to leave out the Zulu in the copies sent to him ; another wrote to ask about the bicycles that were advertised in one place ; another to say how pleased he was to read about the excellent medicine for the hair which would make his beard grow !

Before long the addresses became more secure and the people came to expect the magazine and if the first of the month arrived and they had not found their copies at the post office they would write and ask how it was. Accounts of Church doings all over the Diocese and indeed all over the world appeared in the magazine and also notices of our work on the gold mines ; all this helped to pull the people together and to open their minds and their hearts to things in the bigger world.

But when people begin to wake up they also begin to have new ideas, and we felt that it was important to foster anything which would make them realise their responsibilities. So in the Magazine and in the Synod of the Diocese we began to ask for a definite Council of the Church in which the Native congregations would be represented by their own people. Already Native Clergy had the right of a seat and a vote in the Diocesan Synod, but as there were no Native Clergy this did not help much. The Bishop of Pretoria, always enthusiastic for the extension of the Church among the Native Races, met us more than half way and summoned the first Native Conference of the Transvaal. He left the Mission Priests to appoint Native representatives for

the first Conference, and we chose the men whom we thought were most capable of understanding speeches and of making themselves understood.

The Conference was to meet on a Wednesday at Pretoria, and about seventy representatives had been summoned. They were to arrive at Johannesburg on the previous evening so as to go on with us the following day to Pretoria, but when I went to see if they had supper and a place to sleep in, I found the whole place alive with Catechists from every part of the country. They had read about the Conference in the Magazine, and everyone of them was sure that it was merely by accident that his name had been omitted from the list of those summoned to attend; so there they all were, and on they came to Pretoria the next day at least to be present at the Conference if they could not vote!

Both Magazine and Conference have continued to grow and develop since then, and probably they are doing more to strengthen the Native Church than anything; the Magazine has grown to twelve quarto pages and is printed in Sechuana, Dutch, and Sexosa, with bits of Sesotho and English, and enjoys a circulation of a thousand a month. The Conference is annual and meets after Easter, and the majority of its members are elected by the people.



## CHAPTER IV.

**College and Ordination.**

WHEN Father F. who had been ill returned to Johannesburg he found two things, one was a large packing case and the other was that he could not yet do a long day's work. So he unpacked the packing case and found a small printing press sent from a friend in England; a second packing case turned up and it contained some two hundredweight of type, which unfortunately had occupied the journey from England in getting itself enormously mixed. The printing press of course suggested printing and so the half-time Father spent his other half-time in playing with that until he got some idea of what printing is. You begin to have an idea when, after weary hours spent in setting your first page of type, you drop it on the floor, and there are several hours' work of picking it up again before you can even start afresh; or when you have half crushed a finger in the press; or when the cutting machine has closed upon your hand; when nothing issues from the press but sheets that even you cannot read; or when, in trimming a job that you have at last produced after enormous labour, you cut off all the headline!

While he was doing this and the rest of us were rather pointed in our remarks about waste of time, our opportunity came to build on the ground next door which the Diocese had bought for us. We had to provide the following:—Rooms for four Missionaries,

Dormitories for sixteen Students, Chapel, two Class-rooms, a Book Shop, and a Kitchen. Space was distinctly limited and everything had to be fitted in to the old cottage already existing ; and we just managed.

But this new accommodation would set free the old rooms occupied by our first students as well as another which we had fitted up in the meantime ; here was the opportunity of developing our Printing. If we could secure a good enough machine and plant to do our own printing, we should save the monthly cost of the Magazine, and also be able to do much Mission Printing which was greatly needed, but which we could not afford to pay for.

By the time that the buildings were ready, we had gathered about £75 worth of stock for the shop and had received notice of printing material to the value of £110 having started from England. Twelve new Students were waiting to occupy the Dormitories and a Native Teacher, who was to help the Students in their secular lessons had arrived. His name was Daniel Mavumengwana ; for the three years he was with us he was a brilliant instance of devotion to duty and a grand example to the Students and all who came into contact with him ; then, alas ! he fell ill in the summer of 1906 and died in Johannesburg Hospital.

We knew that if the printing was to develop, we must have a trained printer, for Father F. had far too little spare time to do more than superintend it. At that time there happened to be a native in charge of one of our little day schools who had been for some years a printer in a large office in Cape Colony, but had been forced to give up his work on account of ill-health ; now



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his health was stronger and we suggested his coming to do our printing at £3 a month. He agreed to this, and arrived ; it was December, and we proposed to issue the first number of the magazine for the new year from our own office ! The advertisements tested our supply of fancy type to its utmost, indeed beyond ; and we had also miscalculated our resources in the way of pica ; but at last all was ready for printing ; proofs were corrected and nothing remained but to print. Oh, the horror of those next three days ! Sheet after sheet was tried, but we could produce nothing even passable ; the native printer looked on, helpless to suggest a remedy, and at last we had to print our 900 copies of a 16 page magazine two pages at a time ; and even that could hardly be called printing ! And that was not all, for we had not realised the time taken in folding and stitching, and we had had no experience in trimming edges. Somewhere about the third of January, the magazine was ready, but oh, it was a sorry production !

And before we had time to arrange for the next month's issue, the Printer had run away. He went for a holiday ; he never came back, and we had to produce the February magazine as well as we could by ourselves.

The first steps are always the most difficult. We secured for the following six months a delightful native called Joseph, to do the printing ; he was not brilliant, but he was very patient and willing. After his six months were ended he went home, and then there joined us a young English Printer, who had a desire to serve in the Mission Field, and came to us for an indefinite period, without salary. He was very good, and refrained from jeering too openly at our strange printing methods,

and in a very short time everything was in proper order ; from that time the work really developed ; whenever we could scrape the money together we enlarged our stock ; we could not invest in new machines, but we bought second, or even third and fourth hand ones to good purpose ; by this means we were able to do a good deal of work, and to do it very fairly well. But we hope for still greater things. We hear the printing Brethren hinting at such things as stereotyping plant, stitchers, perforators, electrotpe apparatus, and even a new cylinder machine. All comes to him who waits.

We had been at work two years and had produced the skeleton for future development ; our centre in Johannesburg with Catechists' College, Night School, Chapel, Printing Press and Shop ; our Mission stations along the Reef with our body of preaching Evangelists, congregations and schools ; our visits to the country with their Catechists, Diocesan Conference and Native Magazine. There was the skeleton fairly complete but wanting in three serious particulars. We wanted Native Clergy ; we wanted a Girls' School ; we wanted a School for Training Native Teachers.

As to Native Clergy, none but the Bishop could help us ; we put the matter before him ; it was serious enough. Shortly before we had arrived, the Native Catechists had held a meeting "on their own" to consider the advisability of going over in a body with their congregations to the schismatic Christians known as the Ethiopians who are the same as the American Methodist Episcopal Church ; that is a poor name for these people for they are not American, they have cut themselves



loose from the Methodists, they have of course no true Bishops and we should hesitate to call them a Church.

The chief reason why these Catechists proposed to leave the Church and join the Ethiopians was that they believed there was no chance of their being admitted to the Ministry; for many years they had done their best in the Church, but it seemed as if the way was entirely blocked, they could get no help for their people, they could not advance themselves. Added to this was a strong belief that certain of their number had been promised ordination years before on certain conditions; they had fulfilled the conditions but there had been no ordination.

When we reported this to the Bishop, he made careful enquiry; we found that one of the men who was to have been ordained was our first student, Matthew. At that meeting of Catechists, he and another called Andreas had saved the situation by pointing out that however much they might feel neglected, they could gain nothing by joining a sect; and they had urged that things should be left as they were until the end of the war should come and they could see whether anything was done to help them.

It seemed clear that there were a few men who had worked very well, both in teaching the people and in improving themselves, and the Bishop decided to admit to the Diaconate the best of these, on condition that they spent a year studying in Johannesburg with us and passed an examination. The first to be admitted was Matthew, and he now appears in "Crockford" as Matthew Malo Mntande, deacon. In the course of four years, seven have in this way been ordained Deacons,

and each year the standard of their examination improves.

A Girls' School is still a dream of the future. But we cannot do without it.

It does not sound very necessary ; the same people who tell you about the Missionary spoiling the Kafir by education, will also tell you that it is such a pity to teach the Kafir Christianity, because they have such a good religion of their own and live so morally in their own kraals. Well, no one who really knows the heathen native will talk like that ; the real facts of the case can be put in a few words—The heathen boys or girls may possibly live decently for their first twelve years, though long before that they have heard enough evil to corrupt anyone. But when once they have been through the heathen school, whether boys or girls—and no boy will ever get married who has not been through it, and no girl will be offered in marriage until she has been through it—then there is no vestige left of manly virtue or of maiden modesty ; the old men teach the boys, and the old women teach the girls, and the whole aim of the school is to set ablaze the fire of carnal lust. Well may we thank God for our English fathers who teach their boys to be clean and honourable ; for our English mothers who bring up their children to holiness ; but we can hardly conceive of the fight which the native children have to go through if they want to attain to Christian purity ! Thank God for those who do.

Now there is the necessity for a girls' school ; how can we expect the Native mothers to bring up their boys and girls well and with Christian ideals unless they have been well taught ; what chance is there of their being

well taught, living as they do far away in the country ; but if we had—no, *when* we have our girls' school staffed and worked by good English women, then we shall have a constant stream of Christian girls with high ideals going out into the country to become good Christian mothers.

Yes, these things are the bones which make the skeleton for Mission work ; and it was a great thing to have got so far in two years ; but after all a skeleton is a poor thing ; and a skeleton covered with flesh and blood is not much better for it is just a corpse ; what one wants is Life—yes LIFE in capitals please, Mr. Printer. You cannot get on without the bones ; and you cannot get on without the muscles and the sinews, but it's the Life that you must have and it is that which you cannot buy. But there is plenty of it to be had free from the Giver of Life, and many of our black people have found that out already.

Oh yes ! There are some liars, and thieves and drunkards and wasters among them, but do you know any people anywhere who are all good ? And I would trust the truthfulness and honesty, and the religion of our black people a good deal more than that of most white people in South Africa.

But there are some bad 'uns.

There was Robert. We found him at Pretoria, at the Bishop's house. He could talk English, and said he came from Central Africa ; that was true. He said that he had walked all the way ; that was a lie ; that he had started with his brother ; that was another lie ; that his brother had been eaten by a lion north of Pietersburg, while he had escaped by climbing up a tree ; more lies ;

however we believed him, took him to Johannesburg, kept him and taught him for a month ; went with him to mine compounds where there were others from Central Africa, and there found that he was well known, and had indeed been working there until three months previously ; we told him he was too big a liar for us, and that he must get work to do at once ; that was more than two years ago, but he still comes to us in Johannesburg asking us to try him again ; and I do not think any of us are quite sure how much truth he has mixed with how much fiction.

Then there was Petrus. He was the son of heathen parents, but had been baptized ; he was about twenty-five, married, and had little children ; his parents too had a long family which was still lengthening. Petrus had a great wish to be a Catechist, and we were willing enough, but told him that now Catechists had to come to College for training before they could be appointed ; so far as we knew he quite agreed about this, and would arrive the following term as soon as there was a vacancy. But one day an ox waggon with a good team of oxen stopped at our door, and various native women proceeded to deposit themselves with babies and bundles of clothes on the stoep by the Chapel ; the driver of the waggon was Petrus, and he had a brother with him. The meaning of this was evident, he had brought his baby to be baptised. I was completely taken in ; I asked if the baby was his, and he said yes. Everything was all right, god-parents were communicants, the Baptism was celebrated, and the waggon departed. The next day we heard that the baby was not his son but his brother, and the child of heathen parents ; he knew that we did not

baptize the children of heathen, and so had said that it was his own. Father B. was going the following Sunday to that part of the country, and saw Petrus and rebuked him.

When the following term arrived, Petrus did not turn up; we enquired the reason and learnt that he and all his people had just gone over to the Ethiopians. That was two years ago, and the last news about him was that he had been asking whether he could come back again, for he found that the Ethiopian ministers were no good.



## CHAPTER V.

**Ethiopians.**

**N**OW we must turn aside a bit to see what an Ethiopian is, but you can skip this chapter if you like.

Probably we are right in saying that there is no such thing as a "raw" Ethiopian; that is to say, Ethiopians are not born, but made, made by being brought from their homes and thrown into contact with civilisation. What happens? As soon as the native has arrived at the mine, he finds himself quartered with from ten to forty others in a big room; the following day he is allotted to his European "mine boss," and for the first time in his life goes underground; being a very phlegmatic sort of person he merely exclaims gutturally and waits for instructions; he is shown a machine drill, or an iron jumper and hammer, and his boss tells him to start work. Now the European boss may know a little, very little English Zulu, and he may not. In any case, it will be a marvel if a raw boy understands what he says; the probability is that he will understand nothing and the white man promptly "boots" him to quicken his wits. This is new to the raw Kafir and he merely regards it as a new experience; he will bear a great deal of it; that is largely why the Europeans on the mines dislike the Chinaman—he will not bear it. The Kafir goes on bearing this sort of treatment, he gets used to being knocked down, beaten with sjambok and jumper even, sworn at continually in most disgusting language,

but at last he reaches the point when even he turns, and from that moment he is an Ethiopian ; he will not say anything, still less do anything, but his heart is bad within him and he is against the white man, and should the chance come to him he will fight to destroy all that is white. Africa for the Africans.

Or take another case which is nearly as common.

A native comes to look for work as a " house-boy " or indoor servant ; for this purpose he is allowed six days in which to find work, and if he cannot find work in that time, he will be arrested by the police, and having thus been made a " criminal," will be given one or two or even three months' forced labour. But suppose that he finds work, his new employer takes him to the Pass Office, which is the office where every native working in a " labour district " has to be registered, and has to renew his registration every month ; there he is sworn at as usual, and when his turn comes to have name, tribe and home registered, the official at the desk talks to him in the recognised and horrible " kitchen " Kafir ; here the probability again is that he will not understand and will give the wrong answer ; the official finds out eventually that he is on the wrong tack, but it is the native who suffers. No instruction as to the town rules is given him, and he goes to his master's house to learn his work ; his master sends him next day to take a message, and the boy guilelessly walks on the sidewalk ; he is promptly run in by the police, and his master has to pay a fine of £1 to get him out ; of course it is the native who suffers for that ; after his work is finished, he wants a breath of fresh air and goes out into the street ; he has no watch and could not use it if he had,

but it is five minutes past nine, and no native is allowed out after nine ; the police again run him in, and this time he begins to wonder whether the great white King is really making his country better than it used to be. Here is another on the road to Ethiopianism.

It is merely the black man being turned against the white man ; they start always with a great respect for the English King and the English people ; they are willing enough to regard them as great and good and to fit in to their ways ; but they find on all sides that brutal and brutalizing treatment which on the mines, on the farms and in the towns is creating, manufacturing Ethiopians by thousands every year.

What wonder is it that in Religion, in Politics and in Social Life these people band themselves together under leaders of their own colour and take as their watchword—Africa for the Africans ?

The education of the Mines and the Towns has done its work ; the black people have waked up, they are thinking and moving ; it is too late to let sleeping dogs lie, too late to say—Keep the Native where he is ; but it is not too late to guide their education into healthful lines, and to fortify it with sound religion. The people of the Transvaal begin to see this, but they are only beginning, and in the meanwhile the older generation as well as the Press are content to bewail the Ruin of the Kafir.

So long as this continues there is only one logical outcome ; the sense of injury brings hatred of the white man, and this hatred smoulders until it meets the fan of a black orator ; then the people begin to combine, to prepare for war as secretly as they can ; they trust to



numbers, bravery and a reckless disregard of death ; and when it has reached this point no remedy remains for the white man but thousands of troops, the expenditure of millions of money, the loss of some lives and the ruin of the labour market.

In these surroundings and under these conditions the Missionary has to go on working cheerfully, comforting the people as best he can and hoping for better times.

And in these circumstances and conditions the native Christians do endure and live wonderfully.

Here are specimens of the cases which have come under my personal observation.

I was spending Holy Week in a native town ; there were many Christians there, and we had daily services in preparation for Easter Communion and Easter Baptisms. We were doing all we could to realise the greatness of that greatest Sunday in the year, when after the sorrow of Good Friday, our Saviour rose again and brought hope and gladness to the world. Of course Sunday is a new idea to the heathen.

All went well ; the people gathered early on Easter morning to worship the risen Christ, and after our first service I came back to the chief's kraal where I was staying. There I found commotion ; English soldiers were standing about, English officers were seated at a table in the courtyard, and there, on Easter day of all days in the year, they were showing their utter disregard of every Christian instinct, were destroying all the reverence for the day which we were teaching, by holding a court for the collection of the hut tax !

What could those Natives learn but that in his heart of hearts the white man cares nothing for religion. A thing like that done by Government officials makes the heathen jeer and the Christians despair.

Another day I had gone with the Bishop to a Confirmation at one of our country congregations. The previous week great care had been taken to see all those who were to be confirmed, and all had been told where they were to meet the Bishop on the Sunday.

The Sunday came, and the Confirmation; all the candidates for Confirmation were there and also many others who wished to take the somewhat rare chance of seeing their Bishop. The Confirmation was just over and the people had begun to disperse when there was a cry of "The Police," and we saw several of the mounted police chasing the people as they went to their homes. Now these men had the law on their side, for no Native is allowed to travel without a pass from his employer, and the police have therefore the right to examine each man's pass; but that men serving under the British Government could be guilty of such amazing bad form as to come out to a place where they knew the Bishop was confirming, in order to arrest those who might very likely be there without passes, is almost incredible. And they did arrest four and marched them off to prison!

The excuse is that it is easy for men to get a pass. Is it? The man hears on Friday that the priest will be at a certain Church on Sunday; that Church perhaps stands only two hundred yards outside the farm on which he lives; still he must not go without a pass. He goes, probably two or three miles, to his master's house, to be told that he cannot see the boss. He returns on Satur-

day to learn that the boss has gone away, or to find him in a bad temper, in which case the pass is refused. The man wants to go to Church. He has tried to get his pass and has failed; he goes without it and the police arrest him, take him miles away to prison, and make another Ethiopian!

We had another illuminating incident at what was known as the Tent Location, in Johannesburg. One of the mines was trying the experiment of having natives and their families to live on the mine, instead of the men only. While the experiment was being tried, these natives lived in tents. So we invested in a large tent for services, and either one of ourselves or a Catechist went there every Sunday.

Now this Location was in one way a failure, in that it became the haunt of a great number of scoundrels, and therefore it was necessary that every now and then it should be raided by the police; this had to be done on Sundays, and certainly was necessary. But one Sunday the police came at the recognised hour of afternoon service; they tried to stop the service in the tent in the middle of the Creed, but the Catechist went on to the end of that, and then came out of the tent Church, and was very roughly reprimanded by the officer in charge of the troops.

This Catechist came and reported the matter to me at once. I made some stir about the service being disturbed, and the head of the police paraded all the men who had been engaged in the work, asked each one individually whether any service had been going on, and whether he had stopped it. Every man denied that he

had stopped any service, and that there had been any service at all. These police are all Europeans.

The system of native detectives who wear plain clothes also leads to difficulties. A most trusted Catechist was instructed by me to go one Sunday evening to a suburb of Johannesburg. He held an Exemption Certificate and was therefore free from the ordinary pass regulations.

On his return he was accosted by two natives who demanded his pass. There was nothing to show that they were detectives and he refused to show it. They then said that they were in the police force and that he must come to the Charge Office; thereupon he produced his certificate, but they refused to look at it. When they arrived at the Charge Office they said that he had tried to knock them down with a large rock, and one of them actually produced a stone which he swore he had taken from the Catechist's hand. The charge was taken and the Catechist had to come to our house to get £2 bail or spend the night in the common prison. And the next morning we had to spend three hours at the court to show that the charge was simply a fabrication.

The Natives have a very keen sense of justice, but they have quite as keen a sense of injustice, and they see in all such cases proof that though British Law may be very splendid it often fails to produce justice.



## CHAPTER VI.

**A Country Visit.**

**W**EEK-ENDS are the busiest time in mission work, and the most interesting. Let us take a typical example.

I was to go for services to a place called Rietfontein ; there may be as many as twenty farms of this name in the Transvaal, but the one I was going to was about twenty-four miles from Johannesburg.

As it is always good for people to get away sometimes from the town work into the country, I asked our printer, Mr. F., to come with me. There was a train early on Saturday afternoon, which would put us about twelve miles on our way, so we determined to go by it, and to take our bicycles with us.

The morning routine is always much the same at Sherwell Street ; you are waked at six by a terrific ringing of a bell in the Catechists' quadrangle ; a moment before or after, one of the Fathers does an equally lusty solo on the bell in their quadrangle. That is the signal to get up ; but as a fact, on Saturday you have before that been conscious of a sound of water and scrubbing, which has reached you even in your dreams, for that is the great wash day, and nearly always someone is scrubbing something by five o'clock.

What about Kafirs and cleanliness ! To hear Europeans talk about Kafirs one would think that they had as great an abhorrence of water as many English people ; but this is altogether wrong. They simply

delight in bathing, and are never really happy unless they can have a bath pretty often ; on the mines they are at it constantly ; in the country you see them at every little rivulet bathing ; but when he has bathed, the native is also not quite happy unless he is able to anoint himself with a few drops of oil.

Now though he likes to wash himself he does not like to wash his clothes ; they cost money and washing wears them out ; also he has usually only one set of clothes, and it is awkward to wash them if you have no others to put on. So while the man is generally clean his clothes are generally dirty, and this accounts for more than half the unpleasant odour in a building crowded with natives ; this as a rule is no worse than the atmosphere of a village school in England on a wet day.

So the bell rings at six, and at half-past six the second bell rings and that is the bell for service ; we all troop off to our Chapel, on an average about twenty of us ; we have our morning service and Eucharist, and breakfast is ready at 7-45.

That morning, being free at about half-past nine, I went to see how things were going on in the College. By that time all the dormitories had been swept and scrubbed and the schoolrooms were being treated in like manner. I saw there were several people waiting about and so was prepared for a busy time.

Hullo ! Daniel, what do you want, *u batlang na ?* *Kena le nna mo kemereng ea ka*, come into my room and tell me about it.

So Daniel comes in looking rather sheepish ; he is a Catechist in the country. First he asks how I am and



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says he is glad to hear I am still the same. What has he come for? Oh, he has just come to see Father and the Students. This does not sound probable, so I wait for the real business to declare itself. Daniel pulls a knotted handkerchief out of his pocket and says he has brought some *chelete ea phuthogo*, money from his congregation, and proceeds to produce it from the handkerchief—two and sixpence for magazines, one pound ten shillings for books which he has sold, two pounds five shillings for Church subscriptions, “but the people are all bad and many have not paid yet.” When all is entered and Daniel has got his proportion of the money and a receipt to show the people, he begins to explain what has really brought him. There are many children and they want a school-master; Daniel himself has too many people to visit, and also does not know enough to be school-master. How many children are there? This leads to a great reckoning on fingers and at last the reply comes—*mashome a mabeli le metso e robileng memo e mebeli*, that is 28, but put literally it means “two tens with numbers breaking two fingers,” that is to say, fingers outstretched twice (20) but two fingers bent down (8). I then explained that there were not sufficient children to make a school large enough to be helped by Government, but if they liked to find a teacher and pay him themselves, we would give them blackboard, slates, books and other school material; so he went away content.

The next to come in was a “Churchwarden” from one of the reef congregations; he had a great matter to discuss, but it was rather involved, and he did not speak a language I knew, so I soon sent for an interpreter;

there were two congregations on two neighbouring mines, but neither had yet a Church and they were not agreeing as to where the Church should be; as we had already for a long time been trying to secure a site in either place and had so far failed, it did not seem to be a very pressing question, but one has to hear the matters discussed at full; also each of the two congregations had in their mind different men whom they wished to be Catechist; also the "Churchwardens" were not agreeing, and another man had run away with some money that had been collected for Church building. This of course I was not able to straighten out altogether, but it was some satisfaction to the man to know that "mfundisi" knew all about it.

Then appeared a messenger with a sad little note from prison; a Catechist on the mines had for two years been allowed, like everyone else to take as much coal as he could use from the mine bunkers. But a new man had been put in charge and had had the Catechist arrested for stealing coal and he was in prison, and would I please come and get him out. Well, I did not feel quite sure of my ground until someone had seen the officials of the mine, so that had to be postponed; finally the Catechist spent a month in prison where he edified his fellow prisoners, and on coming out was re-instated in his work.

After this I got away to see the letters; every morning there is an appalling heap of these, and when there are a good many "official" envelopes among them I always experience a sinking in the "heart," for they generally mean either that municipal authorities want more money, or native regulations of some kind have

been broken, or the Education Department are crying out for returns, or some other trouble. That morning the letters looked innocent enough. Half-a-dozen were from natives either containing letters for insertion in the magazine or asking for a supply of books, or reporting matters more or less trivial. One however was annoying—it came from a school teacher who was in charge of one of our schools; he was a one-legged man, and it told how the children had been very bad, so he had punished three of them by locking them into the school while he went into the town; but on his return, angry mothers had attacked him and broken his wooden leg; what was he to do?

In a lucid interval between interviews and letters, I packed a travelling basket with all I needed for two days; brush and comb, and as little more as possible, for every pound of weight counts; service books, certificate forms, Church necessities, repair outfit for bicycle—about 15 lbs. weight altogether.

We then oiled and pumped the bicycles, fixed on our luggage and ate dinner. As soon as that was over, we rode off to a distant railway station to join the train which in a tantalising manner decided to start two stations away. Half way to the station, a thunder-shower caught us, and we arrived at the station fairly wet.

By four o'clock we were on our bicycles again, and grinding up a steep hill from the station; I knew the first part of the road, and we must have come within seven miles of the place we were going to, when we were pulled up by a new fence. That is the difficulty of a new country; in the first instance, you make your road

as straight for the place you are going to as you can ; then people begin cutting up the country into farms, which pay no regard to roads. Before long the owners begin to fence the farms, and then as you cannot get through a barbed wire fence, you go round, the road is diverted and you lose your way ; at least we did. We met a native who explained where we must go ; at a certain point we were to turn to the left and go up the hill on the right. We did so, but unfortunately there were a good many "hills on the right," and we struck the wrong one. After riding what I felt was too far, we reached one of our congregations, but the wrong one. From them, however, we learned the right road, and hurried off across bog and mountain to get in before sunset, for you have little twilight in Africa. Again we pounded up a stiff and long ascent, and having reached the top, found the other side quite unrideable, but saw across the valley some houses which I recognised as the home of our congregation. The sun was just setting, and we had only time to get there before dark. We had to walk down the mountain side, and having reached the bottom had still to walk, for the veld grass was two feet high and the rain had soaked everything, and thrown the grass across the tiny footpath making it impossible to ride.

As we approached the houses there was no light or sound, and we discovered that they were deserted ; roofs, doors and windows had been removed ; the people, who are always inclined to be nomadic, had gone further on.

This was a bit discouraging ; we were getting tired and distinctly hungry ; it was very dark and wet ; we could not see anything and did not know where to find

the people; should we camp, supperless and damp, in one of the roofless houses? But I wanted to reach the congregation for Evensong, so we turned along a path to the right, on the chance of finding our way. The path began to go evidently too much to the right so we left it and struck across the veld; this was not much better for it soon landed us in "mealie" gardens; now you cannot walk through wet mealies which are two or three feet high. So we diverged again and struck another road; to tell the truth we struck a good deal, for in the dark I at least kept falling off my bicycle.

We cheered up a bit when we saw a light in the distance, but desponded as suddenly when we caught against the sky the shadow of trees—it was only a Dutchman's house; we should have received a hearty welcome, but their hospitality would have prevented us from finding our own people.

We were sadly turning back to a higher track when I thought I caught the sound of very distant voices; I was not sure so we went on a few hundred yards and listened again. Yes, certainly, far away there were children's voices singing. We hastened in the direction from which they came, and after a mile could hear them quite plainly, and before long we were met by some twenty people and children who had been looking out for us; it was our congregation. Poor Mr. F. was pretty well finished, and was glad to get off his wet boots and stockings and lie down on the bed where he promptly fell asleep.

As soon as I had unpacked the basket from the bicycle, I went to the Church and found a large congregation ready for Evensong.

What are these country Churches like? They are much better than they used to be; generally they are built either of rough stone or of sun-dried bricks; but whichever it be, they are plastered with dagga (made with earth and water) both inside and out; they are thatched; they are about fifty feet long with a little Sanctuary at the east end raised two steps, and an Altar built of stone or brick. At the west end there is the door, and there is a little Vestry on one side opening into the Church near the Sanctuary. In width they are from thirteen to eighteen feet, and they have hardly any seats; the men sit on the right side, the women on the left, on the floor, and they sit so close that even in a little place like that there are often more than a hundred people; at first the windows were only square holes in the walls, but now they begin to buy ready-made glazed windows.

As soon as the Catechist was ready, we entered the Church from the Vestry, and began the service with a hymn; here the languages were Sechoana and Dutch, about two-thirds of the congregation singing from the Sechoana hymn book and the rest from the Dutch; one gets inured in time to the horrible mixture of languages but not to the mixture of hymns; the congregation takes care to sing the same tune but does not care whether the words match or not; and often the Sechoana section will suddenly end with a loud Amen, while the Dutch section goes on with an extra verse. It is not a tidy way of singing. Then the Catechist said Evensong and I read the Lessons; there I think the Church Bible was in Sesotho, but you have to be prepared for pretty well anything; there are current among our congregations

Bibles in two versions of Sesotho, three versions of Sechoana, one of Dutch, two of Sexosa, and one of Zulu !

At the end of the service I preached in Sechoana a simple address on the Eucharist as a preparation for the morrow's service, and then we had an informal after-service of prayer and self-examination ; when the congregation had gone away, three or four remained behind because they had either committed some sin which made them unfit for Communion, or they had become involved in some quarrel which made them doubtful as to whether they ought to receive Communion or not. After talking to them and hearing what they had to say, I blew out the two or three guttering candles that had lighted our service and went across the veld to the house where supper was ready and where Mr. F. was now ready for it.

Supper ended, the Catechist stopped to tell me various things which had happened since I had last seen him, and to tell me what work lay before us the next day. Then I said my prayers and slept the sleep of the weary.

I suppose I sleep in the huts of Natives about 150 nights every year, yet with rarest exceptions I have always found them clean and "uninhabited." I have slept in many houses of Europeans of which I could not say as much.

In the southern Transvaal the native hut is built oblong, like a Dutchman's farm house ; in the centre of each long wall is a "Dutch" door, like a loose-box door that is made in two pieces, an upper and a lower half. Two partition walls, each with a narrow doorway in the middle divide off two small sleeping rooms, one at each

end of the house, leaving a larger living-room in the middle. The father and mother and baby live in one end room, the children in the other; when the priest comes, if he does not sleep in the vestry, the children's room is vacated for him and they sleep where they can.

Very early in the morning you wake up; it is the chattering of the people that wakes you; they are beginning to meet for the Communion Service; they begin to arrive about five o'clock; they continue to arrive until about half-past six; then you get up and let a modicum of light into the room by pushing open the little wooden shutter which does duty for a window. Someone sees you do this and promptly arrives with an iron basin full of water for you to wash in, which he deposits on a chair in the living-room, together with soap and towel and sometimes a looking glass, a queer little thing in a wooden frame probably which seems to twist your head into all sorts of amazing contortions. As you leave your bedroom to wash in the living-room, a hen hastens to fly in at the window and proceeds to lay an egg under the bed!

About seven o'clock we were ready for service.

It takes some time getting ready, for the Catechist has to see if there are any people there whom he does not know, and if there are, to find out what their standing is in the Church; we began with Mattins in Sechoana; this I said without any singing as it is much shortened by that means; it gave late-comers a chance of arriving in good time for the Communion service. Indeed by the time that Mattins was ended, the crowd was so great that it was difficult to arrange kneeling space for them all. The babies were of course all on their mothers'



backs; the children were placed in front; next behind them, in dense array, the Communicants; behind them crushed into the remaining space by the door were the baptized. There too would have been the Catechumens, only none were present.

We were ready to begin by about a quarter to eight, and the people sang a hymn as an Introit, and all the parts of the service that were theirs except the Confession; not very beautiful this singing so far as sound goes, but very devotional and the expression of their Faith.

When the Communion of the people began it was very difficult for them to move so as to come to the Altar step, but although they had to move through that crowded Church, stepping over each other as they went, there was no confusion and no noise; and when some twenty had received Communion, they began to sing Eucharistic hymns in a low voice until all the eighty-five who were Communicants had returned to their places.

As soon as the service was finished, we all knelt together and made our thanksgiving to God for his great Gift.

As the congregation passed slowly out from the dim Church into the brilliant sunshine, I unvested and then waited to go through a wearying but necessary business. One by one the men of the congregation came up to pay to the priest the Church subscription that was due. Each amount had to be entered on the man's card and also in the Catechist's book; after the men came the women; after the women the young people. They do not all pay, but a great many do, and each year they seem to do so more willingly.

Breakfast came about ten o'clock, and by half-past ten I was again busy, but this time with babies ; five or six mothers had brought their babies to be baptized and the Catechist had to produce their names, with the names of the parents and of the godparents written on printed slips. By eleven o'clock we were ready for another service and this was indeed overcrowded ; it was simple ; litany and sermon. Service ended, the babies were baptized. After this two or three young men who wished to become Christians came to be examined, so that I could see how much the Catechist had taught them and what they were like.

It was now past one o'clock. Mr. F. and I had some dinner and were then ready to start off on our return journey. We left the congregation about two o'clock, and as there were no Sunday trains we proceeded to ride all the way home, and eventually arrived safely in Johannesburg.



## CHAPTER VII.

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The North.

THE war had come to an end in 1902, and the Native Mission on the Reef had been started early in 1903; in the two and a half years covered by the foregoing chapters, much had been done by the Bishop of Pretoria to quicken Mission work in other parts of his diocese; the Mission District of Pretoria, lying to the north of our District had received a great renewal of life by the appointment of the Rev. W. A. Goodwin as Missionary-in-charge. On the south-west and west of our district two men had been appointed to develop the Native Missions of Potchefstroom and Krugersdorp, and again to the north of them a new Mission District was beginning to develop at Rustenburg.

But the Transvaal is divided nearly equally into northern and southern halves by the 25th degree of latitude; and even with these new works going forward there was no one to teach the people in the northern half; and yet it is in this northern half that there is found by far the densest native population.

In the Zoutpansberg alone, which is the north-eastern district, there is a population of 300,000 natives, and they are nearly all heathen.

Not that there was nothing being done; here and there, priests in charge of European congregations were sparing all the time they could to help the small communities of Church Natives who were living in that country. Both at Potgietersrust where the Railway

Mission were working and at Pietersburg where the Rector was a former Missionary of the Zululand Diocese there was great interest being shown in the Native Church people. But this very interest began to make the position impossible; even a little loving care does wonders in the way of developing Native Christianity, so very soon rather despairing letters began to arrive about the need of someone to look after the Church Natives in the north.

And in this way it came to pass that as soon as we had got our skeleton of the work wired together down at Johannesburg and the figure was really beginning to dance rather nicely if you pulled the right strings, the Bishop began to urge us to open up new work more than two hundred miles away from our centre.

There was only one thing which made it at all possible for us to consider the idea; and this was our layman printer volunteering to come and help our work for nothing. In that way I was relieved of much work, and the Brethren were able to send me to visit the Northern Transvaal.

It is strange how hard our Church makes it for laymen to devote themselves and their trade to God. As soon as God touches the heart of some lad so that he wants to give himself altogether to God's service, he goes to his Vicar or Rector and asks advice, asks how he can find some way of consecrating his life to God; and then there is practically nothing for the priest to advise except to say that the boy must prepare for Ordination. How different is this to what was always happening in the earlier days of the Church. In those days men who were really devoted to God were welcomed

as laymen ; they worked for nothing but their food and lodging, often indeed begging for that ; they gave all they had of art or knowledge, of craft or trade to God, and were the glad servants of God's people. Hence came saints, Antony and Francis and many like them, and the world was rich by their poverty. But now the man who shrinks from Ordination, not feeling called to that, but longing to serve God, can hardly find an opening for his life.

Anyway that was how I was able to go to the north.

There is a railway as far as Pietersburg with one train up and one down every twenty-four hours. So I went to the station at Johannesburg about eight o'clock in the evening and arrived at Pietersburg about nine o'clock the next morning ; we do not travel very fast. The distance is about two hundred miles, so this works out at about fifteen miles an hour ; there are several reasons for this slow travelling ; one is that the lines are laid with a narrow gauge, round sharp corners and up and down hills ; this is necessary in a new country on account of expense ; if one went much faster there would be many more accidents, and they are quite common enough as it is. Another reason is that the railway cannot make the line pay except by taking all that is going that day by one train, so the train is very long and very heavy and can only just get up the hills ; indeed when it meets locusts it stops at once, for they get crushed on the lines and then the engine wheels cannot get enough grip to move the train. And yet another reason is—Why hurry ? Nine o'clock is a very nice time of day to arrive, so let us not arrive sooner ; if the train is there at six o'clock, as happened once or twice

by mistake, every one will have to get up to meet it—Post Office people, Railway people, and Custom House people, to say nothing of those who have to meet travellers.

Now here has to be recorded one of our failures; probably most things that are successful are so because men have learned experience by failing.

Just at the time that we were looking out for a chance of going to visit the Northern Transvaal, a young man called to see us with sufficient commendation from people we knew to justify us in believing in his integrity; X, for that is a safe designation, stated that he was a man of means as he received an allowance from his father in England; that he had spent his time since the war in the police department, but did not like the secret service in which he had been engaged; that he had a great liking for the Natives and wanted to work among them; that he knew their language, and that what he specially wished was to have a school.

He stayed with us for a month, and certainly was a pleasant enough fellow, if not particularly capable. He helped us to catalogue our library, and I fear it has not yet recovered; he corrected proofs, but did not see the mistakes.

When we were satisfied that he was dependable, we sent him up to the north to Pietersburg to help the Natives build a Church in a place called Moletsieland, where the Rector of Pietersburg had already placed a good schoolmaster.

About six weeks later I was able to go myself, and X met me in the town to take me out to this congregation. Well, he had done nothing, and what he had

done he had done wrong; when I had been a fortnight at the place I found out something more; he had told us that he did not need any money, but that he would want money for buying tools and material; we said we could afford £10 a month while the Church was building. At the end of two months he had received £20; had bought tools and material but had not paid for them; had spent his week-ends in the town but had not paid his hotel bill, and worse still had borrowed £10 from the native schoolmaster. Then it had to end. I paid him his fare to Johannesburg, paid back the schoolmaster, and told X how much he had cost the Mission—£35, for which there was nothing to show. The result of his two months' work would have been dear at £5.

At Moletsieland I lived in a nice square native house, quite new, which had been built by one of the Christians; the heathen in that country still make their little round huts with tiny doors and no windows.

In that part the country is really beautiful and in some places very strange. Moletsieland is a Native Reserve set aside by the Government to be the home of the tribe of Chief Seshiu, which consists of about 30,000 people. The piece of country belonging to him will be about twenty miles across and is very picturesque, for it is studded with granite hills rising suddenly from the plain, and strewn with enormous granite natural monoliths, which look as if some awfully gigantic giants had been playing skittles and had forgotten to put away their playthings.

It is a strange place in other ways too; when I got to know some of the people, they told me about the great caves in the hills, and how in one of them there lives a

great white snake which kills people, for six men went into the cave one day and none ever came out; and there are many human skeletons in the caves, and the hills are full of ghosts which walk home with the people and vanish when they get near their house, and they are too frightened to ask them who they are or what they want. Yes, a strange country.

And the people build their houses among the great rocks so that it is often difficult to see them, and here and there one can see that before long the great overhanging masses must fall and crush the people like beetles; but they say there is no danger; did not their father live there and their great father before him, and they were not squashed.

It is nice living right among the people like that. Early in the morning you hear the children beginning to talk and laugh, you un-roll yourself from your blankets in which you have been sleeping on the earth floor and open the door to see what chance there is of a wash. In front of the door is always a smooth and scrupulously clean courtyard, which is really the reception hall and dining-room of the native. There you catch a glimpse of a brown child who promptly flies, but is soon visible again in a far corner, looking at you with two or three brothers or sisters.

It is a wonderfully beautiful colour the skin of the Basotho of the Transvaal; a deep rich brown you think at first; but on second thoughts you are not quite sure in turn that it is not blue, red, black. The fact is that as the light catches it in different ways, it gleams with changing colours and wonderful shadows, like silk. And you have a good opportunity for judging, for men and





**BABIES NEAR PIETERSBURG.**—*page 64.*



women and boys and girls wear remarkably scanty clothing. Yet it is a thing very noticeable that even to the European mind this nakedness gives no sense of want of decency; you can see any day half a dozen maidens going to draw water with nothing on but their leather tail and their five inches of tassel, but they give the impression of being quite sufficiently clothed; while if English men and women dressed like that, we should not be able to bear it at all.

So when you catch sight of the children peeping at you from a safe distance you call them—*Oho, banaka nt'isa metsi a nyenyane!* Hullo, children, bring me a little water.

Presently one of them arrives, in much trepidation, with an old basin and some water in a round pot. She is a heathen girl, so her hair is all red with clay and oil. When she is older she will cut it very carefully just the length of astrachan fur, shave it into the shape of a curving skull cap, oil it to make it a gleaming black, and draw very beautifully a narrow line of red lead all round the edge.

About half-past six you find the few Christians met together in their little Chapel for morning prayers. Then you go back to your house to look for breakfast.

Do I like eggs, asks the man who has appointed himself my cook. He has half a dozen eggs which he shows me. Being by now a connoisseur, I ask whether they are cooked. They are; then I shake them. Two give an ominous sound, so I return them saying that white men like new eggs. While I eat the others, the cook eats the discarded ones. That is a modern taste

that they have acquired; formerly they considered that milk and eggs were only food for women and children.

Butter they do not understand. They used to make butter from milk, but they only used it to oil their hair. Even now it is rarely that they will eat it.

They cook out of doors in the courtyard, burning wood or dried cow-dung. Their chief food is mealie-meal porridge, which they pound and cook fresh every day. Fetching water and preparing the mealies for porridge takes the girls of the family nearly the whole day.

But they made bread for me. They bought the flour at the nearest store, used bee-bread out of an ant-hill for yeast, and baked the dough in a three-legged iron pot, made for boiling the mealie porridge. To bake bread in that way you put the pot on the embers of a dying wood fire, and having put on the iron lid, you heap up live embers upon it.

Then at dinner they fed me with chicken. I believe I could be content never to see chicken again all my life; I have so often tried so hard to eat "native" chicken and have seldom succeeded. But there the chicken was quite good though curiously tasteless. The different local tribes have different ways of killing chickens; there they brought me the live bird as they wished me to feel whether it was fat enough; when I had approved of it the "cook" called the same damsel who had brought me the water to wash in, and she held the chicken's head while the man cut through the neck with his knife and let the corpse fall on the ground; it immediately ran round and round, and finally floundered into a bush close by. In another Reserve not far off

they hold the animal by the head and swing it round and round until the body flies off! Personally I prefer the simpler mode of chopping the head off with a chopper.

For supper there was cold chicken and tea and eggs; first they boiled the kettle—a real ordinary kettle, borrowed from a neighbour. When the water was boiling they put in the eggs; having removed them and put them in a place of safety, they put in the tea leaves, and as soon as they had done that, brought it to me.

In the evenings the people seldom use any light. There is the fire in the courtyard and they squat or sit round that and talk. They always have a lamp, but they only light it if they want to fetch something from the house. They mostly make the lamp themselves; they buy a tin of condensed milk; in the middle of the top they make a small hole, through which they run out the milk as they need it. When it is all gone, they wash out the tin, put in a little paraffin which they buy at the store at half-a-crown a gallon, roll up a cotton wick and insert it through the hole and light it. A lamp like that will burn many hours with one filling. But they use paraffin also as medicine, drinking it with gusto and certainly with excellent results when they are suffering from indigestion.

After supper I looked out; it was glorious moonlight. In England we do not know what real moonlight is; in Africa it is sometimes so dazzling that you have to shade your eyes with your hand if you want to see.

I went out for a stroll hoping to see the ghosts of which I heard so much, but they were not in evidence; perhaps they dislike moonlight; I heard however a great

deal of singing and went to see where it was. Out in the moonlight I saw some thirty or forty girls playing games curiously like our English round games that we played as children ; but as they played they sang weird heathen melodies with a sort of delirium of sound for it was full moon and the heathen get something like lunacy in the moonlight.

I went a little further and round a hill came to the same sort of thing again, only all these were boys.

And then I tried to find my way back ! Every hill I saw looked like the right one and proved to be the wrong one. Every group of houses I stumbled on produced fiendish dogs with an unpleasant aptitude for biting, and I might have wandered all the night if I had not found a friendly man who guided me safely to my blankets, where I was soon at rest.



## CHAPTER VIII.

**Finding Congregations.**

**T**HE first few days had to be spent in looking for Church Natives near Moletsieland.

There were four little groups of Christians near there at distances of about ten miles, and the people lent me a little cart and a mule so that I might take a guide with me to visit them.

The weather was hot; the country there is really hot; and the mule was very slow; so I leaned forward to give it a whack; my whip was very short, so it was necessary to lean far forward to reach the beast, and before I could draw back, up came its back legs with the hoofs almost catching my face.

Unluckily it did not come down straight, but astride of one of the shafts; so we climbed gingerly out of the cart and outspanned the animal so as to get it straight again. And we had to put up with the slowness.

There was no doubt about the welcome the people gave. They were really delighted to know that someone had come to look after them.

From a Church point of view they were extremely primitive. There was only one place where they had anything to be called a Church. Books were extremely rare: a surplice was unknown; the singing beggared description—I don't quite know what this means, but it sounds a good strong expression—and theology had **not** arrived. And there were rumours of other little groups of Churchpeople much further away to the west.

Having seen something of the people near Moletsie-land, I repaired my bicycle—one day in that country I spent two and a half hours mending twenty-eight punctures, and then had to ride home with the front tyre down, because there was no more india-rubber for patches—and started off at six o'clock in the morning to visit some people whom the Rector of Pietersburg had told me of. The native schoolmaster went too, as he knew the people.

It was a ride of forty miles, and forty miles on the Tropic of Capricorn in rough country is as hard work as a hundred miles on English roads.

We kept going as hard as we could, stopping now and then to repair punctures, and once for food. We crossed three rivers, but all of them quite dry for there had been great want of rain for nine years, and even the wells at Pietersburg were drying up; and we arrived at the place we were bound for at two o'clock.

Everywhere as we travelled the crops were dying. There had been a little rain two months before, just enough to start the mealie, but there had been none since, and when it did come it was too late to save things. Even the veld was dying and the cattle and goats were miserable. As we had crossed Zand River we had stopped to get a drink of water but there was so little that the Natives had had to dig a hole ten feet deep in the bed of the river to get drinking water, though generally it can be got by just scooping a little hollow in the sand.

I knew that I should have to hold a long palaver with the people at this place, Mamabolo, so I was glad that they had some food ready. When I was a bit



refreshed, for the ride had for the moment quite tried me, I asked where we were going to hold our meeting ; they conducted me to a big tree and there I found between thirty and forty men sitting in a circle, with a chair for me to sit on.

It was about three o'clock, Saturday.

We talked until nearly sunset.

Now this was the question, and one of principle. The people had been Lutherans. Rightly or wrongly they were convinced that the Lutheran authorities had treated them unjustly in a question between them and the Native Chief; they declared, and held to their declaration, that not only had they separated from the Lutherans but also that the separation was vital and permanent.

The line I took was to tell them to go back again ; of course if they had come to me on a doctrinal point, I could not have done this, for clearly the Church can never refuse to accept those who seek the Truth. But these people were not sufficiently instructed to know whether they believed rightly or not ; they came on the question of injustice done to them. So I said, and said it until I wondered how I could go on so long at one point, Go back to your old teachers. I added that moreover the Church could not afford to take in wobblers ; if they had wobbled once they might soon do so again when they were tired of us.

It had not the slightest effect ! They did not move a hair's breadth. But it brought out their counter decision—If you refuse to take us and to make us children of the Church, we shall join the Ethiopians.

That was the deciding point ; I had no right to let people drift into being Ethiopians. So I began to explain what the Church is, when it began ; showed how long it had been the holy Church before Luther was even born ; how by its standard Lutherans are far from the truth ; how, therefore, it could not be an easy thing for them to be Churchpeople ; I should have to make careful enquiry about their Baptism ; there would have to be long preparation for Confirmation ; it would be at least a year before they could be admitted as members of the Catholic Church.

Hour passed after hour, and the sky had begun to redden for sunset, as I waited to hear what they said in reply. It was a long and a very native speech but it meant—We put ourselves in your hands ; do as you think right.

This was the beginning of the congregation of S. Andrew at Mamabolo.

Our first Sunday there lives in my memory.

The schoolmaster and myself were the only Communicants, but those of the new congregation who were of good standing were present as we interceded for the work then beginning.

At half-past ten we met again under the big tree for service. They had already procured a few books, but very few, and were quite unfamiliar with our services ; but there were a few translations of famous hymns which they knew, a Bible and the Creed and Our Father ; then I preached.

It is hard to express the wonderful beauty of the day ; far away the great blue mountains, rugged and clear in the marvellous sunlight, range above range,

towering with giant precipices, very very far away, and yet so clear that you could see the tiny red streaks of roads that climbed zigzagging across their slopes ; the air still and hot, seeming to quiver with the fragrance of summer, while it was soundless except for the twitter of a beetle in the sun, or the far off ting ting of a donkey bell ; and here all around me, a great circle of keen dark faces, tense in their earnestness, waiting to hear what their new teacher will say ; the men solemn and rugged, the women gentle but full of fervour, and the children happy. At such a time one is glad of the " foolishness of preaching " ; one cannot choose but do one's best, and however poor that be, God will use it.

From Mamabolo, we walked across the mountains to visit another congregation ; these were much further away from civilization ; they had no chairs or stools, no knives, and only one cup. They regaled us with roast goat, and I sat on the floor and ate it with my fingers—when you have to do this you cannot eat your food hot ! We returned the same day, and set out on the following one to look for other congregations on our way back to Pietersburg ; I had heard of three. One I soon found, for they had stationed three men at different points of the road to watch for us, and they conducted us to the place.

Here one realised the ant-difficulty.

The ubiquity and diversity of African ants is a thing to be experienced if it is to be realized. It is not so much that there are ants black, brown, tawny, red, yellow, mixed and white, giant, moderate, fairly large, big, medium, small and tiny, living in stone, trees, ground and houses, eating wood, grass, hay, paper,

sugar, meat, walls and everything ; they do all that, but there often seems to be really hardly anything but ants ! You can sometimes go into a Church and notice little heaps of black dust ; you wonder the people have not swept properly, but discover that the heaps are myriads of almost microscopic ants. And before the service has been going on for ten minutes everyone knows it too well ; one's body is literally covered with them ; surplice alive with them ; books full of them ; you turn over a leaf and squash four or five in doing so.

Or you lay your dinner, but before you can sit down to eat it the place is alive with great red soldier ants standing a quarter of an inch high and running as fast as beetles ; you go to gather the mealies and find the stalks covered with earth under cover of which the white termites have carried away the grains ; you go into the house and hear a curious faint scratching ; the ants have attacked your books and have eaten away the margin and first words of every page of fifty books since the day before. You sit down to eat your dinner under a tree and are fascinated at the sight of thousands of ants of which every single one is carrying a bit of dry grass into holes in the ground ; you leave a spade or pick-axe out in your garden, and when you go to fetch it the handle is half gone ; the wonder is that they do not eat your toes as you walk along !

Well, there were plenty of ants at this place I came to ; the people had built the walls of a Church rather nicely, and were putting the roof on ; but I noticed a great heap in the middle of the floor, and remarked that of course they must clear that away. But it turned out that it was rock ! They had to build on rock to prevent

the ants from eating up the Church ; they could not find a flat rock, so had had to use this pointed one.

The next place was more difficult to find ; we wandered about a great deal, crossing and re-crossing the Zand River ; at one place we came across an old man who showed us the way ; he was sitting on the top of an immense heap of sand, in the bed of the river. He had stuck up a couple of poles with an old piece of matting across them to shelter him from the sun ; I could not think what he was doing. He explained ; the people had dug a great pit in the river bed to get water for the cattle, and he had to sit there all day to watch it, else the cattle would come down to drink and the sand would fall in and the water be lost. But it seemed a dull sort of life.

At length we found the people for whom we were looking, but also found that there were only four of them ; we also found some others, and then started back to Pietersburg. Having reached the main road we had to do a long course of puncture mending, and then started again, but the dust was too much for me. I have heard people complain of the dust in England ; let them try the Transvaal. There is the ordinary fine dust ; that merely takes hold of your wheels and stops them ; there is, apparently, no bottom to it, and a waggon once fairly in, has to be dug out. But often enough the dust is sharp sand ; you come flying at it hoping that your impetus will get you through ; as you strike it, there is a sudden slowing down of the machine, you begin to wobble, and if you turn your front wheel to recover your balance you are done for, for at once a hail of sand flies.

up into your face and over your head and you descend hastily.

And so we reached Pietersburg again. I had seen something of the country and of the people; having covered about fifty miles from one point to the other, and had always heard of more people waiting for us beyond.

There were some disadvantages in the country, it was hot, and there was fever, and there was very little water. But there were plenty of people, and after all it is the people that the missionary looks for.

Certainly it was hot. Finding it very hot, I had at first bicycled without a coat and with shirt sleeves rolled up. The result was that when I arrived at Mamabolo I could not bear to let my arms hang down, they were too painful, and the only way of getting to sleep at night was to prop them up against the wall. You cannot always avoid sunburn, but you can avoid a good deal by wearing plenty of clothes.

Fever is of course common in the low country in the summer time but rare in the winter; also as a rule it is not very bad, and quinine is a great help. But the country within thirty miles of Pietersburg has practically no fever, only if you are subject to it you may have it anywhere. It takes a lot of fever to kill a man.

Scarcity of water is a terrible thing for anyone who wants to do gardening or farming. But except as a secondary occupation farming is a poor business in the northern Transvaal.

To begin with, everything dies up there; horses die and mules die, of horse-sickness, quite suddenly and generally. Donkeys die (and all "transport riding")

is done there with donkeys) ; sheep die and goats die ; chickens get chicken-sickness ; cattle die of red-water.

You plant crops—mealie, forage, castor oil, beans and so on. If the rain is not sufficient to start them, the ants eat the seed ; if the crops start, the locusts walk across your farm and leave no blade of green behind them ; if you escape them there is often a drought which kills the crops, or you cannot get any people to hoe the fields. If however you get through safely to harvest, everybody else does the same, the market is flooded and you sell for almost nothing.

It is no use growing fruit or vegetables for there is no market nearer than Pretoria, and the cost of transport to the railway and the railway rates swallow up your prospective profit.

But all the same it is a beautiful country ; it is not easy to say quite where the charm of it lies, but there is no doubt of its existence. The bigness and brightness of the land, the expanse of open country, the freedom from over-crowding, the chance of accident or incident so rare in an old country, all these things have probably something to do with it.

But for the priest there is more than charm ; there is the call of those hundreds of thousands, turning in a wonderful way to thoughts of God, and very often looking to the white man to show them the way. For hundreds of miles in that northern country, all the way to the Rhodesian and the Portuguese borders there is a teeming population of heathen, and we must not tarry too long if we are to help them.

## CHAPTER IX.

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The Farm.

**W**E had to consider now what was to be done, for it was impossible to work a district from a centre more than two hundred miles away.

It seemed necessary to secure a piece of ground somewhere in the north; also as far north as possible, with a view to the yet further extension of our ministrations later. At first we inclined to buying an ordinary house-plot close to Pietersburg, where we could build a house. But the question of having some place where we could train schoolmasters was growing more and more pressing, and it seemed likely that if we secured a largish piece of land at some distance from the town we might be able to begin our school on it.

The next time I was up in the north I began to make casual enquiries about farms; some four or five were known to be in the market; and then a store-keeper whom I met, and who knew of a farm near his store that was for sale, invited me to come over to dinner, so that we could go together and look at the farm.

I arrived at the store about one o'clock, and found a great dinner, for the store-keeper had lately killed a piglet, and so there was fresh meat.

A country store is a wonderful thing both from the things which it contains and the people who deal at it.

This store is also post office for the district, and there are two posts every week—two out from Pietersburg and two in. The letters are carried by a native runner who wears a uniform, and carries a knobkerrie.



The shop part of the store is a long one-storied iron building, with a door in the side, and a long counter running nearly the whole length of the building, so as to admit many people to be in the shop at once ; you might think this hardly a necessary precaution so far away in the country, but I have seldom gone into that store without finding at least six natives bartering or doing business in some way, and it is nothing unusual to have twenty at a time and another dozen sitting on the ground outside. This is not at all the case with all stores ; it is a sign that on the whole the natives trust that particular man, and when that is the case, they will walk many miles to deal at the store where the store-keeper tries to get what they want, and does not "eat them up." That is a great phrase of the native lady shoppers. If they bring rotten eggs for sale, the store-man shakes them, and when they rattle, promptly throws them out into the yard, and at once a terrible wail arises :— *O re yile, O re yile, yile !* He has eaten us, he has eaten us up altogether ! Or perhaps one has been expecting to get two boxes of matches for a tiny basket of mealie which her mother has given her as pocket money, and she only gets one ; as she takes it you hear a murmured, *Oa re ya !* He is eating us !

Most of the trade is by barter ; from early morning till about three o'clock there is a constant stream of natives ; they bring eggs, mealie, kafir corn, manna, fowls. They want flour, meal, milk, sugar, coffee, tea, salt, soap, sweets, blankets, cotton blouses, handkerchiefs to wear on their heads, beads in great quantities, candles, paraffin, matches. These things they get by exchange. Barter is distinctly a profitable business ; for when you

take goods, you take them at a price which will allow you to make a profit, and when you give goods in their place you give also at a price which allows profit ; in fact you get two profits ; but it takes such innumerable tiny exchanges before the profit made amounts to any value, that the labour of a store-keeper's life is tremendous.

The store-keeper is of necessity also a chemist ; you can buy fruit-salt and mustard plasters and Epsom salts ; but the remarkable part of the chemistry department is the enormous array of minute bottles of Dutch medicines ; the names alone are enough to make one ill ; but their contents are said to cure every known disease or sickness. One end of the store is packed with the sacks of grain that has been taken in exchange, and on the long shelves is a great medley of little stacks of various cloth and clothing and blankets ; pounds and pounds of coloured beads fill one corner ; tools, nails and wire another ; a big case of mixed biscuits, and another of mixed sweets stand open, and are in constant use, for after every exchange or sale the native clamours for a " beselle " or present ; they never give presents, they always expect to receive them. Tins of paint occupy one shelf and the next is loaded with food of many varieties in tins—yes, indeed, I have often scrutinised that shelf, hoping that some different sorts of Chicago beef or Chicago sausages might have arrived to make a little variety. From the rafters hang coats, reims (long leather thongs), a little harness, a chair or two, and bundles of small lamps and candlesticks ; a few books in native languages are on a shelf, and there is a cupboard for the letters.



THE FARM LAKE, -page 102.



There is no other shop for ten miles round, and it is therefore a great centre of news and gossip.

The store-keeper is also farmer ; he has goats and sheep and a waggon with a team of donkeys, ploughs and harrows, he grows mealie chiefly and pumpkins. When he has to go with the waggon to town his wife keeps the shop and the children soon learn all about it too.

As there is no inn anywhere near, belated travellers often ask for a shakedown in the house, and there may be as many as three at a time sleeping on the floor ; the store-keeper has a rondavel, (round hovel) for bedroom, and the house proper is one big room with a raised hearth at one end for the fire which burns wood, and it has a nearly flat corrugated iron roof which is used as open air drying room for the pumpkins and the mealie.

When we had finished dinner and I had had a look round the store, we started off to look at the farm for sale close by. I suppose my host thought that it would be good for business if there was an Englishman living so near to him, for as we walked he talked, and there seemed to be no advantage that the farm did not possess.

Was I interested in sport—There were two sorts of buck, endless hares, guinea-fowl, night-hares, jackals, ant-bears, and korhaan. Quite true, as we walked across the farm I saw most of these animals. Was I a naturalist—There were snakes, centipedes, scorpions, secretary-birds nesting, tailor-birds, and many other animals. Did I know anything about minerals—There were two quartz reefs outcropping on the farm, sure to be valuable some day, and much talc. Was I a botanist—There were twenty or thirty different kinds of

tree on the farm and very interesting ferns and plants. Or perhaps I was a bit of a farmer—Those high ridges would be excellent for mealie, and the grazing was particularly good; there was no horse-sickness, and sheep and goats did well.

All this made one slightly suspicious; there must be something wrong. The farm had been occupied for seventeen years; a rough Dutch cottage and a patch of ploughed ground were the only signs of this; it was a farm of sixteen hundred acres. The price was £300; about four shillings an acre.

The farm looked nice enough. Then I said—where is the water? Ah, my host replied, that is the difficulty, there is none. But it is easy to get that, you need only sink a well and get plenty. As he went on to explain how one man in the neighbourhood had spent his whole capital in sinking two hundred feet and had found no water, this was not very reassuring, but all the same I thought there was water. We were in the middle of a very very dry season, which had been preceded by eight or nine other very dry seasons, and yet the grass looked very well; a great deal better than on many farms I had been over. I was sure that this meant water somewhere.

We decided to buy the farm! Not that we had £300. A friend in England had about that time entrusted to us that sum for the purpose of employing it in some good work which should be a memorial of one who was gone, and we hoped this Mission centre would be a good and lasting memorial.

It was two months or more before the purchase was sufficiently complete to allow of our taking possession, but then I went to start work. There was £150 to work

with, but that does not go far in South Africa. I bought as little as I could, and arrived on the farm with a waggon load of wood and iron, screws and nails, and tools ; wheelbarrows, jumpers (steel chisels for rock boring), and mason's hammers, a bucket of water, four or five tins of beef, a loaf of bread, a kettle, a small table with one leg broken off, three plates, two towels, a couple of knives and forks, and half a dozen books of devotion. A week later there arrived a tent.

It was a queer sensation, driving in our tiny cart full of various household goods and a bucket of water into a domain two miles long and a mile wide, and looking for a place to settle at. I chose a certain ridge, partly because of the view, but partly too because it was nice to be high up. From this freak of mine of settling where they said of course there could be no water, I received my nickname among the Boers of "The — Englishman on the Hill."

The farm is only eight miles from Moletsieland, so I invited the congregation there to provide me with free labour for a month. They did so ; on my supplying food, they kept me supplied, on the average with eight men for four weeks.

We began with looking for water ; that is to say, I applied myself to the dowser's art, and walked up and down for half a day with a forked stick in my hand "finding" water. When I was quite sure in my own mind where there was some, I marked a circle on the ground seven feet in diameter, and the men began to dig ; probably you have not tried digging in Africa. Spades are no good ; pickaxes wear out in no time, but we got down about two feet with them, and then came

to solid rock. That meant dynamite or rather blasting gelatine. So I journeyed into the town, called on the magistrate in his court, answered various questions, and got a permit to buy the stuff; a case of gelatine, enough to blow up the whole farm, with fuse and detonators, cost £2 5s. I got them out to the farm by waggon and we proceeded to blast. Having never seen dynamite even I was interested but nervous. At the bottom of our pit the men had bored four holes about a foot and a half deep. The way you use the gelatine is this—you put two cartridges of gelatine into each hole, then you cut a cartridge in two with a pocket knife, taking care that it does not explode on contact with steel; into the half cartridge you insert the detonator or cap with a yard of fuse attached. The two first cartridges are jammed tight into the hole with a wooden stick, the half one follows, and you nearly fill up the hole with sand. The fuse is sticking out, and you plaster up the top of the hole with wet mud. When you have done this with all the holes you are ready to ignite the fuses. I used matches; as the fuse caught and began fizzing away it blew the match out and one had to light another for the second fuse, and so on; it sometimes happened that a fuse would not light readily, and then one went on with more matches, until one wondered how much time remained for getting away into safety. I played this game twice a day for nearly two months, and yet never got rid of my nervousness; as the well got deeper and deeper, I allowed more and more fuse, as one had to climb out up a rope and that took some time; but I never wasted any time about it, and was always extremely glad to be out. About a minute and a half after lighting,



the charges used to go off with a tremendous explosion, sometimes throwing big lumps of rock as much as fifty or sixty feet in the air. As the hole got deep it became necessary to have a windlass to remove the stone. It took us half a day to fix up, and weighed between two and three hundredweight, and when we had got it up the very next explosion of gelatine was too much for it; looking on from a distance I saw this great thing sail up into the air, fall to pieces, and crash down into the well. But it was not much damaged.

Day after day we went deeper and deeper, and the deeper we went the drier the rock became. Indeed it looked as if there never had been any water there and never could be. The rock pulverised when the dynamite exploded, and the powdered rock was like the driest dust. But we went on.

At the end of two months the well was 26 feet deep, and began to get damp; at 28 feet water began to drip in steadily; and one day the men left their tools at the bottom as usual, so as to begin work again the next day, and they are there still; for the next day there were eight feet of water in the well and there has never been less than six feet since. Possibly in a long drought it may run dry some day, and then the tools will be ready to deepen it?

But all this time what else had we been doing? There was only work for two men at the well, and I was only about twenty minutes a day blasting. House-building was occupying us chiefly. A tent is a very nice thing for a time, but you get wonderfully tired of it after a few months; so we marked out the foundations for a

four-roomed house and began digging. Next we had to get stone for the foundations, for brick gives way in wet weather. This took some days with crowbars and picks in the bed of a dry donga; there we worked out large heaps of rough stone and then had a waggon to carry them to the site. Next came the bricks; they had to be made; first we made the wooden formes or moulds to hold three bricks at a time. Then we dug earth and mixed and kneaded it with water, drove it into the formes with our hands and turned it out in the sun like mud pies. For a long time we made bricks at the rate of a thousand a day. The second day after making, the bricks are turned over, and about the fourth day you can build with them; we had to be our own builders, plasterers, carpenters and painters. I had no idea before what an enormous amount of work there is before even a little house is ready to live in. We always worked from sunrise to sunset, taking out two hours for breakfast and dinner. And I did not sit up late. About sunset the jackals would come and howl round, and very early in the morning the guinea-fowl would cry, and it was very jolly living all alone, really "in the country."

At first of course the water difficulty was a very real one. A friendly Dutchman allowed us to draw water from his water pool two miles away, and we had a hundred gallon cask running on felloes and drawn by a mule to fetch it, but even then we had to be very careful; and the natives were careful!

One day a certain Archdeacon came over to see what was going on, and asked for a cup of tea before going back; I took off one of the natives from his work to boil

the kettle and make the tea while I entertained the Archdeacon. The tea arrived, and I drank mine with gusto, being thirsty and having mixed it with tinned milk. But the Archdeacon elected to drink his without milk : he just tasted it and would have no more, protested even that it was not tea ! When he was gone I tried it too without milk, and summoned the tea maker. It turned out that he had filled the kettle from a basin of water in which several of us had washed our hands with large quantities of soap !



## CHAPTER X.

## Country Life.

WHEN October arrives one begins to expect rain ; no rain falls after the early part of April, so there is always six months absolutely dry, and the grass dies down about May and the leaves go about June, and then for the rest of the time the dust increases, and everything becomes more and more like tinder.

But October arrived and we began to prepare for rain ; part of the roof was already on the house ; there was no chance of living in it yet awhile, but the native workmen moved into it now for the night-time as it was warm and dry ; I tightened up the tent, dug a trench all round to carry off storm water, and barricaded my bed with doors and planks to prevent being blown away when the storms came. We made a small dam across a dry donga to catch water for building purposes, and went on building ; when the rest of the roof was on, and I was busy fixing gutters to carry the rain-water from the roof into a big iron water tank, one of the men talking to another said "*e e tla*," and the other replied "*ee, e tla nna*,"—It is coming ; yes it will rain.

We had had lightning for several days, and in half an hour a huge bank of cloud appeared on the horizon ; it was coming along at a great pace, and before long I could see, from the roof where I was working, the long wall of rain hurrying towards us. But I was determined to have some of that rain to drink, therefore the gutters must be finished. Before the last length connecting the

piping with the tank was in its place the rain arrived, one great downrush of the sky, but before it had reached my end of the gutters, the connection was completed, and in five minutes the water was rushing into the tank, with a sound to gladden the heart. No one who has not felt the dearth of water month by month can imagine even what joy one feels at the sound of rain.

But our little dam had been made with dry earth, and I knew the water would soon begin to wash it away; calling a native to help me, we went through the storm to try and preserve our bank. Already water was rushing down the donga like a river, and a big pond was collecting at the dam. As it rose higher, and the pressure of the water increased, little streams broke through the earth bank and all these had to be stopped somehow; luckily the rain soon slackened, and in a short time a dozen of us were in the water, puddling the bottom with our feet to stop leaks, and strengthening the bank.

Now that rain had come it was possible to plough, so we ploughed a few acres, and sowed mealie and castor oil and water melon. It is a simple process. You choose a piece of the grass-covered veld where there are few bushes, and if possible no rocks, measure out roughly a length of two hundred yards and say a hundred yards for breadth, and scatter mealie ~~broadsides~~ <sup>grass</sup>. Then you plough, with an ordinary American steel plough and a team of eight or ten donkeys, or with a light 19½ plough and two mules. As you go you drop in castor oil beans, one to every five yards, and when you come to an ant hill you put in one or two pumpkin or water melon seeds. When you have ploughed 200 yards by 100 you have finished about four acres, and it is wonderful what a

small patch it seems when it is done. The mealie should appear in ten days, and the ground will want hoeing as the mealies grow. But unless the ground is very fertile there is no profit if you have to pay for labour.

Donkeys are convenient animals because they eat anything ; but for the same reason they are a nuisance. Soon after we had acquired the farm, all "transport" failed because a large gold mine was being developed in the low veld, and every Dutchman who had a waggon and team went off to earn large monies by "riding transport" (carrying) for it. In that difficulty of being unable to get anything from the town, or any stone carried, or ground ploughed, the storekeeper joined with us to invest in waggon and team of donkeys ; the price of a donkey then was £10 12s., and we had to buy twelve of them ! But we were in consequence able to plough, and the donkeys in the intervals of ploughing went about eating anything. I had just nourished up a dozen pepper trees and they ate them ; a little later when the mealies were growing they ate them ; but they do not eat castor oil.

Mules are very different animals and very interesting because they are so unaccountable ; as a rule they are not particular ~~about food~~ <sup>very friendly</sup> ~~about food~~ <sup>about food</sup>. This may be largely due to the way they are ~~used~~ <sup>used</sup>. They do not get the careful training of a horse, but they are put straight into harness and flogged until they leave off kicking. We started with one mule for which we had to pay £24, and a tiny cart which cost £9, for I found that when I had bicycled a longish way in that heat I was not fit always to start work, as one has to do, straight away. I became very fond of this mule ; true, it was peculiar ; it would

shy right across the road ; it would refuse to go, to the point even of kicking, and then without notice would gallop off at a pace that would astonish some horses. One day I was starting from the farm with a bicycle on the cart ; almost before I was safely in the cart, the animal was gone down a steep hill like a whirlwind, across an awkward donga at the bottom, with the cart swinging like a shuttlecock. I tried to pull the creature in but it promptly started kicking like a demon, while it still rushed onwards ; up the next hill we went, I holding on grimly and wondering how soon we should part company ; then at the top of the hill it stopped and began to feed.

I got out. One trace was gone, the saddle girth was broken, and nothing much was in its proper place. I took out the bicycle and left it on the veld ; the pump was smashed and one pedal had been kicked clean off. I had a spare reim, so was able to bind cart and mule safely together and continue my journey.

But it could pull ! Again and again in crossing deep spruits I have looked at the bank in front and thought it impossible for us to get up, but the mule has just hunched itself together into a bow, driven its front hoofs into anything that would hold and heaved away until it got a move on the cart and eventually landed us safely on the top.

It had a special genius for running away ; for the first two months on the farm it always ran away ; we would knee-halter it, and that is generally enough to keep mules or horses within distance, but it made no difference to this one. One of the workmen would shout out *E tsamaile !* We never had to ask what it was that had

run away, it was always the mule, and off we should have to go after it. But sometimes it would get out of sight before we knew it was off, and then after hours of hunting we would see it trotting along, somewhere far off, in the distance, knee-haltered though it was.

One day we very nearly had a catastrophe. The Rector of Heidelberg was coming to stay on the farm for a holiday. We started together from the station at Pietersburg in the little cart and proceeded to trot, very gently, to the farm; so gently that jeering people might have called it walking. The fact was that it was very bad weather, roads heavy with recent rain and a look of storm in the sky. A mile out of the town the rain came on and the mule simply stood still; but in time we got into a slow trot, and at last reached Blood River. The bed of this river is formed of wild broken rocks among which the water, if there is any, swirls and breaks wildly; high banks on either side lead down to it, and many people have been drowned there.

When we reached the river the water was racing like a mill stream and was some sixty feet wide. I did not dare drive into it, so waded in as I was, for I could not get much wetter than the rain had made me. When the water was up to my thighs I felt that I could not keep my feet and came back; it was impossible to cross, and there was nothing for it but to wait. The water was still rising; we amused ourselves with putting in sticks at the edge to measure the growing depth; it rose more than a foot higher and then began to go down. We waited until it had dropped two feet and then thought it was safe. Also we wanted to get home before dark.



I ought to have waded through, leading the mule ; but I didn't. We got to about one-third of the way across, when the mule dropped into deep water ; the force of the current frightened it and it began to turn itself down stream. Another yard and the mule and cart and ourselves would have been crashing and battering among the rocks ; there was no time to be lost, and I jumped into the water, hung on to the wheel until I could get a foothold in the horrible swirl of the water, and worked my way to the animal's head. Jamming my feet against a rock that I felt under the water, I threw all my weight against the mule trying to make it head for the bank ; but I could not do it ; seeing this, the Rector (who had come for his health !) jumped out on his side of the cart, missed his footing and went under water, but recovering himself, pulled at the mule on his side for all he was worth, just as I gave it a mighty smack with my hand and yelled to it to *Ekk !* That was more than it would stand, so with a heave and a jump it pulled its legs out of the sand and sprang forward towards the bank. Down went the cart, all but the seat under water, but straining and yelling and pulling we got to the bank, lifted ourselves and the mule up the steep ascent, and once on the top stood holding on to the cart, panting, dripping and thankful.

I don't think anything but our luggage was the worse for it, but it was a very near thing.

Alas for that mule ! Shed a spare tear as you read of its decease ; after working with me for two and a quarter years it went down in December of 1906 with two others to visit one of our congregations in the Low Veld. There it contracted horse-sickness and died, to

our great sorrow, a week after its return. Other mules will kick and shy and run away, but I doubt whether I shall ever have so much affection for any other ; no other will have been my companion in pioneer days.

Of course all this time we were doing other work besides well-sinking and building and ploughing ; every Saturday or early on Sunday I would start out to visit congregations, returning to work generally either on Sunday evening or Monday morning. By the time that the house was nearing completion, there were also a good many people ready for Confirmation ; and the Bishop arranged to pay us a week's visit.

We could get on by ourselves with a very small supply of cooking utensils and crockery, but now I had to be rather more respectable. I spent a week in flooring, painting and ceiling one of the rooms so that it might be decent for the Bishop, laid in a few chairs and a bed, and indulged in sheets and a pillow. Nevertheless, when the great day came and we had the great pleasure of introducing our Bishop to the Farm there proved to be many things still wanting. If you used the bath for its original purpose, there was not much to wash up the plates and other things in ; if you had used the cups for soup, they could not be at once ready for coffee ; plates and spoons gave out at every meal, and vegetables did not always cook very well with the meat but there was only one pot for both.

After three days at the farm, including a Confirmation at Moletsieland, we set off for Mamabolo. The kind Commandant at Pietersburg lent us a cart and four mules with an excellent driver, and three of us started off in the morning.

Everything was in readiness at Mamabolo, for I had spent the previous week-end in giving the candidates their final preparation ; the Confirmation took place on Saturday evening after our arrival, and the following day the Bishop dedicated the Church to S. Andrew at the eight o'clock Communion. It was a great day for the people, for it marked the completion of their entrance into the Catholic Church ; for a year they had learned and worked and prayed. The new Church was a worthy witness to their labour, for they had built it themselves and built it well. Their reverence and earnest preparation had proved their devotion, and their perseverance had been tested by regular attendance at class.

The Day School had in it nearly a hundred children and the congregation that met to worship our Lord on that Sunday morning was well over two hundred, of whom eighty-five were now Communicants.

At eleven o'clock the new Church, large as it is, was all too small for the crowds who had come to see the Bishop, so once more we went out to hold our Service in the open air as I had done a year before.

The afternoon was devoted to dinner and concert. Three goats and three sheep had been given for the dinner, and the preparation of the food and then the eating of it gave us time to have a quiet stroll together in the country. About four o'clock we said Evensong together and then went to see what the people were doing.

They had cut off the Sanctuary of the Church from the Nave with curtains and were preparing to have a Concert ; chairs were placed for the chief people against the curtain and facing the west end of the church. Two

schools from the neighbourhood had sent singers and there was to be a great singing during which there would be offerings made to the cost of buying seats for the church. The chief was represented by his brother, and two other chiefs were present; they sat with us on the chairs. The three schools sang in turn, led by their respective teachers; one was very good but distinctly heathen. However, it so pleased their chief that he jumped up and made a little speech saying that as they had sung so well he gave a shilling. This went on for a long time and promised never to end. The Bishop wishing to show his sympathy gave me a sovereign, so I had to get up and say that all the singing of all the schools had pleased him so much that he gave a pound. This was evidently not playing the game, so the counsellor of the chief who was giving shillings had to get up and explain that his chief, too, would give a pound altogether, but preferred doing it a shilling a time. We then escaped from an atmosphere thick with dust and sticky with perfume.

At seven o'clock there was no sign of abatement in the singing, so I suggested to the Catechist that it would be wise to let them come and finish on some week-day; he took the hint, and very soon all the people were gathered together outside the Church to say farewell.

Thinking to calm the people down a bit after their long and exciting singing, the Bishop asked them to sing the Evening Hymn in Sesotho, and they did so; but then just as they were preparing to march off quietly to their respective homes he said in English—Good-night, my children, Good-night. It was all that was wanted;

the teacher remembered a glee that he had taught them in English, and at once took up the Bishop's words by leading off with "Ladies, Good-night!" The effect was instantaneous, for in half a minute the whole crowd were singing "in full cry," and probably did not stop until they got home. But we went to bed.



## CHAPTER XI.

**The Training School.**

**W**ATER! That was the real problem still. Our little dam was useful but was far too small to be of permanent value, and it had also a leaky bottom ; the well and tanks would provide water for household purposes, but for the well-being of the farm we needed a large store of water that would last right through the longest dry season.

There was one place where I thought we could make a young lake that would be big enough for a boat even. In the same donga through which we had to drive to reach the main road, but higher up, was a huge hollow, which the rains of countless seasons had worn away in very hard clay until it reached a rocky bottom. At one place where the clay was specially hard, the two banks, which were twenty feet high, approached each other to within less than a hundred feet. There I hoped to make a big wall from side to side, so as to catch the flood water from the rain.

So when it was possible to take men away from brick-making, I put them all to start at the new dam. It was such a big job that I determined to start it securely, as it would be such a serious loss, if after spending great labour and expense, we lost it after all.

There was sand at the bottom ; this we cleared right away, laying the rock bare below ; with crowbars and picks we worked out every piece of rock that was loose and then packed each crevice by hand with clay broken

up small, and rammed it hard. We cut far into the banks on either side, so as to get a strong hold for the new work, and then began the tremendous job of building up the big bank of clay. Every spadeful had to be hewn out with the pick, shovelled into a barrow and wheeled and thrown over the bank. The base of the earth wall was to be not less than 80 feet wide, and the length was about 95 feet, with a height of 22 feet, six feet wide at the top. If you work this out into barrow loads it is something enormous.

The natives simply did not believe that they could do it; the water would come before it was finished and all would be washed away.

The Dutch farmers from the neighbourhood were interested; they rode up now and then on their ponies and looked on. Yes, it was a good dam wall; but it was no good. I ventured to ask why it was no good. Well, you see, when the rain comes, there will be a big crack in the floor of the dam and all the water will run away and be lost. When I ventured to express a hope that there would not be a crack in the bottom they would say that in that case the water would soon work its way through the bank and wash it all away.

In spite of their criticisms, I determined to make the experiment. We had got the bank about ten feet high, made, of course, of dry clay and soil, when I awoke one night about two o'clock, aware that something unusual was happening. The wind had risen to a storm and blown both ends of the tent open, and the whole place was rocking and lifting, papers and bed clothes and everything that could fly were flying about and all as dark as pitch. I felt for matches and lighted one and

another and another ; it was no good. I found a bucket, put a candle inside and managed to light it. Hanging on to the beating canvas walls of the tent, I drew them together and laced them up tight everywhere ; and as I did so, the rain came ; I crept out underneath the canvas, and feeling my way from peg to peg, drove them in hard with a big mallet ; fixed up a few ropes that had blown loose, and crept back again to bed. The noise was tremendous, the lightning continuous, and the rain wonderful. I lay with the candle burning in the bucket, and watched the top of the tent with a sort of fascination ; it seemed so impossible that it should go on heaving and shouting like that for long without breaking. While still watching it I fell asleep and only woke again at four o'clock. The rain was still falling and I made up my mind to do what I could to save our poor embankment. Daylight was not due for an hour, but when I got outside bushes were visible, and I shouldered a spade and struggled down to the donga. I had had no idea there had been so much rain. Already a big body of water was standing there, blocked by our dam wall, but already also it was running away as fast as it could go.

Taking off shoes and stockings and rolling up my knickerbockers as far as they would go, I walked carefully on to the unfinished bank, sinking into the wet and sodden earth further and further as I went ; well up to the knees in mud I shovelled away until I had raised the lowest point of the bank above water level, and daylight had arrived.

The water still trickled gaily through in many places ; but it was not running over the top and that was something ; it would take more than I could do to stop the



leakage so I paddled up the hill to the tent, woke all the "boys" and brought them down to the dam with every available spade and shovel. There were twelve of us; we had to dig down in the middle of the bank at every place where water was working through, and stop the leak; it was horribly heavy work, and soon we were all in an indescribable state of clay and water. For a long time we seemed to do nothing toward stopping the escaping water, but at last we stopped one leak, then another, and by ten o'clock, after five hours' work, we were able to leave off and go to get breakfast.

The work was worth the effort, for we knew then that the bank was solid up to that level; whatever happened higher up, that part could never move, for every foot of it had been punched and puddled until it was more like cement than earth.

After that there was no more rain until we reached the top of the bank; of course all the upper twelve feet of the bank was soft, and likely to give way as the water rose, but we piled it up high above the level of the banks so as to allow for its sinking.

The next rain was the big rain when we so nearly failed to get out of Blood River. It made me very anxious to get home. Leaving the Rector to take the cart up to the house and to change into dry clothes, I went straight to the dam; it was safe but full of water; the men had been working all day long at it, strengthening it where it had settled, and raising it constantly; when I arrived water was still running into it from the valley, the bank was only six inches above water level, and we had misjudged the level of our overflow, so that

if the water rose another six inches the work of two months would be gone almost at once.

It was sunset, and the natives were just putting on their coats to stop work.

Speaking in my most forcible Sesotho, I pointed out the danger and exhorted them to renewed work. Taking off my coat I marked out the line of a new overflow and we all started as hard as we could to cut a ditch at the side, to carry off any more water that might come in ; it grew dark and we contrived to go on working by candle light ; taking turn and turn about we were able to work continuously, and by nine o'clock, a little trickle of water running down our ditch from the dam showed us that we had completed our work.

I may have been wrong, but I gave each of those men half-a-crown extra for those three hours of "over-time."

That was in January, 1906.

The dam held splendidly all along ; somehow or other, the Dutchmen had been wrong about a crack in the floor. It stood the rest of the rainy season well, and winter (the dry season) began early in April. There was no rain from then until October 20th. All that time we used two hundred gallons of water a day, stock drank from it, and the evaporation in winter is great. Yet all that time the level sank only at the rate of less than half an inch a week. There was a depth of twelve feet of water even when the winter was at an end. The accompanying photograph of our little lake was taken in August ; the rain came in October, and brought the water up again to the level of the overflow. The rains of December, and January, 1907, were heavier than had

been known for fifteen years ; all over the country dams were being washed away, but in spite of the great pressure of water ours remained safe. For which blessing we say grace.

All this time, since the building of the house, our builders had been busy putting in foundations for a big schoolroom and dormitories, with kitchen and a temporary Chapel. During the rainy season we stopped building, but as soon as winter arrived, we turned our attention to it again, and made eighty thousand bricks. I managed to be in the Pietersburg district every alternate month, and when I was down at Johannesburg some other equally adventurous brother presided at the Farm ; they have their own stories and incidents and accidents, but they must tell them themselves ; how one carried a sick mule to a farm-house and made it well ; how another was followed all night by lions—which turned out to be jackals ! how another fell again and yet again out of the cart. All these things must wait.

By May of 1906, we had built a dormitory and kitchens, and that month I devoted three weeks to nothing but building ; starting every day at sunrise, a native builder and I set to work to build the schoolroom ; it is fifty feet long and twenty feet wide ; the walls are fourteen inches thick. By the end of the three weeks we had the roof on, and by June we were prepared to find a Schoolmaster for our Diocesan Training School. That was a long business, but it ended successfully in the arrival at the farm of a young English schoolmaster with his wife and baby. In July the first students came, and by October there were fourteen of them, twelve of

whom passed the first Government Examination in November.

The buildings are necessarily rough and primitive, but we hope that before long young men trained in such arts as building and carpentry will join us and devote their talents to God's service in our Mission field; then we will have buildings worthy of their purpose, and able by their beauty to inspire those who follow.



## CHAPTER XII.

**An Exhortation.**

**T**HESE pages have been written so that you in England may know something of the delights, hopes and difficulties of the Native Church in the Transvaal.

The work is enormously hopeful—If we could get rid of certain difficulties we believe that in a very short time we could double the number of our congregations, and carry the Gospel all over that country.

These “certain difficulties” are often summed up in the words “men and money”; we say rather “men, women, money.”

But before we go further, we must say something about finance, the great money question.

We do not believe in pauperising the people of South Africa; our business as Missionaries is not so much to teach Religion, as to build up Christian Character through Religion. Contributing to the work of God, paying one's way in Religion has a great deal to do with character. When we tell you that it is your duty to support the Church's Missions, we are not only seeking money, we are showing you a way in which you can build up character. So with the Native Church, far the easiest way is to pay for everything and let the native have his Gospel free, but this way weakens his character, unfits him to be a responsible Christian, in fact makes him a wretched pauper.

We have no right to do this. Also we do not do it. But people often say we do.

When we deny it, they retort, Well, why do the Missionaries always ask for money? What is the meaning of all those working parties which make waist-coats or something for the niggers?

Let us see.

The Church in South Africa, as in Central Africa, aims at building up a true Native Church of the country, with its own ministry, its own finance, its own organization, all in communion with the Holy Catholic Church.

At present, they must have European Bishops and Priests and other helpers, to guide and teach them. Also, at present, everything is in the stage of beginnings; Churches, Schools, Colleges have to be built. The people are few at present to pay for all these things.

Therefore we help them with "European" money.

By "European" money we mean money subscribed by white people; we refuse to use this to pay the salaries of Native Priests, Deacons, Teachers, Catechists; the people must pay them. We refuse to give them clothes, books or food; they must provide themselves with necessaries. But we do recognise that they cannot do everything while they are young and growing; so we pay for European Clergy and Teachers and Evangelists; we make grants to the building of Churches and Schools; on the mines, when we get the chance, we build little chapels which cost £50 a piece. When well-wishers who want to help us cannot give us money but can make clothes or bazaar goods for us, we accept the things gladly and sell them, and the money swells the

Mission Funds, even as when you buy a copy of this book you do something to help us.

Are the native people paying?

Remember what there is to be paid by the people of our Mission—One hundred and twenty Native Deacons and other workers, (and those on the Reef have to be paid well ; there it is very hard for a Native teacher to live on £2 10s. a month. If he is married he must have £3 a month), twenty-two Schools, much building of Churches, many Church books, a good deal of travelling for those who minister to them. In the twelve months ending Easter, 1906, the natives of our Mission paid for Church purposes £1,200. Of that amount £900 was spent in salaries ; £300 went in buildings and schools.

Besides the Natives, there are the Europeans who are creating the Mission ; they need supporting ; there is the Catechists' College at Johannesburg and the Teachers' Training School at the Farm ; these need supporting. There is a tremendous amount of travelling—train, bicycles, mules. All this has to be paid for. For example, when a mule dies, it takes £20 to replace it. Our railway travelling alone for one year cost £82.

One cannot shut one's eyes to facts. However keen a Missionary may be, he cannot do without money. And in a new country, he cannot do without more money than his converts can supply. We want men ; more men ; because it is not safe to have more centres of work than can be carefully supervised by the staff of Europeans. It would be easy to increase congregations by making more extensive journeys, but it would be only weakening the work. We want more men.

We want women. We want some of those devoted ladies who have consecrated their lives to God's work, to settle in our Mission and to show the Native girls what the Christian ideal is. It is only women who can help women as a rule, and our native women need help above others.

But even women cannot live without food. Now food costs money.

We want men.

What sort of men ?

I suppose that in this sort of work there is only one essential requisite—Love of God, from which follows love of His people. But it is allowable to think also of how the work can be done economically; it is not economical to lead about a wife; S. Paul travelled the quicker, the more freely, the cheaper by having no wife. So when the work can be done equally well by unmarried men, it is fair to look for them. As a matter of expense, four workers living "in community," can live in the Transvaal on the same amount as is required by one worker who has wife and children; one need not be afraid of doing the married men out of their job; for the supply of clergy is far below the demand. So we want unmarried men. But we go further than this. It is natural to men to marry, and for a very good reason—it is not good for a man to be alone. We are made to be gregarious animals, we need some form of family life; spiritually it is far more necessary even than physically. Now the ideal for the man who desires to devote his whole being to God is to be part of a family, to join with others who have the same ideals, the same kind of work,



the same needs, the same limitations, and this ideal is found in "Community Life."

So in this Mission work we want men, and we want those who are ready to cut themselves free from the ties of the world in order to give themselves particularly to devotion to God and to His work ; for such men there is always an opening, whether they be priests or laymen, provided that they are in hard earnest and not afraid of obedience and a simple life.

In the printing office, the shop, the keeping of accounts, the building of Churches, the farm, the teaching of the schools, there is scope for the employment of many mechanical gifts, all of which can thus be consecrated ; in the great area of the gold mines, with their thousands upon thousands of heathen, and in the country, there is scope for all the evangelistic gifts which any man may have.

Here then you have the elements of the perfect life—family, labour, Godliness, all applied to the building up of the City of God.

Socialism in its perfect, because its Christian form.

Surely England who, centuries ago, sent out so many devoted men to Evangelize Europe, still has some of the same strong faith, the same devotion to our Lord, the same straight response to a clear vocation, who will give themselves heart and soul to the noble task of witnessing for God in the more distant parts of her own Empire.





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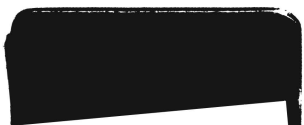


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